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COMMUNIQUÉ

Arshag Dickranian School in LA Concludes Its Mission

It is a sign of the times that any project or mission in the diaspora tasked to preserve the Armenian heritage gradually will face harder challenges, the school mission being perhaps the most taxing one among them.

In 1981, encouraged by the leadership and the generosity of the late benefactor Arshag Dickranian, the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) embarked on an educational mission by laying the foundation of the Arshag Dickranian School in Hollywood, Calif. Over time, the school expanded to become a K-12 educational institution, serving generations of students by offering a solid academic program along with a core curriculum of Armenian Studies. Today, over 500 graduates look back with pride on the instruction, care and inspiration which the school provided them. It also helped them to become responsible and productive citizens and members of our community.

The combination of the efforts of the far-sighted school board and the dedicated professional faculty and administration, compounded with the care and love of the families, created a dynamic and successful school for decades.

However, during recent years, demographic changes in the area where the school is located, combined with the alarming scarcity of funding resources, negatively impacted the mission of the school. Community-wide appeals by the school's Board of Trustees and good-faith efforts by the TCA Central Board proved to be insufficient to continue the operation of the school at the level of academic performance which the parents had come to expect from the school.

In consultation with the School Board and prominent community leaders, the TCA Central Board realized that it had no other choice but to terminate the operation of the school. On June 30, 2015, the TCA closed the school with a heavy heart. The closure of the Dickranian School is not a unique phenomenon in the diaspora, where the same fate has befallen several other schools already.

With the utmost sense of its fiduciary responsibility, the Central Board was duty-bound to judiciously preserve its decades-long investment. Consequently, with the advice and the participation of competent real estate experts, the property on 1200 Cahuenga Blvd., was disposed of at the highest possible market value.

The closure of the Dickranian School does not terminate the educational mission of our organization. Soon a task force will be charged with conducting a feasibility study and coming up with a series of recommendations for investments in educational projects with viable and sustainable potentials in various Southern Californian communities. In the meantime, the TCA

Central Board, continuing to act within the framework of its mission, will maintain its sponsorship of Tekeyan schools in Lebanon, Armenia and Artsakh, as well as pursue its other educational and cultural programs.

Grateful Acknowledgements

Whereas the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada, for the past 34 years, has dedicated a very large proportion of its human and financial resources to the founding, development and maintenance of the Arshag Dickranian School at this critical juncture of our educational mission, we feel duty-bound to gratefully acknowledge and express our heartfelt appreciation to the individuals and institutions which supported the operation of the TCA Arshag Dickranian School. Our thanks and appreciation particularly go to:

- The members of the School Board of Trustees, who shouldered the heaviest burden in steering the day-to-day operations of the school for 34 years.
- The past and present members of the administration and faculty for maintaining the high academic level of the school's programs and for inspiring the students with pride in their Armenian heritage.
- The parents, for entrusting their children to the school, and supporting it unconditionally throughout its history.

• The Western Diocese of the Armenian Church, under the leadership of Archbishops Vatche Hovsepian and Hovnan Derderian, for lending their unwavering support and for conferring the auspices of the Diocese to the school.

• A long list of individual benefactors for providing the resources and support without which the school could not have existed. The TCA Central Board, families, graduates and students will bear in their minds and hearts the contributions and the memory of the late benefactor Arshag Dickranian, whose family continued the tradition of giving until the last day the school was in operation.

• The Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Gulbenkian Foundation, the Lincy Foundation and the George Ignatius Foundation for their continued annual contributions through the years.

All the above-mentioned individuals, organizations and foundations made history through their conscientious contributions to the school and deserve our sincere gratitude.

Tekeyan Cultural Association Central Board of Directors
October 8, 2015
Boston, Mass.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Sargisian Sets Date for Referendum

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenian President Serge Sargisian signed a decree last week setting December 6 as the date for the country's referendum to change the constitution in order to establish a parliamentary republic.

Sargisian made the move on October 8, days after parliament voted on October 5 to hold such a referendum.

According to the proposed changes, presidential powers will be transferred to the parliament and the president will no longer be elected via a direct vote of the people but rather by parliament.

The presidential term would also be extended from five to seven years.

Opposition activists say the reforms are a ruse to let Sargisian slip into an enhanced prime ministerial role at the head of the ruling Republican Party after his presidential term ends in 2018.

Michel Legrand and Friends Honor Genocide Victims

PARIS (Armenpress) – A special concert dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust, was given under the auspices of French-Armenian singer Charles Aznavour. The event, titled "You Are My Brother" was held in Paris on October 12 at the Folies Bergère hall.

The special evening was dedicated to Armenian-Jewish fraternity. Opening speeches were given before the concert started and Charles Aznavour's greeting was shown on the screen. Legendary composer and pianist Michel Legrand with his son Benjamin, pianist, singer Gilbert Montanye, singer Enrico Macias, producer André Manoukian, duduk player Lévon Minassian and others took part in the concert.

Oxford Exhibits Armenian Manuscripts

OXFORD, UK (Armenpress) – The second oldest library of the world, the Bodleian Libraries of Oxford University, for the first time exhibits its collection of rare Armenian manuscripts.

The exhibition, titled "Armenia: Masterpieces from an Enduring Culture," is dedicated to the 2,500 years of Armenia history.

In honor of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, the library displays more than 100 items spanning more than 2,000 years of cultural history: from King Tigranes II the Great's coins minted in the first century BCE, through sumptuously and more modestly decorated manuscripts from the Middle Ages, to the treasured objects of survivors of the 1915 genocide.

The exhibition is open from October 23 to February 28, 2016.

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Team Coco Lands in Armenia

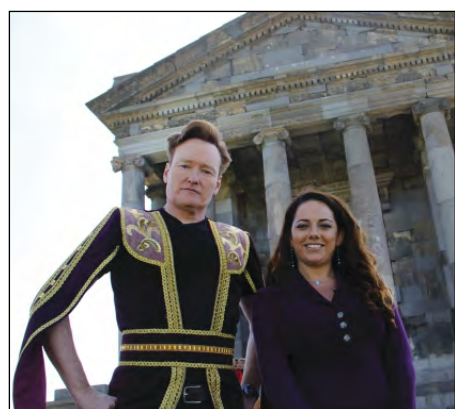
Conan O'Brien and Assistant Visit Her Ancestral Homeland

LOS ANGELES (Combined sources) – Conan O'Brien is on the road again, this time journeying to Armenia in the latest of a series of ongoing efforts to mix up his TV routine.

The results of O'Brien's sojourn to the country, believed to have commenced on Sunday, are slated for broadcast on Time Warner's TBS on Tuesday, November 10, at 11 p.m. and will be available a day later across digital and mobile venues operated by the network and O'Brien's Team Coco outlets. Sonja Movsesian, O'Brien's long-time assistant

who is of Armenian descent, has joined him. The visit is a first to the country for both and O'Brien's broadcast will be the first by a host of an American late-night show from the nation.

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Conan O'Brien with his assistant, Sonja Movsesian at Garni, Armenia



TCA Meets in Montreal

The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada held its 34th annual representative assembly in Montreal from October 9 to 12. Aside from meetings, events included a special banquet and program celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Montreal weekly newspaper *Abaka*, a requiem service for Vahan Tekeyan and all deceased Tekeyan members, and book presentations. The delegates are depicted in the above photograph. A full article will appear subsequently on these events.



ARMENIA

News From Armenia

500 Delegates Attend Francophonie Conference in Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – More than 500 delegates of 80 countries attended the 31st session of the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the International Organization of La Francophonie. The regular session of the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the International Organization of La Francophonie was held in Yerevan, October 9-11.

The head of the Armenian delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie Margarit Yesayan noted during the meeting with journalists that the organization of such an event in Yerevan speaks of the efficiency of the foreign policy of Armenia.

According to her, such a respectable, large-scale assembly has never been held in Armenia.

Yesayan noted that the International Organization of La Francophonie has great significance for Armenia.

Armenia and Artsakh Tourism Reps in Italy

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Through efforts of Armenia Development Fund, 4 Armenian companies presented Armenia's and Artsakh's tourism anchors during "TTG Incontri-2015" international exhibition held in Rimini, Italy on October 8-10.

More than 60,000 travel agencies from around the world participated in the exhibition. During meetings the Armenian companies presented to their European partners the travel destinations of Armenia, sights, lodging establishment in order to start cooperation.

Recycling Plant to Be Built for 33M Euros

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Armenian government approved the building of a garbage recycling plant and a greenhouse in Armavir province. First Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations Vache Terteryan introduced the details of the program during the executive session.

According to the investment program, the Armenian-Czech Limited Liability Company is going to build the recycling plant and greenhouse on 15 hectares in the northern part of Armavir Province.

"The program will cost around 33 million euros, 21 million euros of which is planned for the garbage recycling factory and the 11 million for the greenhouse. The remained 1 million Euros is planned for other charges. The program is a result of private partnership," said Terteryan.

First Indonesian High-Level Delegation Visits Komitas Museum-Institute

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The first high-level Indonesian delegation, apart from political meetings, has acquainted itself with the Armenian culture and the heritage left by Komitas.

Irman Gusman, speaker of the Regional Chamber of Representatives of Indonesia and the delegation of 12 people visited Komitas Museum Institute. They familiarized themselves with the life and activity of the renowned Armenian musician, then enjoyed the spiritual performance of the Geghard choir.

The Indonesian official left a note in the memory book of the museum which reads: "I am greatly impressed with Komitas Museum Institute. The museum taught us many lessons to appreciate one who has lived his life as a great Armenian teacher and musician." Irman Gusman said that he intended to learn more about Komitas who contributed not only to the Armenian culture but also to human civilization. The delegation members were presented with books about Komitas at the MuseumInstitute.

Gusman and his delegation had been received by Armenia Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian the previous day.

Race Against Time: Archeologists Dig at Karmir Blur Site Before Road Construction Begins

By Hrant Galstyan

YEREVAN (Hetq) – A new road designed to bypass the western portion of Yerevan will be constructed atop the Karmir Blur (Red Hill), a famous historical landmark in Armenia. Excavations at the site have uncovered a burial mound dating back to the Urartian period. If the entire site isn't excavated before the end of this year, many priceless artifacts may be lost forever buried under the new roadway. A study of the 2,700 year-old burial site is important because information gained might add to our knowledge of Teishebaini, the city-fortress built by Rusa II in the first half of the 7th century BC.

Experts say that there are few ancient cities where the fort and burial mound have been preserved.

"This is unique because we have both a living city, the fort, where residents once lived, and the dead city, the necropolis, where those residents were buried. This reveals the ethnic make-up of Karmir Blur," says Hakob Simonyan, who heads the excavation team. The graves can shed new light on Urartian burial rites at the time.

Simonyan argues that the fact that the heads of the dead were placed in women's pelvises shows that people of the time believed in rebirth.

Another new discovery for all of the Near East, according to Simonyan, is the burial of newborn children. Weapons, ornaments and ceramic vessels have been unearthed at the burial mound. Despite the fact that the graves belonged to common urban residents, their burials were accompanied by the sacrifice of slaves.

"Given that Urartu was an empire, it had a diverse ethnic mix. We have to see which were the dominant ones since there are master and servant and master and slave in the graves," says Simonyan. He says the position of women was important since the most luxurious graves belonged to them.

In the graves, the bodies of women are positioned on the left, those of men, on the right. Archeologist Levon Mkrtychyan shows me one of these mounds where they found bracelets, bronze earrings and glass beads some of which have retained their color. The twelve skeletons found here are still being cleaned. Later, they will be measured, photographed and sent to the laboratory.

Armenia, however, doesn't have a laboratory equipped to perform extensive

studies. Some of the remains will be sent overseas, to different labs for DNA testing. This will show what links, if any, connect the people of Urartu and present-day Armenia. Some teeth have already been sent to a lab in Copenhagen. "They have told us the most important, that DNA material remains. We've sent a second batch to UCLA. We are thinking of sending some to China as well. There is so much anthropological material here that we can send samples to various institutions," says Simonyan.

Simonyan noted that the summer heat and speed which with they are working hasn't been kind to the fossils or iron. "The bones need dampness and the metal, dryness. All this needs to be taken into account. But in this rush to work, it's overlooked. Here, we are trying to collect everything in the best condition, and the rest we will try to restore at the lab," says restorer Yelena Atayants. The archeologists sift the dirt lifted from the burial mounds in order not to miss a thing. "There are some beautiful beads, so many, in fact, that it will take months to string them all together. We do it all with love. If we excavate too fast, many things would be lost," says Atayants.

The 15 meter wide by 1.3 kilometer long stretch of road, which will pass through the burial site and above the Hrazdan River, will wind up at the Argavand Highway. The road is a component of the Sustainable Urban Development Investment Program (SUDIP) – Project 1, which has been financed with a loan from the Asian Development Bank.

The paradox is that construction of the very road threatening to bury the site revealed the burial mound in the first place. "It must be said that the roadway, in addition to destroying some of the site, also led to such an important scientific find," says Simonyan.

Preliminary excavations at the citadel site were conducted in 1939 by a team led by Boris Piotrovsky, who served as director of the Hermitage Museum from 1964 until 1990. Over the years, one part of the site was covered with industrial and household waste. Another part, including a section of the burial mound, was buried under the Shengavit cemetery.

Mikayel Badalyan, Director of the Erebuni Museum-Reserve, says that the road will forever limit the expansion of the cemetery. He also points out that due to the road, many will learn about the historical site. Nevertheless, the museum director believes that the burial vaults must be reserved and the excavation site

displayed. "If at all possible, I believe that it would be preferable implement some alternative methods, perhaps overpasses or small bridges, and that the burial site remain underneath. Today, it is a widely accepted practice, at burial sites, to create their copies at the site and to display them aesthetically to visitors and the public at large."

Vardan Karapetyan, an architect at Yerevan Development PIU, says that the only viable alternative at the site remains the road, as planned for. "At the discussion phase, the roadway was placed as close as possible to the cemetery in order to impact Karmir Blur as little as possible. This was the optimal solution." Preventative (rescue) archeology, which is being implemented to the burial mound at Karmir Blur, seeks to save the archeological material when the area is to be used for construction or other purposes.

Badalyan believes that the example of Shirak Street is an important precedent for preventative archeology. "Sadly, in Armenia, such preventative archeology is little employed when construction takes place," he says.

Anthropologist Armen Martirosyan, who is participating in the Karmir Blur excavations, adds that the practice is employed in a number of countries where development and history collide. He proposes that a small portion of the burial vaults be preserved, instead of postponing construction of the road. This will useful to form an understanding regarding Urartian burial rites. "The main challenge is that we be granted enough time to complete all the excavations. Now, we are working quickly but very attentively," says Martirosyan, adding that the time allotted isn't enough to unearth all the burial mounds. He says it would take another six to eight months to do a complete job. Yelena Atayants says that it requires one to two months to excavate one large burial mound. Working quickly risks destroying the intactness of the fossils and negatively impacts the health of the workers. "We will get it done, but at the cost to our health," she says. The Yerevan Municipality rules out any postponement of the roadway construction that is to begin in early 2016.

Excavation leader Hakob Simonyan says, "We can't perform the impossible, but we'll do our best." Their "best" will be to save some tens of fossils dating back to the Iron Age and send them to museums. We will probably never know what Simonyan meant by "the impossible."

Conan O'Brien and Assistant Visit Her Ancestral Homeland

CONAN, from page 1

"I think it's every boss's responsibility to take their assistant back to their ancestral land," said O'Brien, in a statement provided by a spokesperson. "That's why I'm going to make sure my next assistant was born in a five-star resort in Tuscany." At an "upfront" presentation last May, executives from Turner Broadcasting, parent of TBS, said O'Brien was planning to do a series of road-trip specials, meaning this Armenia excursion is likely to offer a taste of things to come.

Armenian Assembly of America Regional Director Arpi Vartanian arrived at the Armenia Marriott Hotel early Sunday morning to meet friends. Unbeknownst to her, she saw a tall, red-haired stranger and thought to herself, "that looks like Conan O'Brien. Wait, why is he here?" Vartanian approached O'Brien, and to her awe discovered that he is filming and traveling around

Armenia with his assistant Sona Movsesian.

The Conan team started exploring more of Armenia's cultural sites, as seen in his social media account's posting in front of the Temple of Garni wearing traditional Armenian garments next to Movsesian. The picture caption reads, "Brought my assistant Sona home to Armenia. It was this or give her a raise."

O'Brien has a history of referencing Movsesian and Armenians in past episodes, such as a visit to Armenian-owned Hollywood pawnshop in Glendale in January 2014.

O'Brien trades in laughs, but his trips – this will be the third he has made this year – are not always something to joke about. O'Brien in February traveled to Cuba in an effort that was known to only a handful of people outside of his staff, and almost ran into a problem when his team tried to navigate through security on the island nation, which at the time



Conan O'Brien and Armenian Assembly Regional Director Arpi Vartanian at the Republic Square in Yerevan, Armenia.

was working to re-establish diplomatic ties with the United States.

(A report from *Variety* as well as a release from the Armenian Assembly were used to compile this story.)



INTERNATIONAL

2015 Frankfurt Book Fair: New Studies on Armenia

FRANKFURT, Germany – Among the hundreds of thousands of new titles exhibited at the Frankfurt book fair, the largest such fair in the world, are

numerous studies on Armenia published this year, the centenary of the genocide. The *Fachbuchjournal*, a bi-monthly publication that reviews non-fiction works, issued its book fair edition with a special focus on this theme, referencing 20 works, 12 of them with extensive reviews. In an in-depth interview which opens the section, Wolfgang Gust, who published the relevant documents from the Foreign Ministry archives of Ottoman Turkey's wartime ally Imperial Germany, comments on the status of genocide studies and the significance of centenary events.

The three “very excellent contributions” to the centenary in Gust's view, were the special mass celebrated by Pope Francis at St. Peter's, the speech delivered by German President Gauck on April 24 in Berlin, and the debate in the Bundestag (Parliament) that followed. In all three, the events of 1915 were called by their proper name – genocide – and bold proposals were aired to assist Turkey in coming to terms with its past. Gust also highlighted an ambitious program of 40 commemorative events organized in Berlin by the Gorki Theater, on the initiative of persons of Turkish-German background.

Gust applauds the achievements (albeit not new) in German language studies contributed by Swiss scholars, among them Christoph Dinkel, Dominik

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Schaller and Hans Lukas Kieser, all of whom have examined the German role in the Genocide. By contrast, Gust laments the relative lack of such studies in Germany itself, noting for example that there is only one history department of one university where academic research into the German co-responsibility is possible. Prof. Mihran Dabag of Bochum University and Kristin Platt have just released their book, *Verlust und Vermächtnis, Überlebende des Genozids an den Armeniern erinnern sich* (“Loss and Legacy: Armenian Genocide Survivors Recollect”), which Gust points to as “a pretty big treasure,” although it does not treat the German role specifically.

To explain why this particular aspect has remained largely in the dark, Gust recalled his youth, and “how Germans spoke about the Shoa, namely, almost not at all.” It took almost a quarter century after the war before Nazi criminals were brought to trial and only in 1968 did the Germans start in earnest to process the past; Gust adds, “and working through the Armenian genocide lies ahead of us still, because many think, ‘For God's sake, now not yet another genocide, the Armenian one!’” Having done the research himself on this aspect, Gust explained just what the German archive material reveals: what the German diplomats and military knew and what they did or did not do.

What's New In 2015

There are three new German publications he singles out for attention: Michael Hesemann's book, *Völkermord an den Armeniern* (“The Armenian Genocide”) he finds particularly important “because it contains new research results and heretofore unpublished documents from the Vatican secret archives.” The importance of Jürgen Gottschlich's *Beihilfe zum Völkermord* (“Accomplice to Genocide”) lies in the intensive research conducted into the role of the German military, says Gust. And another new release with important documentation is *Der Völkermord an den Armeniern im Spiegel der deutschsprachigen Tagespresse 1912-1922* (“The Armenian Genocide as Reflected in the German-language Daily Press 1912-1922”) by Yetvart Ficiyan.

It becomes clear, in a detailed review, just why Gottschlich explored the question, “what occurred, how, when and for what reason, and what role Germany played.” As a long-term correspondent in Turkey for the Berlin-based *Tageszeitung*, he was often asked by Armenians and Turks alike about the co-responsibility of the Germans, and at the same time realized that Germans knew little or nothing about this chapter in their history. In his book, Gottschlich recreates the scene of the crime, so to speak, taking his reader along with him to landmarks of the genocide which he visited extensively, be it in Van or Musa Dagh, where Armenians resisted, or the Kemagh gorge from whose heights thousands were thrown to their death in the Euphrates. As anticipated in his title, the author holds the German military co-responsible, specifically Lt. Gen. Fritz Bronsart von Schellendorf, who admitted in a secret report to Ludendorff in 1917 that he had organized the preparations for the general mobilization of the Turkish army already in February 1914. On the basis of this documented fact the author moots that Bronsart later, as General Chief of Staff of the Ottoman army, also drew up the June 1, 1915 deportation orders and proposed

plans for their implementation. Although Talaat Pasha implicated Bronsart by name in his memoirs published in 1946, Gottschlich acknowledges

that direct documents proving this are still to be found – perhaps in Turkish General Staff archives.

Hesemann also provides new insights into the Genocide, this time through documents he has studied since 2008 in the Vatican archives. Two focal points emerge from his research: first, the fate of the Catholics and, secondly, the attempts by the papacy to halt the carnage. Although the Catholics constituted the smallest group among Armenian Christians, overall, Catholics were well represented, with 12 dioceses, numerous cloisters, monasteries, schools and communities throughout the Ottoman Empire, and when the genocide began, they were also targeted. Pope Benedict XV, who was elected in September 1914, was to become known as the “Peace Pope” for his indefatigable efforts to stop the massacres, save the Catholics and all Christians. His first encyclical denounced the senselessness of war. He worked through Catholic networks in Istanbul, Mosul, Jerusalem, Vienna and Munich, deploying his diplomatic representatives in hopes of exerting influence on Turkey through Germany and Austria. When this failed, he appealed directly to the Austrian and German Emperors, as well as to Sultan Mehmet V. As such initiatives met no success, the documents show how Catholics despaired, realizing that the Young Turk regime intended to annihilate all Christian life. The author makes clear his aim is not only to provide new documentation but to issue a warning that continued genocide denial may lead to renewed atrocities. Here he refers to the lessons drawn by Hitler and the Nazis, as well as Mussolini, from the Young Turk experience.

Yetvart Ficiyan, a leading member of the Armenian community in Berlin, sheds new light on what public opinion in Germany in the decade including the war years learned or did not learn from the press reports. His careful monitoring of the daily press between 1910-1922 shows the complex web of factors involved in the genocide, from the Turks and Kurds, to the Great Powers (Russia, England, France, Austro-Hungary, Italy, the US), as well as Switzerland, the Balkans and the Vatican, and of course Germany, seen as the responsible for the outbreak of war. There are moving reports on the fate of the deportees during the death marches and accounts of the celebrated trial of Talaat's assassin Soghomon Tehlirian, who was acquitted. The publisher, Donat, has been recognized as a leader in issuing books on Armenia, among them two other new titles this year: Harry Stürmer's *Zwei Kriegsjahre in Konstantinopel 1915-1916* (“Two War Years in Constantinople 1915-1916”), which was banned in Germany shortly after its appearance in Lausanne in 1917, and *Entscheidung in Aleppo – Konsul Walter Rössler (1871-1929)* (“Decision in Aleppo – Consul Walter Rossler 1871-1929”), a biography of a man who helped the Armenians, by Kai Seyffarth. Donat has also published Heinrich Vierbücher's *Armenien 1915* which appeared in English translation a few years ago.

From Rolf Hosfeld, scientific director of the Lepsius House in Potsdam and a prolific author, we have a new, extremely well documented account of the genocide titled *Tod in der Wüste* (“Death in the Desert”). Especially for readers who are approaching the subject for the first time, this carefully researched study presents the Aghet in detail, how it unfolded, see FRANKFURT, page 16

International News

Azerbaijan Expels Two Representatives of Amnesty International

BAKU (Armenpress) – Amnesty International says two of its representatives were detained when trying to enter Azerbaijan and then deported.

The former Soviet republic has come under growing criticism for human rights concerns and a crackdown on opposition. In a recent high-profile case, journalist Khadija Ismayilova was sentenced to prison for 7 ½ years on financial crimes charges that supporters say were retaliation for her reporting on alleged corruption involving President Ilham Aliyev and his family. In a statement, Amnesty said two of its delegates who are Georgian citizens were detained after flying into the capital, Baku, on Wednesday and then expelled from the country.

“There is no letup in the government's repressive campaign to stifle all criticism and dissent,” Amnesty's director for Central Asia John Dalhusien said.

Turkey Protests Erupt After Rally Explosions, Deaths

ISTANBUL (*Hurriyet*) – Strikes, boycotts, marches and demonstrations were held around Turkey on October 12 in protest against the October 10 Ankara massacre that killed at least 97 people, with funerals of the victims being held one after another.

The mass demonstrations came as Turkey's leading labor unions and professional organizations, namely the Confederation of Public Sector Trades' Unions (KESK), the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (D SK), the Turkish Medical Association (TTB) and the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB), made calls for a nationwide strike and boycott for October 12 and 13 in protest against the massacre at the Labor, Peace and Democracy Rally in Ankara on October 10.

Employees at Istanbul's Maltepe District Municipality, including Maltepe Mayor Ali Kilic, went on strike on October 12, holding placards that read “we are in mourning, we are in protest, we are on strike,” and marched from the municipality building to Maltepe Square.

In Istanbul's Fatih district, a ceremony was held outside the Istanbul University Medical School Hospital located in Fatih's Çapa neighborhood on October 12 to commemorate victims of the Ankara bombing, as medical staff and union members gathered outside at 10:04 a.m., the time when the twin blasts occurred in Ankara on October 10.

In Istanbul's Kagithane district on October 12, lawyers chanted slogans inside the courthouse in Kagithane's Çaglayan neighborhood in protest at the massacre.

College students in large numbers, including those from the Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Bogaziçi University, Marmara University, Koç University and Istanbul Technical University in Istanbul, as well as Middle East Technical University in Ankara, boycotted their classes on October 12 in protest.

Exhibit of Photos by Ara Guler Presented in Tbilisi Exhibit

TBILISI (Public Radio of Armenia) – Photos by noted Turkish-Armenian photographer Ara Guler will be on display in Tbilisi starting October 16. The exhibition is being organized by the Georgian National Museum and the Turkish Embassy in Georgia.

Works by Guler, given the title the Photographer of the Century, are on display in many museums.

Guler has taken photos of prominent figures like Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, William Saroyan, Winston Churchill, Bertrand Russell, Indira Gandhi, Sergei Paradjanov and many others.

Guler's photos will be on display through October 31.

New Iranian Ambassador to Armenia Presents Credentials to President

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Seyyed Kazem Sajjad, the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Armenia, handed his credentials to President Serge Sargsian this week.

Armenia's president congratulated the ambassador on starting his diplomatic duties in our country and wished him success. Sargsian spoke highly of the activities carried out by the Iranian embassy in Armenia for the last 20 years and expressed the hope that Sajjad will continue to pay close attention to Armenian-Iranian relations, following the example of his predecessors who completed their diplomatic tenure in Armenia and filled the ranks of the Armenian people's friends, by making every effort to further strengthen relations and broaden cooperation between the two countries.

The two discussed the implementation of Armenian-Iranian large multi-sectoral projects adopted as a result of the high-level bilateral agreements.

They agreed that the new integration processes open up broader opportunities to promote collaboration between Armenia and Iran in both bilateral and multilateral formats.

The ambassador highly praised the Iranian-Armenian community, stressing the community's major role in strengthening bilateral interstate relations.

Community News

AIWA Hosts Tech Panel in Silicon Valley

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif. – On September 24, the Armenian International Women's Association San Francisco (AIWA-SF) led a panel discussion on "Armenian Women in Leadership and Technology." The event took place at the Symantec Corporation Headquarters in the heart of Silicon Valley. The audience of over 70 was engaged in thought-provoking discussions that inspired the whole room. The panelists shared heartfelt stories and words of wisdom that created moving energy in the room.

In her opening remarks, AIWA-SF President, Christine Soussa, acknowledged that Armenia had celebrated its 24th birthday just a few days prior to the panel discussion. Much like a 24 year old, Armenia is developing as a country and has unmapped potential. To hear the stories of the women on the panel, who have a high level of both experience and accomplishment professionally and personally, was encouraging.

The panel was moderated by Paul Agbabian – Vice President, Symantec Fellow, CTO Enterprise Security Business Unit – Symantec and included Lusine Yeghiazaryan, senior director, Internal Audit, Risk and Controls, GoPro; Ani Vartanian Boladian, managing partner, Rubicon Point Partners; Meleeneh DerHartunian PhD RAC, senior regulatory documentation scientist, Genentech and Laura Dirtadian, director, Risk Advisory Services, MUFU Union Bank.

The various people on the panel suggested that opportunities present themselves at different times, and when an opportunity comes, you take it, do your best and turn the opportunity to your advantage. Networks are also a way to utilize transitions in your life.

Each panelist shared personal stories. Each story was moving, inspiring, thought provoking and motivating. Stories including: taking risks, feeling like a failure, moving countries, writing manifestos, admitting to parents that they were not going to be doctors, lawyers or architects.

They stressed that for the next generation, it is important to get girls interested in STEM education (which stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

The panelsits agreed: "Believe in yourself, take risks and have faith that if things don't work out as you journey down a certain path, it's okay! You will be okay, as long as you have your health, support system, and skills."

The panel took time to discuss the importance of their support system including spouses, family, friends, their network and broader community.

One panelist described her path to being a research scientist: "I was going to be an orthodontist; that was my dream. During college I joined the orthodontist group and quickly realized it wasn't for me. When I was in college, my maternal grandmother was diagnosed with lung cancer. I was the only family member in Los Angeles and would spend a lot of time with her and took care of her. If that's not motivation enough, I don't know what is. I wanted to understand why people got sick. Diagnosing and treating the illness wasn't enough for me. I wanted to dig deeper and understand why sickness happens. This is what led me to pursue a PhD and take on the work I do today in research."

A question that prompted much conversation came from a young professional, who landed a dream job after graduating and realized the job was different than expected and the attendee asked What if it isn't enough? This stimulated fantastic conversation around things like the dynamic meaning of "enoughness," the perception of life, and its concept in other parts of the world when compared to America.

Topics for future discussions include: "Armenian Men in Leadership and Technology," coaching sessions for women starting their careers or looking to make a career shift.

– AIWA SF President and Vice President, Christine Soussa and Sophie Moradian



The late Mayram Gulbahar Gigiyani Cinar

A True Salt of the Earth

A Tribute to Watertown's
Mayram Gulbahar Gigiyani Cinar

WATERTOWN (Tab) – The year is 1915. The world is engulfed in warfare. In the cradle of civilization, an unprecedented genocide against the first Christian nation is festering. And Arusyak Hajinian, my maternal great-grandmother, is caught in the middle of it:

They smash open the house door and take her husband to purportedly serve in the army. Amid the pandemonium, she runs and hides a small portion of the family's gold in the wall of the garden's chicken coop. Arusyak (though pregnant), her young child, and other inhabitants of this small Western Armenian town, lying inside Ottoman Turkey, are seized and sent marching south towards the scorching heat of the Syrian desert. With little food and water, she can no longer breastfeed her child. He dies in her arms, and she has the heartbreaking task of burying him.

During the death march through treacherous terrain, a sadistic Turkish military officer bayonets her abdomen, killing her unborn child. She loses consciousness. When she finally awakens, she finds herself in his home, stitched up and recuperating. He then chains her in his basement when she refuses to be his latest wife. Weeks later, with the chains improperly placed, she breaks free, escaping through a small window secured with metal wire.

Arusyak makes her way back to her original village on foot, but nevertheless ends up in abject poverty, working, as she later puts it, as "a slave for Turks on my own land." Her husband never returns. Neither do her brothers-in-law and raped sister-in-law. With most of her family gone and a living sister having fled to Abkhazia to safety, she is introduced to another genocide survivor, Garabed Ayvazian, whom she soon marries and begins to build her family anew. Eventually she returns to her first home and recovers the gold she had hidden in the chicken coop years ago.

Arusyak becomes a devoted mother to her five children, by day faithfully tending the farms and fields of her home village. Though the oppressive Turkish Empire morphs into an equally oppressive republic (using essentially the identical crescent and star flag), she remains a tireless purveyor of goodwill to all ethnicities for the rest of her life, including, for example, the renowned blind Turkish minstrel and poet Asik Veysel. She perseveres to the age of 110, physically disabled the last 10 years due to multiple strokes, weeping beside her sole daughter each and every night in prayer for the unspeakable losses and horrors she and her nation had endured decades earlier. This remarkable woman, "Partridge" as she was fondly called, departs at last in peace.

Arusyak's unbelievable tale of survival and tenacity in the wake of man's worst cruelty to man was recounted to me over and over by Mayram Gulbahar Gigiyani Cinar, her sole daughter and my maternal grandmother, whom the world

see MAYRAM, page 6

Write A House Gives Second Winner Keys To Detroit Home

DETROIT (Detroit Public Radio) – Detroit has itself a brand-new resident.

Liana Aghajanian is the latest winner for Detroit's Write A House program.

She was chosen from more than 200 entries and will move into a totally rehabilitated home just north of Hamtramck for a two-year residency.

Aghajanian had never been to Detroit before applying to the program, but tells us she's read and heard about the city and its history for years and was drawn to it because of how it's talked about in the media.

"The way that Detroit has been portrayed in the media has been very polarized. It's either very high or very low, and I feel like the truth is somewhere in the middle," Aghajanian says.

She looks forward to having the chance to explore Detroit herself and to find and write about that middle ground.

"My favorite types of stories are the ones that I get to spend a long time on, and this opportunity has given me the space, literally the space to think and breathe, but also the mental space," she says.

Sarah Cox, co-founder of Detroit's WAH, tells us that all kinds of factors are at play when choosing a winner from the pool of writers. Once they narrow it down to the top 10, "everyone's a really great writer," she says, and sometimes it just comes down to the writer's individual circumstance and voice.

"I feel like she was very careful in her writing about context, and that's something that we'd really like to see a lot more in Detroit writing," Cox says.

Aghajanian was born in Iran to an Armenian family that came to the U.S. as refugees in 1988, during the Iran-Iraq War. She tells us she's excited to explore the strong Armenian presence in Detroit.

"That's actually one of the reasons that has attracted me to this city for a very long time. We have a very deep-rooted history here that spans over 100 years, and I think that a lot of that hasn't explored," she says.

Cox hopes that WAH will be able to provide writers with three houses every year "starting very soon."

Aghajanian will begin her two-year residency early next year.

Steve Sarkisian Fired as USC's Football Coach

LOS ANGELES (*Los Angeles Times*) – USC has fired football coach Steve Sarkisian, the school announced in a statement Monday, October 12.

"After careful consideration of what is in the best interest of the university and our student-athletes, I have made the decision to terminate Steve Sarkisian, effective immediately," Athletic Director Pat Haden said in the statement.

"I want to thank Clay Helton for stepping into the interim head coach role, and I want to add how proud I am of our coaching staff and players and the way they are responding to this difficult situation.

"Through all of this we remain concerned for Steve and hope that it will give him the opportunity to focus on his personal well being."

The announcement came quickly after the decision was made, according to an athletic department official who, when he was asked about it by a reporter shortly after 1:30 p.m., expressed surprise the news was already out.

USC did not practice on Monday, so players were scattered and being informed via text messages by the coaches of their position groups.

Kenny Bigelow, a defensive lineman, said he was saddened by the news.

see COACH, page 8



COMMUNITY NEWS

AGBU Hye Geen Conference Tackles Globalizations, Challenges for Armenian Women

LOS ANGELES – On August 22, AGBU Hye Geen held a panel discussion on globalization and the challenges for Armenian women at the AGBU Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Center in Pasadena. The event began with remarks by Sona Yacoubian, founder and chairperson of AGBU Hye Geen, who acknowledged the inevitability of globalization and discussed the need to look for new tools to adjust to changes while maintaining Armenian cultural heritage.

The first speaker was Mary Terzian, a former member of the United States Foreign Service. In her presentation, Terzian examined economic growth and global competitiveness as well as the development of an essential infrastructure as the result of globalization: “Globalization will eventually impose a universal language to ease interaction between nations,” said Terzian. She also stressed the need to adjust to foreign cul-

tures “without sacrificing our individuality,” or national identity. Terzian ended on an optimistic note with a comment on the effects of globalization on the improvement of Armenia’s higher education, efficiency of institutions and the expansion of the scope of internet technologies.

The second speaker, Nelly Titizian-Kazman, is an adjunct professor at the University of La Verne, where she writes and lectures on leadership, culture and gender issues in management and power politics in organizations. Kazman stressed the need to develop both personally and professionally to meet the challenges of a globalized world. In her presentation, she focused on the attributes and challenges of each age group, including navigating today’s social and cultural diversity at home and at work, prioritizing family and career, managing dual Armenian and American identities and resisting parental control.

The concluding remarks were delivered by Osheen Keshishian, editor of the Armenian Observer.

The event ended with the presentation of an award to AGBU Hye Geen on behalf of California Assemblyman Mike Gatto for the organization’s “dedicated leadership to preserve and promote Armenian women and their history.”



The event began with remarks by Sona Yacoubian, founder and chairperson of AGBU Hye Geen, who acknowledged the inevitability of globalization and discussed the need to look for new tools to adjust to changes while maintaining Armenian cultural heritage.



AGBU Hye Geen held a panel discussion on globalization and the challenges for Armenian women at AGBU Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Center in Pasadena, California.

Steve Sarkisian Fired as USC’s Football Coach

COACH, from page 4

“Coach Sark is a great guy despite what anyone might think,” Bigelow said. “He really cared about us and the program. Whatever he’s going through, I pray he finds peace.”

Other players spoke anonymously because they had been told not to comment publicly.

“He should handle what he’s got to handle,” one said.

Said another: “We wish him the best. He has serious issues to handle. We have to focus on the season.”

Sarkisian, 41, was placed on indefinite leave by Haden on Sunday after the coach failed to show up at a team practice.

At a meeting with his team Sunday morning, Sarkisian “did not seem right,” according to a USC player. When he didn’t show up for the midday practice, Haden was alerted to the situation.

Haden said he called Sarkisian and it was clear to him the coach was “not healthy.” At that point, Sarkisian was told he was being put on leave.

Sarkisian had been under scrutiny since August when, two weeks before USC’s season opener, he slurred his words, insulted opponents and shouted an expletive during the football

program’s annual “Salute to Troy” pep rally.

The event was closed to media, but witnesses said Sarkisian appeared to be intoxicated.

A day later, Sarkisian apologized in a statement on USC’s athletic website. “Pat Haden talked to me after the event about my actions and I assured him this will not happen again,” the coach said.

USC football Coach Steve Sarkisian has been fired.

Haden, in his own statement at the time, said he was confident Sarkisian had received his message “loud and clear.”

The following day, Sarkisian held a news conference on campus and explained the incident was the result of his mixing alcohol – “not much” – with medication he did not specify. He also said he would seek counseling to see if he had a drinking problem.

Helton, USC’s offensive coordinator, has been named interim head coach. He will lead the Trojans against Notre Dame in South Bend,

Ind., on Saturday in the resumption of one of college football’s great, traditional rivalry games.

Sarkisian was thought to be among the highest paid coaches in the Pac-12 Conference.

As a private university, USC is not required to make details of coaches’ contracts available to the public. So Sarkisian’s annual compensation will not be revealed until May, when the school must file a tax return that includes a list of the most highly compensated employees. The latest tax reporting year will be from July 1, 2014, to June 15, 2015.

Sarkisian was hired in December 2013 after Haden fired Lane Kiffin during the 2013 season.

Kiffin earned about \$3.4 million in total compensation, according to the school’s tax return for that fiscal year. Sarkisian, who was signed to a multiyear deal, is believed to make at least that amount.

Sarkisian reportedly earned about \$2.9 mil-



Steve Sarkisian coaches USC against Washington on Oct. 8.

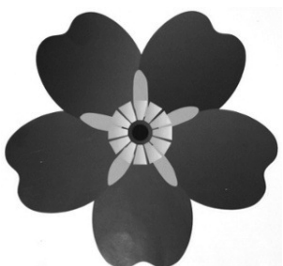
lion in total compensation from the University of Washington in 2013.

It is not known whether Sarkisian’s USC contract included a morals or behavior clause, or whether USC must pay the remainder of his contract.

UCLA has a clause in football coach Jim Mora’s contract that is specifically related to alcohol and drug use.

His contract reads: “If Coach has committed, or shall commit, any act, or has been, or in the future becomes, knowingly or intentionally involved in any situation or occurrence involving his improper use of or other improper association with drugs and alcohol, or otherwise tending to bring himself into public disrepute, contempt, scandal, or ridicule, or tending to shock, insult or offend the people of this nation or any class or group thereof, or reflecting unfavorably upon University’s reputation or products, then the University shall have the right” to terminate his contract.

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A RECEPTION FOLLOWS AT THE MILLENNIUM BOSTONIAN HOTEL



COMMUNITY NEWS

Tribute to Watertown's Mayram Gulbahar Gigiyan Cinar

MAYRAM, from page 4
physically lost one year ago and whose equally inspirational story I have the honor of presenting now.

Growing up in Armenia

Mayram Gulbahar ("Mary Spring-Rose" in Armenian and Turkish) first opened her eyes in the heart of Western Armenia at a time when the rivers were no longer as crimson and no independent Armenian state yet existed. Born on January 9, 1924 in the town of Gamirk (Gemerek), southwest of Sivas, in newly independent Turkey, she was the second youngest child in her family.

Growing up, she had no school to attend and was prevented from speaking her native Armenian tongue due to the dangerous community environment. She spent most of her childhood assisting her mother with family chores and frolicking with her siblings and other youngsters outdoors. Her father, Garabed or "Hayrig" (Armenian for "Father") as she had called him, was an industrious blacksmith who died prematurely when Mayram was 10-years-old.

To preserve her Armenian identity and preclude the possibility of marriage to a covetous Muslim villager, a small indigo cross was tattooed above the backside of her right wrist at the insistence of her grandmother immediately following her father's death. A year later, at the mere age of 11, Mayram was married to 15-year-old Avedis Gigiyan from the adjacent all-Armenian village of Gigi, which was founded by and named after his forefathers several generations earlier as a safe haven for dozens of families that fled the Ottoman Turkish culture of emasculation, harassment, and occasional massacre targeting Armenians and other minority groups.

Relocating to Gigi with her relatives, Mayram went on to slowly build her own family. She gave birth to eight children over the span of 24 years: three daughters, three sons, and two infants who died from fever.

From dawn until well after dusk, the entire village toiled in the fertile hilly fields, tended the farm animals, prepared fresh bread and meals, sewed and washed wool blankets and rugs, and tidied up their homes made of adobe-like baked bricks. Gigi had a small Christian chapel (today a mosque), a walled cemetery, and a sizeable orchard of oak and poplar trees. The city fountain delivered the daily supply of water. News arrived via word and radio. Every celebration or tragedy was an all-village and multi-day affair. Darting swallows and soaring eagles entertained them from above throughout the day, and the kaleidoscope of stars enchanted them during clear nights.

Life in Gigi was not always idyllic. Electricity was unavailable at the time. The small state-funded school was soon closed. Winters were generally harsh. The men would take turns carefully balancing relations with occasionally belligerent Muslim villagers. The young men were required to serve in the army, putting extra strain on mothers and siblings to make ends meet. In the 1930s, their Armenian surnames were all replaced with codified Turkish renditions designed especially for Christian citizens as part of then President Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's forced assimilation and tracking campaign. Gigiyan was renamed Cinar. And with tensions again rising in the early 1960s between Turkish nationalistic groups as well as Alevi and Kurdish inhabitants, thereby exposing the village to direct threats, the people of Gigi, including Mayram, Avedis, their six children, and her mother, were forced one by one to flee to the relatively safer metropolis of Constantinople (Istanbul) to live among its historic Armenian community.

Gigi thus became a ghost town and has remained so since. But its people – both in the Old Country and in the New World – have never forgotten Gigi.

Moving to Watertown

The Gigiyan's peaceful pastoral village setting was thus instantly replaced by a bustling urban one. From 1964 on, Avedis worked as a

clerk at a local hotel for a few years before establishing his own grocery near Taksim Square.

Mayram helped him run the store, walked their younger children to and from local Armenian schools, attended weekly mass at a nearby Armenian church, and celebrated the marriages and baptisms of their younger children and grandchildren. In 1974, she began round-the-clock care of her now disabled mother Arusyak. Political tension as well as anti-Armenian hostility and attacks in Turkey continued unabated. Starting in the late 1970s, in pursuit of a freer and more secure life, Mayram and Avedis witnessed the slow emigration of their younger children, grandchildren, and other families from Gigi and elsewhere to the United States, specifically to the major Armenian diasporan center of Watertown, Massachusetts.

Following the passing of Mayram's mother Arusyak in 1986 and the sale of the family grocery, she and Avedis emigrated and joined the rest of their flock and friends in Watertown, first residing in a cozy apartment on Putnam Street before moving to a larger home on Dartmouth Street in 1996.

The year 1988 is when I and other U.S.-born cousins first met the ever-smiling, petite Grandmother Mayram with gemstone eyes and a reserved angelic presence whom we called "Yaya" (Greek for "Grandma"). She would always be occupied with cleaning up the house, cooking scrumptious meals, slicing and peeling fruits for us to enjoy, getting us ready for Armenian Saturday school, and attending every church service and family festivity with grandfather.

Yaya was always there for everyone and made those around her feel utterly loved and important. The way she would zero in on you during one-on-one conversations at her kitchen table was exceptional.

And her dexterity was evident in the many hobbies she pursued. She dedicated many hours to crocheting elaborate white floral laces wearing her thick glasses, continuing her agrarian routines from Gigi in her home garden, stacking pots of dolma from hand-picked grape leaves, and filling bags of manti dumplings made from spiced meat and thinly rolled-out dough pieces. She was a master at preparing and gifting fresh yogurt, dried mint leaves, tomato sauce, rose and apricot jam, and trays upon trays of assorted sweet breads and traditional filled pastries, such as baklava, burek, choreg and kete, during Easter and Christmas holidays. Easter afternoon is when dozens of relatives and friends from Gigi would light up her home, arriving with small gifts in their hands in deference to their senior elders, and be treated in turn with large dishes of homemade sweets.

Life with Yaya

Yaya also enjoyed walking along the banks of the Charles River, picnicking on Gloucester's rocky beaches, swimming at Cape Cod beaches and apple-picking in Merrimack Valley with all of us.

She always appreciated the freedoms and opportunities provided to her and her kin in the United States, despite successive White House administrations' unwillingness to formally recognize and address the still-ongoing Genocide. After all, it was in her newly-adopted country that she and grandfather began to receive first-rate medical services to ameliorate their various ailments, attended their first Armenian Genocide commemorations and marches, and saw their grandchildren attain academic degrees, purchase their first homes, and contribute in their capacities to the well-being of their local communities and the nascent Republic of Armenia (1991) – little of which would have been possible had they remained in Turkey.

Yaya's magic extended well after her debilitating stroke in mid-February 2013 that completely paralyzed one side of her body, but fortunately kept her mind intact. For nineteen months she bravely fought on, experiencing several memory triggers that would occasionally lift her spirits and bring her family to laughter. She passed away in Dennis Port,

Cape Cod on September 14, 2014 under the care of my devoted parents and was laid to eternal rest in Watertown's Ridgelawn Cemetery five days later, following a moving funeral service at Saint James Armenian Apostolic Church. She is survived by her husband of nearly eighty years, Avedis, three daughters, three sons, three daughters-in-law, three sons-in-law, seventeen grandchildren, twenty-four great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandchild, and seventeen nieces and nephews.

Remembering the Armenian Genocide

This year marks the centennial anniversary of the beginning of the systematic genocide of two-thirds of the global Armenian population, the worldwide dispersion of the surviving one-third, and the continued occupation by Turkey of the bulk of this ancient civilization's indigenous homeland.

For 100 years, most of the international community has been outraged at the ongoing persecution and killing of so many minority members in Turkey just for being themselves. For 100 years, progressive and righteous governments, groups, and individuals have been denouncing Turkish plunder, confiscation, conversion, and destruction of most vestiges of Armenians' millennia-old presence across Western Armenia – de jure part of the Republic of Armenia under President Woodrow Wilson's binding Arbitral Award of 1920.

For the men, women and children of this longest-running and most-complete genocide in modern human history, it has also been 100 years of assembling shattered pieces,

building ever tight-knit families and communities, passing rich traditions to newer generations, and awakening assimilated, converted, or hidden persons. It has also been 100 years of advocating their collective rights and giving back to the individuals, societies, and nations near and far that granted them all a new chance at life.

Mayram Gulbahar was among the first offspring of survivors of the Armenian Genocide who applied great strength and courage to help raise a devastated nation up on its feet and create countless success stories out of its people. She had no formal education, professional titles, or particular wealth, but possessed the most incredible of souls. And like her mother, grandmother and progenitors prior to the beginning of the Genocide – whose names are all missing on my genealogy tree and whose fates were similar to their contemporaries – she was a living testament to the earth, water, air, and fire of Western Armenia and beyond wherever she was.

There is no finer way to celebrate her existence than to continue imparting our unique cultural heritage to future generations, supporting global genocide prevention and restorative justice initiatives, and kindling the best in those around us to help make this world a richer and kinder place for all. Nothing surpasses bringing family and friends together at each special occasion to memorialize all those who endured the impossible to make everything possible for us.

(The author, a resident of Needham, Massachusetts, specializes in international relations and diplomacy.)

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Embassy Celebrates 24th Anniversary of Independence

By Danielle Saroyan

WASHINGTON – On Thursday, October 8, the Embassy of Armenia to the United States hosted a reception in honor of Armenian Independence Day. More than 100 people gath-

Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Ambassador James Warlick, and Armenian singer Nune Yesayan.

Sargsyan explained why the 24th Anniversary of Armenia's independence is one of the most important dates on the calendar. He said, "The Armenian nation survived, the Armenian nation became even stronger and



From left, Second Secretary of the Armenian Embassy Nazeli Hambardzumyan, Armenian Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs John Heffern, Rev. Fr. Vartanes Kalajian, and Armenian Ambassador Tigran Sargsyan

ered at the embassy, including government officials from the US, Russia, Georgia, Poland and Kazakhstan.

Armenia's Ambassador to the United States Tigran Sargsyan welcomed guests to the reception, including Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs at the US State Department John Heffern, Co-Chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in

more united. And now, one hundred years later, I stand here in front of you all as the ambassador of an Independent Armenia to the United States and congratulate you on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of Armenian statehood."

Sargsyan emphasized the continuous assistance and friendship of western partners, especially the United States. He then introduced Heffern, who spoke about his tenure as the United States ambassador to Armenia from



From left, Mr. and Mrs. Keshishian, Armenian Assembly Board Member Annie Totah, Counselor to the Kazakhstan Embassy Yerlan Kubashev, and Armenian Assembly Public Affairs Associate Danielle Saroyan.

2011 to 2014 and congratulated Armenia on its independence anniversary.

Sargsyan presented medals to two guests, Jirair Nishanian and Dr. Levon Avdoyan, on behalf of the government of Armenia. Nishanian received the Medal of Gratitude, awarded for state, economic, social, scientific-technical, and public activities, as well as for major personal contribution, many years' devotion, and fruitful activities aimed at promoting the spheres of health, education, and culture.

Avdoyan, Armenian and Georgian area specialist at the Library of Congress, received the Movses Khorenatsi Medal for outstanding achievements in the



From left, NKR Representative Robert Avetisyan and his wife Elvina, Rev. Fr. Hovsep Karapetyan, and former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John Evans

spheres of culture, art, literature, education, social sciences, and sports.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Archbishop Barsamian Presides Over Weekend of Remembrance And Celebration at Sts. Vartanantz

CHELMSFORD, Mass. – The Sts. Vartanantz community recently experienced a wonderful weekend of events, presided over by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church.

On Saturday evening, under moonlit skies, the Primate blessed three Genocide Remembrance Benches engraved with some 60

Mezzo-soprano Victoria Avetisyan, and pianist Levon Hovsepian entertained the capacity filled hall with a beautiful musical interlude of popular Armenian selections.

Kesablyan was truly humbled in being honored by he archbishop and the parish. He shared the psalm by St. David, which served as a source of faith and strength to guide his spiritual journey to the priesthood and eventually to pastor: “To you O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in you I trust; Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long.”

He said, “During all these years, starting from the age of 13, serving as an altar boy at St. Mary the God Bearer church in Armenia, then enrolling in the Gevorkian Seminary at age 16, followed by serving as a Chaplain in the Military, ministering to the spiritual needs of the faithful of St. Mesrop Mashtots church in Ghapan, doing my internship at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge, serving as a visiting Pastor of the Armenian Mission Parish of Cape Cod and one of the Directors of St. Vartan Camp, and during the past eight years as pastor of this blessed church family, God being true to His word, always has been with me, helping, guiding, comforting, strengthening and showing me the



Denise Oldham and Sara Martinian, Co-Chairs of Anniversary Banquet with Bruce Kayajanian, and Carol Hildebrand, Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council

names of ancestors of local parishioners who perished during the Armenian Genocide. The benches, inspired by the church’s Memorials Committee chaired by Deacon James Magarian, were added to the churches Martyr’s Memorial. After parishioners returned to the sanctuary, the Icon of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide was then consecrated as the icon was washed with water and wine by ACYOA members, and then anointed with Holy Oil (Muron) by the archbishop.

On Sunday morning, following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, Arman Shirikyan was ordained a Clerk (Tbir) of the Armenian Church as Barsamian bestowed him with the Four Minor Orders of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church – Acolyte, Doorkeeper, Reader and Exorcist.

Prior to delivering his sermon, Barsamian honored the church’s pastor, Rev. Khachatur Kesablyan, by presenting him with a pectoral cross in recognition of 10 years of service to the Armenian Church.

Following church services, a banquet and program was held in the church’s Kazanjian Memorial Ballroom celebrating Kesablyan’s 10th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. James Kalustian, Diocesan Council Chairman and dear friend of Kesablyan’s, served as Master of Ceremonies.

Congratulatory messages were offered by banquet co-chairs, Denise Oldham and Sara Martinian; Isabelle Kapoian, ACYOA Corresponding Secretary; and Bruce Kayajanian, Parish Council chairman.

A toast was offered by Rev. David Rinas, pastor of the neighboring Trinity Lutheran Church, and Dr. Ara Jeknavorian narrated a



Bestowing of pectoral cross by Srpazan Hayr to Father Khachatur

path where to go and what to say and do. And He has done all this through you, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ.”

Kesablyan was full of gratitude and praise for his parish and especially the banquet committee.

“I wish to express my deep appreciation to the 10th Anniversary committee and all the many fine volunteers for all their hard work, long hours of preparation, and their dedication to our church to organize this magnificent event, and especially to co-chairs Denise Oldham and Sara Martinian. I feel truly blessed to serve this Diocese and this wonderful parish here in Chelmsford. Also, I could have not possibly succeeded in my mission if it were not for the tremendous support and love of my dear wife, Yerezgin Anna,” he said.

The archbishop brought the program to a close extending his congratulations to Kesablyan and the parish for a wonderful and inspirational weekend of remembrance and celebration.



Blessing of Priest’s Vestments donated by Gary and Beverly Koltokian and Chalice Veil by Yerezgin Anna Kesablyan

slide presentation about Kesablyan’s spiritual journey from ordination to pastor. The Sunday School presented him with a photo album which highlighted his ministry with the parish youth.



Correction

The *Mirror-Spectator* regrets incorrectly identifying Carmen Gulbenkian due to editorial error in the caption of a photo that appeared in the September 26 issue accompanying a story on the New York reception at the Gulbenkian residence. Above is a photo of Edward Gulbenkian, flanked by Dr. Dennis Papazian and Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, at the reception. To the right is a photo of Carmen Gulbenkian with UN Armenian Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan.



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COMMUNITY NEWS



"Menk Enk Mer Sarere"

Akh'tamar Dance Ensemble's Remarkable Performance Offers 'Rebirth'

By Hagop Vartivarian

LODI, N.J. — This year our community and most all of its organizations commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in their own unique way. Among them was NJ's Akh'tamar Dance Ensemble of the A.A.S.E.C. (The Armenian American Support and Education Center). In August, Akh'tamar Dance Ensemble traveled to Armenia and Karabagh, and performed in Gumri, Stepanakert and Yerevan, dedicating their performances to the Centennial of the Genocide. Following the success of their trip they treated the New Jersey community to a two-hour program dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide with guest performers Kevork Artinian, Ara Dinkjian and Vicken Makoushian.

The dance group is made up of 70 dancers, performing gracefully together to present an array of traditional, popular and new dances.

The ensemble's director and choreographer, Sylva Asadourian, was a dancer herself and has successfully passed on the love of Armenian dance to her dancers. Her hard work and dedication was rewarded by the almost to capacity crowd at Felician College,



Dance dedicated to the Genocide

which holds more than 1,000 spectators, on Sunday, October 4, despite the community being overscheduled this month.

The program, titled "Rebirth and Triumph," presented a nationalistic picture, mirroring the community's feelings and emotions. It was with pride that we watched this young generation, of mostly Istanbul-Armenian parents, present the love of their culture and heritage through Armenian dance and song. It was beautiful to see that our culture and traditions are

being preserved so strongly.

The program included traditional favorites such as "Moush," "Akh'tamar," "Housher" and some more popular ones such as "Menk Enk Mer Sarere" and "Hayastani Yerke." These gracefully choreographed dances and songs all played beautifully to our emotions. And, in the second half, our "Triumph" was evident with dances like "Zartir Lao" and "Celebration."

The program also included three non-Armenian folk dances, all from regions that are close to our people and culture: Russian, Georgian and Greek. These three dances added to the versatility and agility of the group.

Performing with the Ensemble was singer Kevork Artinian, with Ara Dinkjian on oud and Vicken Makoushian on keyboards. They presented an array of nationalistic, traditional and popular songs to the delight of the audience. The selection of songs were such that emote feelings of nostalgia among Armenians, favorites like *Yerevan Erepouni*, *Kele Lao*, *Azk Parabants* and *Hzor Hayastan*. These classics have become part of our national repertoire and are known by all. This was evident when the audience started to sing with Artinian and danced in the aisles. This created a very festive and joyous atmosphere!

Congratulations to the entire Akh'tamar Dance Ensemble's committee, under the leadership of Zivart Gulian and participation of Nivart Arslan, Talin Cinar, Rita Ghichlian, Maral Kilerciyan Kalishian, Jenny Koroglyuan, Talin Purut and Talar Sesetyan Sarafian.

It is also noted that the program remembered and honored the memory of Sylva Asadourian's mom, Marie Kantardjian, who passed away recently. Marie Kantardjian has had a tremendous effect on the group. Her countless hours of dedication to the ensemble and especially to the creation of the costumes over the years was remembered and honored in the booklet.

The audience left Felician College with a renewed sense of Armenian nationalism and pride.

(Translated from Armenian)



"Akhtamar"



"Country"



"Moush" little ones

Arts & Living

Serj Tankian and David Alpay Join 'Glamping with ATP' Event in Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES – Artist/activist Serj Tankian and actor David Alpay will join forces on Saturday, November 7, to celebrate Armenia Tree Project (ATP) and its mission to make sustainability for Armenia possible and to inspire environmental awareness.

The event, "Glamping with ATP," will feature an outdoor Farm Table Dinner under majestic trees atop Coldwater Canyon, at TreePeople in Beverly Hills. The event will include a musical performance by Armenian Public Radio. Glamping with ATP – glamorous camping – will satisfy the craving for the outdoors and penchant for good food and wine, in a rustic yet elegant setting.

Over the past two decades, ATP has made tremendous strides in greening Armenia by planting more than 4.7 million trees and, in the process, has created hundreds of jobs. The organization's current campaign is the Living Century Initiative, launched to commemorate the centennial of the Armenian Genocide.

"We not only plant trees in Armenia, but also work with the youngest of children to raise environmental awareness. In the same vein, we're looking to bring together environmental stewards here in order to more



Artist/activist Serj Tankian and actor David Alpay will join forces on Saturday, November 7 for a "Glamping with ATP" outdoor Farm Table Dinner under majestic trees atop Coldwater Canyon at TreePeople in Beverly Hills

effectively impact our work in Armenia," explains Maral Habeshian, ATP's West Coast development director.

Longtime friends of ATP, Tankian and Alpay are strong supporters of ATP's initiatives. Tankian is a singer, poet, songwriter and activist, and the frontman of the Grammy Award-winning rock band System of a Down that most recently conducted the cross-continental Wake Up the Souls tour to bring awareness to the Armenian Genocide.

Alpay is an actor, musician and producer, best known for playing Mark Smeaton in "The Tudors" and Professor Atticus Shane in the TV drama "The Vampire Diaries." His debut into the world of Hollywood started with his role in "Ararat," directed by Atom Egoyan.

Tickets for this Glamping event can be purchased at itsmyseat.com. The direct link for tickets is: <http://www.itsmyseat.com/events/710732.html>

For more information about the event, contact Maral Habeshian at maral@armenia-tree.org.



Narek Arutyunian

YerazArt Celebrates Music with Concert and Reception

WINCHESTER, Mass. – The volunteers of YerazArt put together yet another elegant soirée on October 3 to raise funds for young musicians in Armenia. This year the event was held at the home of Raffi and Nina Festekjian. This was the second time they hosted a YerazArt reception.

Around 100 guests were present and almost \$50,000 was raised for YerazArt's Instrument Donation Program, as well as other educational initiatives, including funding for young musicians to attend master classes and participate in international competitions.

The featured guest musician was clarinetist Narek Arutyunian. He was born in Gumri, Armenia in 1992 and moved to Moscow at a young age. He graduated from the Moscow State Conservatory and is currently a student at the Juilliard School in New York. He has won numerous prizes, including first prize in the International Young Musicians Competition in Prague and the Musical Youth of the Planet Competition in Moscow.

He has performed extensively across the United States, in Australia, Asia, and in Europe, where he appeared at the Louvre in Paris and the Palazzo del Principe in Genoa, among others.

According to YerazArt board member chair Nicole Babikian Hajjar, some schools receiving aid are in Yerevan (Tchaikovsky, Sayat Nova and Jrbashyan - 400 students) while others are in remote areas (Gumri School No 4 -171 students and No 5- 184 students).

"Our main focus remains on what we call rare instruments, mainly woodwind and brass – clarinet, trumpet, flute, trombone, French horn – disciplines that are endangered in Armenia for lack of available instruments," she said.

She also stressed that the group seeks out rural schools as Yerevan often gets more attention.

"It takes a vast amount of resources on our part to fulfill our commitment to the many young and talented musicians of Armenia: we currently have an annual operating budget of \$30,000 for our activities and operations in Armenia. With one see YERAZART, page 11



The soloist, with accompanist Nune Hakobyan, members of the YerazArt Board and the event committee members

Studio Z Hosts Exhibit on 'Armenian Artists'

PROVIDENCE – "Armenian Artists – A Rich Collection of Original Armenian Art" will be on display at the Butcher Block Mill, Through Saturday, October 17, 2015.

The exhibit ushers in Autumn at Studio Z, showcasing more than 125 original works of original art in a breadth of contemporary styles and themes from our vast array of talented established Armenian artists. These nationally and internationally renowned, living and non-living artists from four corners of the world are exhibiting their original works in Providence.

Some of the many artists on exhibit include Kevork Mourad (b.1970), three generations of Elibekian family painters, Simon Samsonian (b.1915 - d.2003), Zareh Mutafian (b.1907 - d.1980), Reuben Nakian (b.1897 - d.1986), Alexander Grigorian (b.1927 - d.2007), Hagop Hagopian (b.1923 - d.2013) and Rafael Atoyan (b.1931), Karnig Nalbandian (b.1916 - d.1989), Anoush Bargamian (b.1963), Martin Barooshian (b.1929), Seda Bekarian (b.1953), Nora Chavooshian (b.1953), Samuel Gareginyan (b.1961), Emma Gregorian (b.1943), PAKRAD (b.1939), and Levon Parian (b.1954) among numerous others.

Featured artists include Simon Samsonian, b.1915-d.2003, Alexander Grigoryan, b.1927-d.2007, Zareh Mutafian, b.1907-d.1980.

Simon Samsonian did not have a childhood. He lost his parents during the deportation and massacre of Armenia in 1915. He grew up in orphanages of Greece and Egypt. After many years of travel and tours of study, Samsonian acquired confidence and wielded his brush



Alexander O Grigorian, b. 1927 d. 2007

more freely. After a period of research he found his distinct style. Gradually he came to favor the school of cubism which he found more suited to his temperament and which he added an admixture of humanism and symbolism. He interprets nature in rich colors in the style of "symbolic cubism". The cultural periodical Park East, of New York, wrote "Simon Samsonian is a fine artist. His works have Cubist influence, but the paintings are his own superb creations. Using limpid color and contemporary subject matter he has painted landscapes, still life and portraits with strong purposeful technique."

Alexander Grigoryan, (b.1927-d.2007) was a dedicated student and follower of the world-wide known artist-painter Martiros Saryan. Grigoryan received Armenian Art's highest honor. He is endowed with a real gift of portrait painter. Grigoryan has a sharp eye, capability of searching for the model's outer and inner resemblance and at the same time he preserves the integrated painting quality of the canvas. Grigoryan does not betray nature and meanwhile doesn't merely copy what he sees. Alexander is known for portraits of famous Armenian figures. His work is represented in see GALLERYZ, page 12



ARTS & LIVING

YerazArt Celebrates Music with Concert and Reception

YERAZART, from page 10
 person only on our pay-roll, our Armenia Director Arman Padaryan, a major part of the work gets done here in Boston, thanks to a team of dedicated volunteers- my fellow Board members- that I would like to acknowledge and thank tonight: Anna Afeyan, Nina Festekjian, Vahe Ghahraman, Christine Kahvejian, Sargis Karapetyan, Seza Seraderian, Arlette Yegumians and Sylvie Zakarian," she said in her comments.

She also paid special tribute to YerazArt co-founders and continuous supporters Raffi Festekjian and Noubar Afeyan.

Hajjar was thrilled with the gathering, adding "it was a record attendance," and expressed her pleasure that the annual fundraiser has become "a signature event" in the Boston area.

Next year, she promised said the format would be different in order to pay tribute to the group's 10th anniversary.

In his comments, Festekjian said, "In my personal view, it is all about culture for us as a people Without classical music, what do we have?"

Through the music, he said, Armenians can communicate who they are to the world as well help maintain and nurture that culture in Armenia. He thanked those assembled for their support.

Hajjar said that the students who have either performed for the galas or who have been given aid in the past have all gone on to win awards internationally.

But of course, everyone had gathered to hear the evening's guest artist, Narek Arutyunian – and he did not disappoint.

Arutyunian thrilled those assembled with his incredible musical skills as well as his ease and charm. He explained how he became a clarinetist, thanks to his father's playing of folk melodies on the clarinet at weddings and his mother's love of classical music. His mother, he said, bought him a copy of Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* when he was 10 and, he said, he was "mesmerized."

He thanked YerazArt and the audience, adding, "No words can say how grateful I am [for your work] and I hope you continue."

Arutyunian performed a variety of pieces, includ-



Pianist Nune Hakobyan and clarinetist Narek Arutyunian



From left, Michael Kouchakdjian, Nicole Babikian Hajjar, Sonig Kradjian, Mihran Artinian and Ernest Barsamian

ing *Spanish Capriccio for Clarinet* by Ernesto Cavalli, *Fantasy for Piano and Clarinet* by Schumann and the third movement from *Trio for Violin, Piano and Clarinet* by Aram Khachaturian as well as a piece for violin by Pablo Sarasate which he had arranged and transcribed for the clarinet himself.

He left himself and the audience breathless and received a standing ovation.

Nune Hakobyan, his accompanist on the piano who kept up with him flawlessly, deflected any praise directed at her, adding, "With a musician like this, you get even more motivated and engaged. You have to breathe with him."

Sylvie Zakarian Meguerditchian was delighted with the performance. "I think it was amazing. I thought it was the highest level of artistry. With his enthusiasm he was able to take his audience with him."

Another guest, Armineh Mirzabegian, said, "Music unites people. Plus I had heard him play before and wanted to see him play in a more intimate setting."

Raffi Festekjian said, "He is a fantastic talent. It is the kind of talent we want to encourage."

Since its inception almost a decade ago, YerazArt Foundation has been identifying young, talented musicians from Armenia and assisting them with reaching their full artistic potential. YerazArt programs offer professional development opportunities and financial assistance to musicians to participate in master classes and international competitions.



From left, Elo Artinian, Vatche Seraderian, Raffi Festekjian and Anna Afeyan

Through YerazArt's Advisory Board, young Armenian talents gain access to an extensive support network of music professionals and academia, in Armenia and abroad, which provides mentoring, career counseling, and admission opportunities to the best music programs worldwide. Over the last few years, YerazArt has instituted a successful Instrument Donation Program, both in Yerevan and in remote areas, with a primary focus on disciplines and instruments that are in danger of extinction such as the woodwind and brass instruments.

For more information about the Yerazart Foundation and its programs, visit www.yerazart.org.

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ARTS & LIVING

Filmmaker Makes Armenia Her Home

By Tom Vartabedian

YEREVAN — High above an apartment complex in Yerevan, not far from Freedom Square and the Opera House, repatriate Adrineh Gregorian watches the world she loves to see. And admire.

It has been that way for a number of years, immersed in her beloved Armenia doing the projects that inspire the very nature of her existence.

On a clear day, she will see Mount Ararat. And with a clear mind, she will produce yet another film and one other compelling piece of art. Like the pendulum to a clock, it keeps working timelessly.

The 37-year-old has made Armenia her home for half her young life and wouldn't have it any other way. She came here by way of Hollywood, Calif., and has no immediate attentions to ever going back permanently.

Both her parents are Armenian and living in Los Angeles. So what brought her here in the first place?

"My interest is working inside a country that continues to develop," she points out. "Half my memories were made in this country. It has given more to me than I can ever give back."

That may be a modest understatement when you consider her spirit. As a filmmaker, her work "Back to Gurun," won a Special Prize at Golden Apricot. Prior to that, a documentary called "Bavakan" won critical acclaim for examining the high rate of gender-selection abortions in Armenia. It premiered at the Cannes Film Festival's Short Corner in 2013.

"I was so shocked by the kind acknowledgement from the jury president for 'Back to Gurun' that I forgot to give a speech before many Armenian politicians and artists at the closing ceremony," she groaned. "If only I could have that moment back."

The film is currently on its worldwide educational outreach tour, having covered 28 countries as part of People in Need and CaucaDoc. Eventually, it will be available on multiple platforms for larger audience appeal.

"I make documentary films that take years to complete with very little funding," she notes. "If it wasn't for a very supportive group of friends and crowd-funding on Indigogo, 'Back to Gurun' would never have been made. If people want to see more

Armenian films, they must become patrons of the arts."

Gregorian was fortunate enough to develop the film with Oscar-nominated producers at Documentary Europe 17, Doc at Work, among other workshops. One trip to Gurun was all it took to document the homeland of her family. She formed an immediate love affair with the town.

"I really felt at peace in Western Armenia and especially Gurun," she reveals. "I'm not sure if it was the thought of sleeping in the same beautiful valley as my ancestors. Or that I was filming a documentary there."

What impressed her most were the number of Armenian homes still standing, though occupied by Turks and Kurds. She enjoyed saying a simple prayer in the remaining churches or having tea in a home once owned by Armenians.

"We should not remember Western Armenia as a black hole in the map," Gregorian maintains. "The beauty alone is breathtaking — the energy palpable. I highly recommend visiting Gurun."

The film caught the attention of many including historian/genealogist Dr. Luc Baronian, who has researched his family's history through generations. The former Boston



Adrineh Gregorian

University instructor is now teaching in Canada.

"The scenes Adrineh filmed in Gurun touched me very much, especially those in Tsakh Tsor, where my own family originated," he said. "She filmed Armenian descendants still living there. I was caught by a scene with Turks from Greece living inside an Armenian home."

The 63-minute documentary follows Gregorian's journey 100 years after her grandfather fled the town as his family's sole survivor in 1915.

"The story uncovers the lasting impact of a silenced genocide from the trauma passed down from generations to the broken ties and closed borders between two nations — and one individual's search for resolution," she describes.

On a given day, Gregorian starts out with Skype. People

in Los Angeles half a day apart connect with her. Her film-making exploits absorb much of her time. Twice a week, she volunteers at Orran, an after-school program for children from disadvantaged families. Evenings are usually spent cooking with family and friends or strolling the streets of Yerevan.

There is also the artistic side. "Unbreakable Ties That Bind: Art Transcending Three Generations in One Family" represents one subject matter as seen through the eyes of different generations bound by bloodline and art.

The series is comprised of an acrylic collection of contemporary paintings reflecting her late maternal grandfather, photographer Grigor Zarookian. As an artist himself, Grigor inspired his granddaughter to reflect through the eyes of his camera lens.

An accomplished painter, her works have been exhibited in Turkey, Georgia, Armenia and the United States. She has earned degrees from UCLA and the Fletcher School at Tufts University.

In 2008, Gregorian was awarded a Fulbright Grant to study reproductive healthcare in Armenia, focusing her research on sex-selective abortion — an international burden that affected Armenia deeply over the past two decades. Her travels throughout the country have created deep awareness toward the problem.

Gregorian has also worked in acquisitions at Oprah Winfrey's cable network Oxygen Media, specializing in documentaries and international program acquisitions.

Gregorian said she has not met her, but "with some incredible, smart and diverse individuals," she said. "Back then, the network was really at the forefront of female empowerment and I'm really glad I had the opportunity to work there."

Gregorian credits much of her success to the education she received at the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School in Los Angeles from which she

graduated in 1995.

"The teachers there inspired and enriched me," she lauded. "They are still my best friends today. That bond can never be broken."

Being in Armenia for the centennial left an indelible impression with Gregorian. She went to the Tzitzernagabert Genocide Memorial with her friend Susan from Istanbul, waiting hours in line from Yerevan center to reach the eternal flame.

As anticipated, her camera worked in overdrive, filming the monumental event. The evening before found her at a System of a Down concert.

"That was one of the most incredible experiences of my life," she exclaimed.

Studio Z Hosts Exhibit on 'Armenian Artists'

GALLERYZ, from page 10

the National Gallery, Yerevan, Armenia. Grigoryan has been a Member of the Artists Union since 1959.

Zareh Mutafian (1907-1980) was an Armenian orphan of the Genocide who became a famous French painter. His whole family was massacred during the 1915 Genocide. After



Zareh Mutafian, b.1907-1980

1939 and discovering the Impressionist and Fauvist painters in the Paris museums, he altered his style upon, introducing much more the color.

As an active member of the Parisian-Armenian intelligentsia, Mutafian produced numerous books and articles, focusing on art history. Marine subjects inspired by Brittany became one of his

favorites. An exhibition of his paintings in 1965 commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the Genocide. After he was invited to Soviet Armenia in 1967, Mt. Ararat, Armenia's golden autumn and Armenia's beautiful monasteries entered his paintings. His last exhibition in France was called "The Sea" was in 1976, and in 1979, one year before his death, he organized his final exhibition, in New York, entitled "Armenia seen by Mutafian."

Mutafian's work is presented by his son Armen (Claude) Z. Mutafian, a mathematician and historian in Paris specializing in Armenian history, the author of several books on the history of Armenia and a Foreign Member of Armenian Academy of Sciences.

After two art-filled years at its current location, Studio Z is being forced by its current building owner to vacate its gallery space at the Butcher Block Mill. Gallery/Studio

Z owner and director Berge Zobian painstakingly renovated the space over a seventeen month period before opening the gallery to the public for its first exhibit in October 2013. If you are unable to attend this exhibit, please view it through <http://galleryzpro.com>.

joining the Near East Relief, first in Samsun, then Greece, he settled in Italy in 1923, where the Mekhitarist fathers enabled him to study painting at the Brera Academy. After his first exhibition in 1933, he moved to Geneva and began painting Switzerland. After marrying a French Armenian dentist in

Young Filmmaker to Appear In Beverly

BEVERLY, Mass. — Abby Alexanian of Gloucester and Waltham will appear at Glen Urquhart School in Beverly on Sunday, October 25 at 4 p.m. as part of the school's Alumni Speaker Series. Alexanian is the writer and co-producer of the soon-to-be-released feature-length documentary film, "Scars of Silence: Three Generations of Genocide," which traces her and her father's search for their Armenian identity and examines how silence about the genocide has stood in the way of healing for so many Armenian families.

Alexanian, who made the film with her father, well-known photographer Nubar Alexanian, traveled to three of the four villages where her great grandparents lived in historic Armenia, within eastern Turkey, for the project. At the Glen Urquhart event, she will show clips of the film and discuss the importance of educating students about all the genocides and mass killings in history, both to help prevent them in the future and to teach children how to discuss difficult topics. As a professional in the field of child advocacy, Alexanian believes healing from all trauma can only occur when there is openness around hurtful subjects.

The young filmmaker is a graduate of Glen Urquhart, Commonwealth School in Boston, and Vassar College. She will receive a Master of Business Administration in nonprofit management and a Master of Public Policy from the Heller School at Brandeis University in December. She then hopes to continue her work in the field of early childhood policy and advocacy.

Alexanian's appearance at Glen Urquhart is free and open to the public. Glen Urquhart School is located at 74 Hart St.



Abby Alexanian



ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 7 — Saturday, "100 Years and Flourishing," St. Peter Church Ladies Society 57th Annual Fashion Show and Luncheon, at Four Seasons, Westlake Village, CA. Details to come.

FLORIDA

JANUARY 9-17, 2016 Fort Lauderdale, Armenian Heritage Cruise XIX 2016, 8-night Caribbean Cruise aboard Royal Caribbean's Navigator Of The Seas. Travelling to: Labadee-Private beach Island/Puerto Rico/St. Kitts/St. Maarten. Cabin Rates from \$819 based on Double Occupancy, including Port Charges and ACAA registration fee. Government taxes of \$107.40 are additional. Call 1-561-447-0750 or 1-866-447-0750 Ext. 108. Ask for Gail.

MASSACHUSETTS

OCTOBER 18 — The documentary "Garod" will be shown on Sunday, 1 to 3:15 p.m., MIT Building 4, Room 163, Cambridge. The film will be in English and Armenian, with Turkish subtitles. "Garod" is about the lives and the musical stories of two Armenian musicians: A father and his son, Onnik Dinkjian and Ara Dinkjian. Onnik Dinkjian is one of the most influential Armenian singers with his unique style of singing, evoking the Anatolian Armenian sound in America. Onnik Dinkjian's family was from Diyarbakır/Dikranagert and they had to leave the country after 1915. Onnik Dinkjian was born in France and never saw his homeland until he was seventy-five. Yet he grew up in a neighborhood of Dikranagertsi Armenians listening to the stories and songs of his 'home.' For more information, see www.garoddocumentary.com

OCTOBER 18 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church's Annual Banquet honoring Deacon James M. Kalustian, as Parishioner of the Year, following church services, Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St. Cambridge. Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) presiding. During the Banquet, recognition will also be given to outgoing Parish Council members Ara Hollisian and Thomas H. Stephanian, and Diocesan Delegates, Gerald Ajemian and David DerVartanian. Dinner donation is \$35. Seating by advance paid reservation only with a RSVP deadline of October 13. For further information, call the church office, 617.354.0632, or log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/110/>.

OCTOBER 18 — Resilient Voices: 1915 - 2015, a concert commemorating the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, 3 p.m. at Jordan Hall of the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston. Presented by the Boston Modern Orchestra Project and the Friends of Armenian Culture Society and featuring the Boston premiere of Tigran Mansurian's Requiem. Also music by Komitas, Hovhanness and Shostakovich. Nareh Arghamanyan, piano; Gil Rose, conductor. For tickets and information, send e-mail to info@facsboston.org or visit www.FACSBoston.org.

OCTOBER 22 — 2015 Najarian Lecture on Human Rights at Faneuil Hall, Boston. 7:30 p.m. In Commemoration Of The Armenian Genocide Centennial - Honoring America's Call To Action: Then & Now - Peter Balakian, Donald M. and Constance H. Rebar Professor, Colgate University; author, *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response*; a short play by Joyce Van Dyke commissioned for this lecture and Sarah Leah Whitson, Executive Director, Middle East & North Africa Division, Human Rights Watch. A reception follows at the Millennium Bostonian Hotel. The annual lecture is supported by Armenian Heritage Park's K. George and Carolann S. Najarian Endowed Fund. For details, please email info@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

OCTOBER 24 — Armenian Friends of America presents "Hye Kef 5," dinner-dance, 7 p.m.-midnight, DiBurro's Function Hall, 887 Boston Road, Ward Hill (Haverhill). Dinner served promptly at 7:30. Music by Mal Barsamian/Johnny Berberian Ensemble. Tickets \$50 by reservation only. Call either John Arzigian (603) 560-3826; Lucy Sirmaian (978) 683-9121; Sandy Boroyan (978) 251-8687, or Peter Guzelian (978) 375-1616. Proceeds to benefit area Armenian churches.

OCTOBER 24 — Fall Harvest Bazaar, Saturday, 12 noon

to 8pm, First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. Handmade choreg, manti, Armenian pastries and more. Grilled kebab all day. Marketplace treasures. All are welcome, rain or shine. MBTA and handicapped accessible. Information:617-489-4779.

OCTOBER 25 — 2nd Annual Holy Trinity Tailgate, 12 p.m.-4:30 p.m., Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. All are welcome to a tailgate party to watch the New England Patriots vs. New York Jets game, which begins at 1 p.m., on the 12-foot screen. Lots of food, beverages and snacks. Sponsored by the "Trinity Men's Union." For further information, contact the Church office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

OCTOBER 25 — Armenian Genocide 100th Anniversary Memorial Concert, 4 p.m., Mechanics Hall, 321 Main Street. Worcester. Sunday, Co-Sponsored by Master Singers Of Worcester and Armenian Church Of Our Saviour with performances by the combined choruses of the Master Singers and the Greater Worcester Armenian Singers plus a children's chorus and a children's dance group. Tickets: \$25.00 adults, \$20.00 seniors and students. For information call 508-756-2931.

OCTOBER 29-NOVEMBER 7 — "Daybreak," Joyce Van Dyke's play about two women who were best friends and survivors of the Armenian Genocide, will be produced at Tufts University in the Balch Arena Theater, directed by Barbara W. Grossman. (The play was previously produced under the title, "Deported / a dream play"). Performances are October 29-30 at 8 p.m., October 31 at 2 p.m., November 5-7 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for general public, \$10 for seniors, and \$1 on November 5. For tickets call the box office, 617.627.3493, M-F, 9 am-5 pm.

OCTOBER 29 — Annual Fall Dinner and Drawing sponsored by the Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club, 6:30 p.m., Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Open to all - join us for a delicious losh kebab and pilaf dinner, \$7.99 per person; tickets on sale at the door. Regular monthly raffle drawing at 8 p.m. plus 5 additional cash prizes. "One-time" numbers will be sold on the night of dinner; special offer: purchase five "one-time" numbers for \$20, save \$5. For further info, contact the Holy Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632.

NOVEMBER 6 — Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge of Boston 2015 Awards Gala, Vartan Mamigonian Man of the Year Honoring James Kalustian, Shushanik Mamigonian Woman of the Year Joyce Van Dyke, Mamigonian Family Community Leader Joseph Ashjian (Posthumously) & Mrs. Alice Ashjian, Apo & Arlette Ashjian & Family, Hagop & Arpie Ashjian & Family, Vahan Mamigonian Young Leaders Award Sona Ashjian, Zareh Zurabyan, Michael Demirchian, Armine Afeyan, Karina Demurchyan; Ghevont Yeretz Faithful Knight George Haroutunian. Oakley Country Club, Watertown, Reception at 7 o'clock, Dinner at 8 o'clock - Surf and Turf. Tickets - \$100 per person. Black Tie Optional. For Reservations Email: araratgala@knightsofvartan.org.

NOVEMBER 6 and 7 — Annual Autumnfest Bazaar sponsored by the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe, 110 Main St, Haverhill, Friday 12 - 8 pm and Saturday 12 - 7 pm. Lamb, Losh, Chicken Kebab and Kheyra. Dinner served all day. Pastry table, Armenian cuisine, gift baskets, raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org or call (978) 372-9227.

NOVEMBER 6-7 — St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church 59th Annual Bazaar. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown. Meals served from 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Takeout is available. Delicious meals. Armenian pastries. Gourmet Gift Shoppe. Raffles. Attic Treasures. Live auction at 7 p.m. For more information, call the church at (617) 924-7562.

NOVEMBER 5 — Avak luncheon, noon, St. Gregory Armenian Church, 158 Main St., North Andover. Speaker, Ruth Thomasian, executive director, Project SAVE Photographic Archives, "Forty Years of Preserving Armenian History Through Photographs."

NOVEMBER 9 — Trinity Men's Union Dinner and Meeting, 6pm, Social Hour, 7 p.m., Dinner; Johnson Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Guest Speaker: Mark Kolligian, "The State of the Nation's Healthcare System." Open to all. Donation for losh kebab and kheyra dinner is \$15. RSVP by November 8 to tmuhtaac@gmail.com or the Holy

Trinity Church office, 617.354.0632.

NOVEMBER 10 — Nowhere, A Story of Exile, book presentation by author Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte recounting her family's escape from Baku in 1989 to Armenia and then to America. Armenian Cultural Foundation, Arlington. Reception 7 p.m., program 8 p.m. Open to the public free of charge. Armenian International Women's Association New England Affiliate Resilient Women Series. Info:aiwanewengland@aol.com.

NOVEMBER 14 — Holiday Arts & Crafts Fair, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Jaffarian Hall, St. Gregory Armenian Church, 158 Main St., North Andover; handcrafted items by local crafters & artisans; light lunch served; further details, Dorothy (978) 686-7769 or Rose (978) 256-0594.

NOVEMBER 15 — Razmik Mansourian — Live in Concert with Albert Bulbulyan and Hovhannes Meghrilyan, 5 p.m., Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Tickets are \$35 and \$40; advance purchase recommended. For tickets or further information, call 617.842.6552,781.241.2118, or 617.458.0903, or log onto Holy Trinity's website,www.htaac.org/calendar/event/148/. Proceeds to benefit the Holy Trinity Armenian School.

NOVEMBER 21 — An evening with Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, Inc., Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library (previously National Heritage Museum), 33 Marrett Road, Lexington, celebrating 40 years and beyond. Reservations and information, call (617) 923-4542 or www.ProjectSAVE.org.

NOVEMBER 21 — Presentation of a new book and book signing of Muron Scented Whispers by Monsignor Andon Atamian, new of the Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church. Presentation by Avik Derentz Deirmenjian, 7 p.m., Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church, Atinizian Hall, 200 Lexington St., Belmont. Reception to follow.

DECEMBER 4, and DECEMBER 5 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Mark your calendars; details to follow. For further information, contact the church office at 617-354-0632 or email office@htaac.org.

DECEMBER 13 — Christmas Holiday Concert — Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, 7 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, MA. Save the date; details to follow.

DECEMBER 31 — St. James 2016 New Year's Eve Celebration. Entertainment by Arthur Apkarian and Band from Montreal. Save the date, details to follow. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

MICHIGAN

NOVEMBER 1 — Tekeyan Cultural Association and the Cultural Society of Armenians from Istanbul will host a tribute to community leader and architect Osep Sarafian. Sarafian and his wife, Nadya, the retired principal of the AGBU school, have been active in the community since 1980. He has visited Armenia more than 40 times to raise money for specific projects through the World Bank. The program will be at South John Armenian Church Cultural Hall, 22001 Northwestern, Southfield, starting at 6 pm., dinner at 7 pm. Musical interlude with opera singer Solange Merdinian. \$50 per person donation. To RSVP call Karine Koundakjian (248) 761-9744, Diana Alexanian (248) 334-3636 or Sylva Sagherian (248) 592-0825.

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 18 — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church - Name Day Banquet to be held following church services in the Egavian Cultural Center. Honoring Parishioners of the Year: William Aznavourian, Hagop Boghosian, Jasper Der Ananian, Agnes Killabian, Bertha Mugurdichian and Lucy Muradian. Tickets: Adults \$20, Children (under 15) \$10. For tickets contact Ann Ayrassian (401-272-4743) istanbul27@verizon.net or Church Office (401-272-7712) office @stsahmes.org Deadline for ticket sales: October 13. no tickets sold at the door.

NOVEMBER 7 and 8 — Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church 85th annual food fair and bazaar Saturday November 7, 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday, November 8, noon to 6 p.m. in the Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence, RI or visit www.ArmenianFoodFairRI.com



COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

What's in the Kurdish Aspirations for The Armenians?

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The Kurds in the Middle East are within a hair's breadth of reaching their historic national aspirations; Iraqi Kurdistan is already a political reality because Iraq's territorial integrity has been compromised to a nominal value only and the province of Kurdistan operates as a sovereign state within a fractured federation.

The partition of Iraq is a fact; the three entities it comprises it are held together out of political expediency for and by the forces which dominate the scene in the Middle East.

In the first place, the West is temporarily assuaging Turkish fears of a rising independent Kurdistan. The other component of the Kurdish drive for independence is the recapture of the Kobani region in Syria, by local Kurdish forces, creating another threat to exacerbate Ankara's projected fears in the region.

But the main battle is fought within Turkey itself. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan precipitously abandoned peace negotiations with the Kurds and unleashed a war against the latter both in Turkey and Iraq with the short-term goal of intimidating the Kurds and gaining a parliamentary majority in the November 1 elections.

Although the Kurds, including jailed PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan, had compromised their political goals by settling for autonomy within the Turkish state versus full independence to facilitate peace negotiations, Mr. Erdogan threw aside his gains in his rush to win the elections. The bloody war that ensued may have some unintended consequences, which may include full Kurdish independence.

At that point, a historical Pandora's box will be opened, as the Kurds will try to revive the Sevres Treaty, which had promised them independence. The same treaty, of course, has provisions for the Armenians. But since the Armenians were wiped out of their ancestral lands, it would not be easy for them to validate their treaty rights, while the Kurds have been inhabiting the territory, winning 90 percent of the argument.

Though there are no official statistics from the Ottoman era, the Kurdish and Armenian populations in the empire seemed to be roughly equal. Today, the Kurds are estimated to constitute one third of Turkey's population, accounting for 20-25 million people.

During the Ottoman era, the Kurds came to rule over semi-independent principalities in historic Western Armenia. Ottoman modernization and centralization efforts directed against them were supported by the Armenians with the promise of forthcoming reforms, but as soon as the principalities were defeated the Armenians were cast aside. The Armenians attempted to involve the Kurds at times in their efforts at cultural and political progress. Attempts were made to use the Armenian alphabet for writing Kurdish, and some of the Armenian political parties at the end of the 19th century wanted to work for the liberation of oppressed Kurdish as well as Armenian peasants.

Nevertheless, the Kurds were used conveniently by the Sultan to expropriate the wealth of Armenians as well as massacre them. They also became executioners in the hands of the Ittihadists who organized the Genocide of the Armenians on their historic lands. Only a small part of the Kurdish population helped save some Armenian lives.

The Kurds as a group only realized that they had been ill-used when Kemal Ataturk rose to power and began his racist policy of homogenizing Turkey's population.

As Hitler was clamoring for power in Europe to develop and implement his theory of Aryan supremacy, Ataturk was already at work on the same policy. His motto was "Ne Mutlu Turkum Diyene," which roughly translates to "envy the person who claims to be a Turk."

Of course, there was no room in this paradigm for the Kurds and the Alevis, who were being persecuted and whose identities were being denied.

After the Kurds realized that they had been betrayed, they began to apologize to the Armenians and began to protect the

surviving Armenians, even when they were being bombed into submission during the 1930s.

Armenians have seldom banked on Kurdish resentment against the Turks. They have even less participation in their fight against the Turks. Although the Kurds have been apologizing to the Armenians in individual or group bases, they still don't have a sovereign entity that can subscribe to that apology. We may guess what kind of policy that virtual entity may adopt but we do not have a claim of any participation in their struggle.

The Kurds themselves did not maintain sufficient documentation about their participation in the atrocities perpetrated against the Armenians.

Prof. Nikolay Hovhannisyan, one of the few Arabists among Armenian historians, has reviewed a book in the October 2 edition of *Azg* newspaper in Armenia. The book was written by a Kurdish historian in Iraq and published in Arabic in 1977 in Baghdad. The author, Kamal Mazhar Ahmed, does not mince his words in portraying the Kurdish participation in the persecution of the Armenians in Turkey, but he tries to shed light on the historic contradictions which have led to Kurdish association with the ruling power.

First, he dwells on the factors which united the Armenians and the Kurds, chief among them being exploitation by the government. But dividing factors outnumber those unifying them. There is the religious factor, which has been used to pit the two against each other. Then there was the policy of the Sultan to divide and rule. The historian underscores that the Armenians were advanced in terms of education and had amassed considerable capital, whereas the Kurds were the opposite. He also mentions that the Sultan encouraged fears that the Armenians may aspire toward independence.

The Hamidian military units which the Sultan had created to quell ethnic unrest were mostly composed of Kurds.

The author does not justify the Kurdish role in the Armenian massacres, as he writes in his conclusion: "We have to confess that blind fanaticism and cultural backwardness were those two major factors which motivated the Kurdish majority to participate in the extermination of the *giavurs* (literally heathens, meaning Armenians)."

At the conclusion of his review, Hovhannisyan mentions his discussion with a Kurdish activist, a PKK representative in the former Soviet republics, to whom he has posed a question about the future Kurdistan: "How do you and your party figure out the creation of a future Kurdistan? What territory do you have in mind?" Guessing the thrust of my question, the Kurdish leader answered that their leader Öcalan believes that the Kurds and Armenians are friends; when the time comes, everything will be revealed.

Professor Hovhannisyan, frustrated by the ambivalent answer, remembers French

statesman Charles Talleyrand about the ruling French dynasty, the Bourbons, that "They have not forgotten anything and they have not learned anything."

This pretty much outlines the prospect that Armenians should bear in mind as history moves towards the creation of an independent Kurdistan in the heartland of historic Armenia.

My more recent personal experience sheds more light on Kurdish aspirations. During the centennial commemorations, many Turks and Kurds arrived in Yerevan to publicly apologize to the Armenians for the Genocide. They placed wreaths at Tsitsernakaberd, and even cried with the Armenians. I was staying at the same hotel with the Kurdish groups and thus we had many discussions about the ongoing political situation in Turkey. During one of our discussions, I asked a direct question to one of the Kurdish leaders: "I know that at this time the odds are against the Armenians receiving their territorial rights in present-day Turkey, but at least in principle, what is their perception of Armenian claims?"

The Kurdish leader looked into my eyes and said, "You mean to say that after so much bloodshed, we have to take those lands and turn them over to the Armenians?"

Therefore, the Armenians must not hold their breath as to what Öcalan has to "reveal;" we already know his answer.

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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Who Should Demand Armenian Territories from Turkey?

I just became aware of an important interview President Serge Sargsian had given to Turkish journalist Cansu Camlibel of Hurriyet newspaper on April 24, 2015 in Yerevan. The article was buried under the avalanche of media coverage during the commemorations of the Armenian Genocide Centennial.

Here are key excerpts from President Sargsian's lengthy interview as published in the Turkish Daily News, the English edition of Hurriyet:

– The President rightly pointed out that “the emotional and non-diplomatic reaction of the Turkish leadership [to Pope Francis's acknowledgment of the Armenian Genocide in The Vatican on April 12] was yet another proof that Turkey continued its policy of evident denial pursued at a state level, thus taking upon it the burden of the responsibility for the crime perpetrated by the authorities of the Ottoman Empire.”

– “As a mighty power and champion of democratic values, the United States has on numerous occasions stated its position regarding the Armenian Genocide. Out of 51 US constituent states 44 recognized and condemned the Armenian Genocide. Throughout history various American presidents, such as Ronald Reagan, Gerald Ford, described the atrocities

against the Armenian people as genocide. Even those US presidents, that had not used the word ‘genocide’ during their tenure, had used that term while campaigning. It means that they never questioned the veracity of what had happened, and only due to certain political considerations refrained from uttering the word ‘genocide.’” While President Sargsian correctly characterized US recognition of the Armenian Genocide, there were a couple of inaccuracies in his answer: The United States has 50, not 51 states; and Gerald Ford acknowledged the Armenian Genocide as a Congressman, before becoming President.

– “The Turkish proposal of establishing the so-called commission of historians has only one goal, which is to delay the process of the Armenian Genocide recognition, and divert the attention of international community from that crime. That is not only our view but also the view of the international community that goes on recognizing and condemning the Armenian Genocide. The protocols contain no clause of establishing any commission on historical studies. The respective paragraph in the protocol envisages a dialogue aimed at restoring mutual confidence between the two nations, which entailed the establishment of a sub-commission. Throughout the negotiations, the Armenian side has stressed on numerous occasions at various levels also to the Turkish side that the veracity of the genocide cannot be questioned under any circumstances.” Armenians who opposed to the Protocols, including this writer, had made similar objections.

– “It is already the sixth year since the protocols have been signed: when is the expedient time? ...The years past have demonstrated that Turkey is looking forward not to some convenient moment, but instead is trying to prevent the manifestation of the unambiguous position of the international community on the Armenian Genocide by imitating a process of the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement, claiming that recognitions were something that hindered the reconciliation. The process of the Armenian-Turkish reconciliation was launched

upon my initiative, and pursued a very simple goal – to establish diplomatic relations without any preconditions, and unseal the last closed border in Europe, safeguarding peaceful and neighborly coexistence of our nations. Unfortunately, the lack of political will on the part of the Turkish authorities, distortion of the letter and spirit of the protocols, fresh manifestations of denial, and continuously brought up preconditions intended to feed groundless demands of Azerbaijan thwarted the implementation of the protocols.... After six years of unfulfilled expectations, I have decided to recall the protocols from the parliament. On one occasion I said the Armenians are not going to wait indefinitely for the Turkish authorities to be able to find a convenient moment to finally ratify those protocols.” In my opinion, the Armenian Foreign Minister should immediately withdraw his signature from the Protocols and declare them obsolete.

– “The Republic of Armenia has never declared any territorial claims either on Turkey or any other country since our independence. There has never been such an issue on the foreign policy agenda of our country, and there is none today. That is a clear-cut position.”

If not read carefully, President Sargsian's last answer could easily be misunderstood. He is neither saying that Armenia has territorial claims from Turkey nor that it does not! Armenia simply has not raised this issue officially because doing so could have serious national security implications given its powerful and hostile neighbor on the Western Front. Political parties, organizations, and individuals like this writer have frequently made territorial claims from Turkey, but it is understandable that Armenia's Head of State has to be much more circumspect in his public pronouncements.

President Sargsian stated several years ago that he leaves the pursuit of Armenian territorial claims to a future generation, which implies that Armenia does indeed have territorial demands from Turkey.

LETTERS

Why Pick on Republicans?

To the Editor:

To paraphrase President Ronald Reagan “There you go again Mr. Azadian.” Of course I'm referring to the fact that Mr. Azadian uses his platform to continue to bash the Republican Party and candidates. He tries to validate his dislike by misrepresenting their mindset, positions and priorities. I was under the impression that his editorials were supposed to focus on Armenian issues. Oh yes, he covers himself at the end of his misrepresentation of the facts by stating that Trump's Republican rivals “are ready to tear up the Iran nuclear deal and bomb the world”. He then goes on to caution Armenian voters to be “vigilant” as to who they vote for as they may be “warmongers” and “spread devastation in regions where Armenians live.” He also touts President Obama's accomplishments. Where do I begin?

I seem to recall that Azadian along with many of our organizations pulled all the stops

to make sure that Armenians voted for Barack Obama since they were sure that he would keep his promise to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide. We all know how well that worked out. Right after taking office Obama went on an apology tour putting down America. The result is that our friends don't trust us and our enemies don't fear us. In the six + years that Obama has been president, there is more chaos and turmoil in the world. He has destabilized a stable Iraq by pulling out our troops instead of listening to military experts; allowed Isis (aka the JV according to him) to expand its reign of terror; was supposedly asleep and wasn't awakened when our ambassador and diplomats were begging for help in Libya resulting in the death of four Americans. Then to add insult to injury he encouraged his people to lie about the cause of the attack. Oh, and let's not forget the fact that the Turkish backed rebels in Syria are targeting the Christian community, killing them and destroying their infrastructure without pressure from our president to stop it. Let us also not forget to mention the IRS debacle, Fast and Furious and mishandling the V.A. Hospitals. Despite his poor judgment in promoting Obama, Azadian claims that voting for any of the Republican candidates is “chilling.” What is “chilling is blindly voting according to party lines, not once but twice, no matter how inexperienced and incompetent the candidate is. Didn't Einstein define insanity as “doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result”?

At least Azadian tells the truth about Hillary Clinton but what the Democrats are left with is Bernie Sanders, a socialist, unless of course Joe Biden who suffers from “foot in mouth” disease throws his hat into the ring. Azadian and most people who watched the Republican debates must be on a parallel universe. He continues to try to prove his point by quoting David Brooks' characterization of Donald Trump when everyone knows that the New York Times is a very liberal paper and what would anyone expect from a journalist like him. Who knows if Donald Trump will be or should be the Republican nominee, but he has given rise to a much needed conversation about illegal immigration, a problem that is wreaking havoc on our economy. If Azadian were actually well versed on the stats in California, as one example, proving how illegal immigrants are depleting our resources,

perhaps facts instead of opinions, might prevent him from putting down the Republican candidates' mindset on the issue. Instead he touts the Democrat party platform whose candidates will exacerbate the problem for their own purposes. It's grist for their mill to allow as many illegal immigrants to stay in this country, give them all the entitlements they need thus adding to our outrageous and dangerous deficit, put them on a fast track to citizenship and then sit back and enjoy a one party system.

I think that it's a given that hindsight being 20/20 the Iraq war should never have been fought. Everyone blames George Bush as the president who declared it but let's not forget that Hillary Clinton, John Kerry, and Joe Biden all voted to go to war based on the same faulty intelligence. Our allies bought into it as well. According to Azadian it cost us two trillion dollars which was nothing compared to the price paid by those who died and were injured. But let's also remember that Obama referred to the deficit under Bush as being “criminal” and then he proceeded to more than double it. Obama's economic missteps don't end there. Obama Care is a disaster for the middle class and the unemployment rate is misleading and doesn't address all those who stopped looking for work. Azadian touts Obama's foreign policy achievements such as Cuba. Here both Obama and Azadian show moral selectivity. Obama freely refers to the Holocaust, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Darfur as Genocides but not the events of 1915 as Genocide. Similarly Obama gives Cuba a free pass for the tens of thousands of Cubans Castro killed and evidently, so too, does Azadian.

Finally, Azadian alludes to people who vote for Republican candidates as doing so because they have money. How does he explain the Kennedys, George Soros, and the Hollywood elite? Perhaps the reason isn't money but some Independent voters like myself actually make educated decisions and vote for the most qualified candidate as opposed to being ideologues. He continues to state that “US citizens...do not see nor care what their elected officials do in planning America's foreign policy” Perhaps that's true in light of the fact that President Obama never had a foreign policy and hence his failed presidency.

Adrienne Alexanian
NYC, NY

Armenia's Outdated Mental Health Laws

By Marianna Grigoryan

YEREVAN (Guardian) – Women recount being forcibly sent to psychiatric hospitals by family members relying on leftover Soviet legislation

It started as a family row over property. Julietta Amarikian and her brother were arguing about a flat they had jointly inherited from their parents. She wanted to sell and share the proceeds; he wanted her to move out so he could live there with his wife.

The conflict escalated and Amarikian says her brother, unable to get his way, threatened to have her committed to a psychiatric institution if she would not cooperate.

She did not take him seriously at first but when police and medics in white gowns arrived at her door a few days later, she realised he had not been joking.

The 54-year-old says she was taken by force to a Yerevan mental health clinic where she was held for a month against her will. “They locked me up and left me,” she says. “No one even examined me. I was terrified. I thought it was the end of me.

“I have never had problems with my mental health,” she adds. “I only had problems with my brother.”

Human rights workers say that Amarikian's experience is not unique in Armenia, where it is all too easy to have someone declared mentally incompetent in a holdover from Soviet times.

Under Armenian law, one phone call to the police or a psychiatric institution claiming that someone is a risk to themselves or others is enough to have them hospitalised. If the person refuses to be admitted, the hospital can apply to a court for a mandatory treatment order – without the patient being represented.

An examination by a “psychiatric commission” is required within 72 hours of the order, but staff from the same hospital usually make up the panel. There is no requirement to periodically review the decision.

Not only is the law open to abuse, human rights workers claim there are see MENTAL HEALTH, page 16

Kudos to Edmond Azadian

To the Editor:

For a very long time I have wanted to drop you a laudatory line after reading one of your editorials, but have failed to. Now, after this current one – on all the presidential candidates – my enthusiasm for your tone, poise, clarity, balance and detailed evaluation compels me to write these few lines to you. Many, many thanks. The *Mirror-Spectator* is fortunate to have you in its pages week after week as we, your readers are, to help guide us through the jungle of this oft times highly confusing presidential campaign. I am looking forward with great eagerness to your analysis next week.

Ed Alexander

(Ed Alexander is an author and retired State Department Foreign Service Officer.)



2015 Frankfurt Book Fair: New Studies on Armenia

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who the Young Turk perpetrators were, what motivated their search for the “final solution” to the Armenian problem and much more. And it leaves no room for doubt that this was indeed genocide, the case which Lemkin in fact used to formulate the juridical definition of this crime. One criticism raised by several reviewers is that the author has left the matter of German complicity virtually untouched.

The Survivors Speak Out

No matter how detailed and exhaustive such historical studies may be, in presenting the facts of the genocide, it is the personal accounts of those who miraculously survived which open the hearts and minds of modern day readers to the human dimension of what has been called an “unspeakable” tragedy. Among the books in this category released this year in Germany is the volume referenced above, by Mirhan Dabag and Kristin Platt, *Verlust und Vermächtnis, Überlebende des Genozids an den Armeniern erinnern sich* (“Loss and Legacy: Armenian Genocide Survivors Recollect”). Professor Dabag, who is director of the Institute for Diaspora and Genocide Research at the Ruhr University in Bochum, and his colleague Dr. Kristin Platt, psychologist and trauma researcher, conducted 140 interviews in an oral history project in France, Holland, Italy and Cyprus, in the Armenian language, between 1989 and 1996. The seven personal memoirs they selected for publication in German trans-

lation come from Armenian men and women between 80 and 95 years old. Their recollections are as moving as archaic tragedies, expressed sometimes in laconic, factual terms – “We were like animals. We could not think.” – and sometimes in poetical force – “Men fell like fruits from a mulberry tree. Like mulberries they fell. The fell and they died. Without sound, without cry...” The book is not only a gripping historical document but a literary gem, the reviewer writes.

One of the earliest personal accounts of the genocide is by Pailadzo Captanian, published in 1919. Just released in Germany, titled, *1915 Der Völkermord an den Armeniern. Eine Zeugin berichtet* (“1915 The Armenian Genocide. An Eyewitness Report”), its value, like that of other early such testimonies, lies not in its literary greatness but in its stark realism. What motivated her was the desire to provide other survivors with a truthful account of what occurred, and to urge “the civilized nations” to ensure that justice be done. Her saga, in short entries in a diary, tells of house searches in April 1915 in Samsun, followed by orders for Armenians to leave their homes in July, then offers to convert and be saved – an option she disdained and condemned. She details the horrors of the deportation marches, the rape of girls, hunger, thirst, death. Through a series of fortuitous incidents, the author manages to escape death and eventually to be reunited with family members. As is common in this early genocide literature, the author indulges often in stereo-

types, presenting the Turks as brutal, inhumane and obsessed with possessions. The Germans fare no better, as she sees them as ultimately responsible. And, typical of this literature, her message is one of revenge. Yet optimism in the end prevails as she expresses her belief that a new Armenia will blossom and justice will be done.

Though not strictly speaking a survivor’s memoir, the little volume by Dr. Hagop Martin Deranian, *President Calvin Coolidge and the Armenian Orphan Rug*, has also recently appeared in a German translation. The publisher, Schiler-Verlag, has issued numerous books on Armenia, among them works by Hrant Dink, my book *Through the Wall of Fire: Armenia, Iraq, Palestine: From Wrath to Reconciliation*, and this year, a brand new translation of 28 poems by Paruyr Sevak, which will be presented this month in Yerevan as well.

German-Armenian Relations – From Enmity to Friendship

If the thrust of the newest studies in the German language has been to shed light on the German role in the genocide, a topic which had been taboo for many years, this most welcome development can only have a positive impact on relations – already friendly and fruitful – between Berlin and Yerevan. And on the occasion of the centenary, recognition of the history of German-Armenian relations has played an important function in defining and confirming deep-rooted cultural and historical ties. Among the organizations dedicated to strengthening this relationship is the Deutsch-Armenische

Gesellschaft (DAG - German-Armenian Society), which celebrated its centenary in 2014, with a Festschrift. Already before the First World War there were important scientific and academic contacts, the most illustrious being that of the composer Komitas who studied in Berlin. When the reforms in the Ottoman Empire promoted by the DAG came to naught, and the genocide began, the association moved to assist survivors and inform world public opinion on the fate of the Armenians. In the period after the war, the DAG began to focus on developing relations between the two countries and has organized conferences and seminars, which have become an integral part of the discussion process in Germany.

The history of German-Armenian relations goes back even farther in history, much farther than one might think. Azat Ordukanyan, a historian and doctoral candidate at the Ruhr University Bochum, is head of the Deutsch-Armenische Akademische Verein, the oldest German-Armenian organization. In a pamphlet first published in 2008, Ordukanyan tells the totally unknown story of the relations between Armenian and Germans, between Armenia and Germany, reaching far back in history. There are numerous German saints who are regularly honored in church services, for example, but no one knows that they were Armenians. Or who knows that the marriage of German Emperor Otto II with Theophanu, a Byzantine-Armenian princess, in the 10th century would bring together the German Roman empire with Byzantium?

A Special Tekeyan “Soccer” Movie Night

featuring...

Christiano Ronaldo & Henrikh Mkhitaryan



Christiano Ronaldo



Henrikh Mkhitaryan

Join us at Michigan’s premier indoor soccer arena, Ultimate Soccer, to enjoy and be inspired by the stories of two great athletes; Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Christiano Ronaldo.

First, enjoy a short film on highlights from the career of professional Armenian footballer **Henrikh Mkhitaryan**—Armenia’s all time top goal scorer since his debut in January 2007. He has been chosen “Armenian Footballer of the Year” five times.

Then we will screen a documentary “The World at his Feet” on soccer player **Christiano Ronaldo** who made his international debut for Portugal in August 2003, at the age of 18. He has since been capped over 100 times and has participated in 6 major tournaments: three UEFA European Championships (2004, 2008 and 2012) and three FIFA World Cups (2006, 2010 and 2014). Ronaldo is the first Portuguese player to reach 50 international goals, making him Portugal’s top goal-scorer of all time as well as the country’s top scorer in the European Championship with 6 goals. He scored his first international goal in the opening game of Euro 2004 against Greece, and helped Portugal reach the final. He took over captaincy in July 2008, and he led Portugal to the semi-finals at Euro 2012, finishing the competition as joint-top scorer in the process. In November 2014, Ronaldo became the all-time top scorer in the UEFA European Championship (including qualifying) with 23 goals.

We would like to extend special thanks to George Derderian, Jr., for the use of Ultimate Soccer Arenas



Open to the public—\$5/person
Friday, November 13—doors open 7 pm
Movie begins at 7:30 pm sharp
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follow the signs at main entrance to conference room
for more information call Hagop at (248) 302-7576

Refreshments are available and can be purchased in the first floor Arena Grill & Café and can be brought into our meeting room.

Wine and Spirits also available on second level.

Funds raised from these events support the Tekeyan “Sponsor a Teacher” program supporting schools in Armenia and Karabagh

Mental Health in Armenia

MENTAL HEALTH, from page 15

perverse incentives for institutions to admit people unnecessarily.

Hospitals are paid 6,000 drams (about €11) a day for each inpatient – a significant amount in a country where the official state pension is 16,000 drams a month.

According to the data provided by the Armenian judicial department, 1,367 people were ruled mentally incompetent between 2008 and 2014. Of these, 247 were committed to psychiatric institutions against their will.

The Armenian state deputy ombudsman, Tatevik Khachatryan, believes the legislation requires complete revision.

“We have registered cases when people with no mental illness were locked away in institutions where they were tied up and abused,” Khachatryan said.

Artur Sakunts, head of the Armenian branch of the human rights NGO Helsinki Citizen’s Assembly, said his organization had documented cases of forced committals being used to solve conflicts over property, inheritance or relationships.

“The situation is disturbing,” said Sakunts. “A person might be completely healthy but just one phone call from relatives, neighbors or someone else who has a grudge against them could lead to them being picked up by police and locked up in a psychiatric institution.”

Amarikyan was lucky. A human right activist visiting the clinic became aware of her case and helped her launch a court appeal to secure her release.

“With our help Julietta Amarikyan was able to overturn the court’s decision and was released,” said Marietta Temurian, of the Helsinki Citizen’s Narine Avetisian was not as fortunate. The 46-year-old spent six years in a psychiatric institution after falling out with her family. Avetisian says it started when she was raped by a relative at 14 and tried to press charges.

“My mother was telling me to keep quiet,” she said. “No one believed me. When I was 15 I was sent to a psychiatric clinic upon [a family member’s] request.”

The teenager managed to escape from the institution, and eventually left Armenia to live in Denmark. She returned 30 years later to confront her rapist, and her story was made the subject of a popular television show.

The government seems prepared to admit that this is a concern. “The more we develop the legislation to make it more accessible and clear, the more the patients will benefit.”

For Amarikyan, reforms cannot come soon enough. “All I wanted was to live in a corner of my own but [institutionalization] I have no idea what will happen to me next. Every moment I fear that all that horror is not over.”