

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Delegation in Dubai Meets with Energy Leaders

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian minister of territorial administration and infrastructures Suren Papikyan met with Chair of the World Energy Council Younghoon David Kim on September 9 in Abu Dhabi on the sidelines of the 24th World Energy Congress, the ministry announced.

During the meeting the officials discussed the future cooperation directions between the organization and Armenia's national committee.

Papikyan invited Kim to Armenia to get acquainted with the energy opportunities of the country.

Armenian Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates Mher Mkrtumyan accompanied the minister during the tour in the expo of the Congress.

### Armenia's Tumo to Open Branch in Tokyo

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The Tumo Center for Creative Technologies – a free of charge digital media learning hub in Armenia – is opening a branch in Tokyo, Japan, according to a Facebook post by the center on September 10.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between Tumo and Gakken, one of Japan's largest publishing and educational companies, on Monday, September 9.

Over the coming months, Gakken will start laying the groundwork for Tumo Tokyo.

The educational center's first chapter was established in Yerevan, followed by branches in other major Armenian cities.

Tumo Paris opened in the central Parisian district of Les Halles in 2018, while another branch will be created in Albania.

In addition, the European Union in partnership with Tumo Center for Creative Technologies, in March launched the EU TUMO Convergence Center for Engineering and Applied Science, a state-of-the-art STEM ecosystem for young adults in Armenia.

### Armenia, Lebanon to Expand Military Cooperation

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Armenian Parliament on September 10 adopted the bill on ratifying the military cooperation agreement between Armenia and Lebanon at the first reading.

The bill had been submitted by the government.

Deputy Defense Minister Gabriel Balayan highlighted the necessity of adopting the bill and stated that Armenia has several prospective cooperation programs with Lebanon, and the adoption of the bill will enable to make the current ties and contacts more substantial.

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## Asdghig 'Starrie' Alemian Dies

One of the Last Armenian Genocide Survivors in State

WEYMOUTH, Mass. – Asdghig "Starrie" Alemian, one of the last Armenian Genocide survivors in Massachusetts and a strong presence at every Genocide commemoration at the State House, died on September 5, 2019. She was 109.

She was a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, which took the lives of her parents and brothers, leaving her orphaned at age 5. She lived in an orphanage in Syria until 12 years old when her uncle Garabed Tetezian assisted her and her sister Anna in coming to the United States.

Starrie worked alongside her husband in running Alemian's Delicatessen for more than 30 years.

Beginning in the 1980s, Alemian was honored yearly at the State House for Armenian Martyrs Day. On her 90th birthday, she traveled to Egypt and Syria with family, revisiting parts of her childhood.

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Form left, Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, Asdghig "Starrie" Alemian and Rep. David Muradian at the State House in 2018

## Goethe, Poetry and Truth Honored at Weimar Ceremony

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach  
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

WEIMAR, Germany – If today's cultural context is besieged by "deliberate attempts to mislead" and to cut off meaningful discussion, if it is a context in which unfounded opinions enjoy the freedom of unfettered movement, then it is necessary to juxtapose with such "hideous developments" an understanding of Truth and Fiction.

Thus Klaus-Dieter Lehmann, President of the Goethe-Institut, presented the motto of this year's award ceremony of the German cultural institution. Dichtung und Wahrheit is the title of one of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's major works, and it symbolizes the idea behind the selection of the three winners of the Goethe Medal, presented in Weimar on August 28, the 270th birthday of the national poet.

This year's recipients of the official decoration of the Federal Republic of Germany are the German-Turkish writer Dogan Akhanli, the Iranian artist and filmmaker Shirin Neshat and the Mongolian publisher and political journalist Enkhbat Roozon. Lehmann said it was not political activism, but rather, their independence, that established the credibility of the three.

The festive ceremony in the Kleine Weimarahalle was attended by 200 guests, and in addition to the Goethe-Institut representatives were Lord Mayor of Weimar Peter Kleine, Cultural Minister Benjamin-Immanuel Hoff and Andreas Gorgen, director of the Department of Culture and Communications in the Foreign Ministry. It was featured widely in the German media.

Klaus-Dieter Lehmann was joined by Ina Hartwig, the head of cultural affairs of the City of Frankfurt to present the award. In his opening remarks, the institute's president said they were "honoring personalities who, through their work, address the conflicting poles of social reality between influence and autonomy, ignorance and culture of debate, unknowing and education, and do so regardless of possible personal risks or disadvantages." Christina von Braun, second vice president of the Goethe-Institut, added, "With their works, which wake people up and create new relationships, the laureates play a central role in culture and international exchange."

#### The Power of Language

Enkhbat Roozon received the honor in recognition of his indefatigable efforts to develop an open, critical and responsible



Dogan Akhanli

civil society in Mongolia. The central focus of his publications is education, which he views as the foundation for cultural exchange. He places special emphasis on the importance of language in his work. "Unfortunately," he said, "in today's society, we talk far too little with one another about the important issues, and we also don't maintain and develop language as such. And yet, what is to become of us and what we can achieve – see WEIMAR, page 5

## Pashinyan Raises Some Doubts on Amulsar But Presses Ahead

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on September 9 asked the residents of Jermuk to open the roads leading to the Amulsar gold mine.

He said that even if the roads are opened now constructions works will not commence there until April 2020.

"I am asking the residents of the town of Jermuk to open the roads leading to the Amulsar mine because you don't need to close them, because you have a government which in the event of seeing a legitimate necessity to close these roads, will go and close the roads with its tools and lawful authority," he said during a live Facebook broadcast.

Pashinyan added that his government has no "legal grounds" to ban its development by a Western mining company.

Pashinyan said that failure to allow the company, Lydian International, to mine gold at the Amulsar mine would have severe consequences for Armenia's economy and even national security. He also argued that Lydian has given the Armenian government more guarantees that mining operations there would not contaminate water, soil and air.

"My statement remains the same as during the last live broadcast, that at least for now we don't have any legal grounds to ban the operations of the Amulsar mine. But understandably we can't not take into account the concerns which exist among our society," he added.

Pashinyan said he has tasked the environmental inspection agency to start inspections at Amulsar to clarify certain issues raised by the Minister of Environment.

Pashinyan explained the theoretical developments resulting from the inspection.

"Option one - there are no violations, everything is normal. Option two - there are violations and irregularities and they can be eliminated without project changes," he said, adding that in this case a new EIA will not be required.

see AMULSAR, page 2



## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Defense Minister Meets With Disabled Activist, Athlete Veteran

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – Defense Minister of Armenia Davit Tonoyan received on Monday, September 9, retired major of Armenian Armed Forces, gold medalist at the arm-wrestling European Championship and three-time world champion Sargis Stepanyan.

As the press service at the ministry reported, the minister congratulated Stepanyan on receiving the rank of “Lieutenant Colonel”, asked about his health and the military routine as well as the operation of Armenian National Federation of Disabled Sports that had been established by Stepanyan. Minister Tonoyan wished him robust health and inexhaustible energy

To note, Sargis Stepanyan was injured during a mine explosion, losing his two legs and the right arm while trying to take out his fellow serviceman from a minefield in summer 2014, when the Azerbaijani military launched a sabotage infiltration attempt at one of Armenian military posts.

Major Stepanyan has been awarded with the Armenian Defense Ministry “Marshal Baghramyan” Medal and the Medal “For Courage” by the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR).

## Kim Kardashian West to Visit Armenia, Participate in WCIT

YEREVAN – WCIT announced today that activist, entrepreneur, beauty mogul and producer Kim Kardashian West will be a special keynote speaker and panelist at the 23rd World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT 2019), which will take place in Yerevan, Armenia from October 6 through 9.

Ms. Kardashian West will address a plenary session of WCIT 2019 called “Marketplace of Ideas,” which will examine how decentralized technologies have democratized the worlds of entertainment, media, and journalism and revolutionized the manner in which we create and disseminate art and information, making new stars along the way. “Marketplace of Ideas” will explore what these developments mean for personal privacy, social relations, trust in institutions and new business models.

Ms. Kardashian West will set the stage for the “Marketplace of Ideas” session by engaging in an intimate, one-on-one conversation, and will then be joined on stage by a group of distinguished panelists, including Hovhannes Avoyan, co-founder & CEO of the globally recognized Armenian company PicsArt, to further explore its themes.

Alexander Yesayan, chairman of the WCIT 2019 Yerevan organizing committee, president of the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises of Armenia (UATE) and co-founder of UCom! the largest telecommunications provider in Armenia, issued the following statement about Ms. Kardashian West’s visit:

“We, the organizers of WCIT 2019 Yerevan, decided to take a bold, unconventional approach to framing the agenda of WCIT 2019 that takes ideas, even controversial ones, seriously, from everyone in the world today who has something relevant to say, from both within the information and communications technology (ICT) industry and beyond.

## Fire at Malatia Mall Ruled as Arson

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Yerevan city prosecutors have launched a criminal investigation into the August 24 fire at the Malatia Mall shopping center, General Prosecution spokesperson Arevik Khachatryan said..

Authorities are investigating a possible arson.

The major fire was put out by multiple firefighting teams on August 25. No injuries were reported but the fire resulted in significant material damages.

# Pashinyan Raises Some Doubts on Amulsar But Presses Ahead

AMULSAR, from page 1

“Option number three – these violations and irregularities cannot be eliminated without a new project and if a new project is considered it means that a new EIA is considered,” he said, adding that in addition to the environmental inspection agency the Investigative Committee’s criminal investigation will have to give answers to certain other issues as well.

Pashinyan said the government has asked Lydian, the parent company of Amulsar, to clarify whether if they were to be granted permission to resume operations, when would they begin working at the mine and the company has noted that it will not take place before spring 2020.

“If the roads leading to Amulsar were to be opened today, no construction will take place there at least until April 2020. But the closure of the road is creating serious problems for Armenia in terms of international economic image and rating, creating concrete chance for a drop in Armenia’s rating.

Pashinyan added that a recent video-conference with ELARD – the company which conducted an environmental audit of the project – said that eventually Lydian International bears responsibility for any actions.

“The company Lydian itself must give or not give guarantees, assume certain obligations, as a result of which the government must decide to what extent it trusts these records,” he said.

Access to the Amulsar mine has been blocked by environmentalists for many months and the government is expected to announce its decision whether or not it will allow Lydian International to resume operations. ELARD, an international audit company, carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment study for the project, which in turn is under scrutiny.

### Anger from Former Ally Sefilian

The leader of Sasna Tsrer, an Armenian party whose members stormed a police station in Yerevan in 2016, on Friday, September 6, warned Pashinyan against giving the green light to the project opposed by environmentalists.

Sefilian said a government decision to allow a British-American company to restart the project disrupted by protesters over a year ago would be exploited by Pashinyan’s bitter political foes branded by him as a Russian “fifth column.”

“The fifth column is praying and waiting for Nikol Pashinyan to reactivate the Amulsar mine as soon as possible,” Sefilian said in an interview. “The fifth column has very well calculated that ... the people would not allow [mining at Amulsar] and that there would be a clash between the people and police forces there.”

He claimed that heavy-handed police actions against the protesters would deal a huge blow to Pashinyan’s popularity and lead to his downfall.

Sefilian admitted that the Amulsar issue was on the agenda of Pashinyan’s unexpected meeting with him and another Sasna Tsrer figure, Garegin Chukaszian, held late on Thursday. “We urged Mr. Pashinyan yesterday not to make mistakes on this issue,” he said. “If he makes a mistake on Amulsar that

will mean his political death. We made this clear to him yesterday.”

Sefilian stressed that his party, which got 1.8 percent of the vote in the December 2018 parliamentary elections, remains opposed to the Amulsar project. “We will not allow the opening of any new metal mines,” he said.

Asked whether Sasna Tsrer will protest if Pashinyan’s government decides to restore the Lydian International company’s access to Amulsar, he said: “Of course, and we will protest and at the same time try to ensure that Mr. Pashinyan does not issue wrong orders.”

The Lebanese-born politician dismissed speculation that he and his associates have actually pledged not to hamper the Amulsar project as part of a secret deal with Pashinyan.

“THE FIFTH COLUMN HAS VERY WELL CALCULATED THAT ... THE PEOPLE WOULD NOT ALLOW [MINING AT AMULSAR] AND THAT THERE WOULD BE A CLASH BETWEEN THE PEOPLE AND POLICE FORCES THERE.”

Some of those associates led a 31-member armed group, also called Sasna Tsrer, which seized a Yerevan police base in July 2016 to demand then President Serzh Sarkisian free Sefilian and step down. Sefilian had been arrested a month before the attack.

The gunmen laid down their weapons after a two-week standoff with security forces which left three police officers dead. All but two of them were set free pending the outcome of their trials shortly after Sarkisian was toppled in last year’s “Velvet Revolution” led by Pashinyan.

The two Sasna Tsrer members remaining behind bars stand accused of killing the policemen. They deny the accusations.

In February, Sefilian warned that Sasna Tsrer will “force” the authorities to free the “rebels.” Leaders of the pro-government majority in the Armenian parliament denounced the threat.

### ELARD Findings Ambiguous

Lydian’s interim chairman, Edward Sellers, and top Armenian executive, Hayk Aloyan, met with Pashinyan on Friday. They also attended on Saturday a meeting with senior government officials chaired by Pashinyan.

The prime minister said on Monday that they made fresh assurances to the effect that “not a single liter of toxic water” would be leaked during gold production at Amulsar. He said his government will not hesitate to stop mining operations and even revoke Lydian’s license if the company fails to honor these commitments.

Pashinyan also stressed in that context that he has instructed the Investigative Committee and the government’s Inspectorate Body on Environment Protection and Natural Resources to look into the “questions” raised by the ELARD experts.

Pashinyan also implicitly mentioned Lydian’s threats to take international legal action against Yerevan. The company, headquartered in Colorado and listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, claims to have invested \$400 million in Amulsar.

Lydian planned to produce 210,000 ounces of gold, worth over \$315 million at current international prices, annually. It pledged to create about 800 permanent jobs and pay \$50 million in annual taxes.

The company was due to start mining gold at Amulsar in late 2018. The blockade, which began in June 2018, delayed those plans indefinitely.

Pashinyan met with his political allies, environmental activists and the chief executive of a Western mining company on Friday to discuss the future of its controversial project to develop Armenia’s Amulsar gold deposit.

Pashinyan briefed parliament deputies from his My Step alliance on the status of the stalled project and answered questions from them. He declined to talk to journalists after the three-hour meeting behind the closed doors.

Alen Simonian, a senior My Step figure and deputy speaker of the Armenian parliament, gave no details of

what Pashinyan told his loyalists. He said that the participants of the meeting did not arrive at any “conclusion.”

“The prime minister’s position is known,” Simonian told the press. “As for his remarks, they were about the existing situation.”

Pashinyan went on to hold separate meetings with activists opposed to the project and Edward Sellers, the interim chief executive of the British-American company Lydian International that had received in 2016 a government license to mine gold at Amulsar.

Pashinyan echoed that assessment on August 19 when he signaled his intention to restore Lydian’s access to Amulsar. But he then decided to ask ELARD experts to personally explain their findings at a video conference held ten days later.

The experts said they cannot definitively evaluate environmental dangers of the project Lydian because had submitted flawed and incomplete information to Armenian regulatory authorities. Lydian responded by accusing them of misleading Pashinyan’s government.

Pashinyan said at the end of the Skype call that the government might require Lydian to go through a fresh licensing process which would probably take months. The government has announced no decisions to that effect yet.

The meetings followed the release of ambiguous findings of an independent environmental audit of the Amulsar project conducted by ELARD, a Lebanese consulting firm hired by the Armenian government.

ELARD sent a 200-page written report to Armenia’s Investigative Committee a month ago. According to the law-enforcement body, the report concluded that Lydian’s operations would pose only “manageable” risks to the environment. It said that toxic waste from the Amulsar mine is extremely unlikely to contaminate mineral water sources in Jermuk or rivers and canals flowing into Lake Sevan.

But at an August 24 video conference with Armenian officials moderated by Pashinyan, ELARD experts said they cannot definitively evaluate environmental dangers of the project. They claimed that Lydian had submitted flawed and incomplete information to regulatory authorities before obtaining its mining license in April 2016. The British-American company responded by accusing the Lebanese consultants of misleading the government.

(Reports from Armenpress and RFE/RL were used to compile this story.)



## ARMENIA

## Forest Summit: Global Action and Armenia Announces Field Visits

YEREVAN – Armenia Tree Project (ATP) and the American University of Armenia (AUA) Acopian Center for the Environment are proud to announce details for field visits at October's Forest Summit: Global Action and Armenia. The event will feature four days of education, dialogue, and networking among the leading minds in forestry from Sunday, October 20 through Wednesday, October 23.

The field visits announced today will bring these leaders to Dilijan National Park and to planting sites in Armenia, where seedlings meet soil, and purpose-driven workers help fuel the continued regrowth of the country's tree canopy. The landlocked nation has recently committed itself to achieve 20% canopy cover by 2050 as a part of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

On October 21, guests will visit Dilijan National Park in the northern province of Tavush, one of Armenia's most picturesque regions. The Park occupies 33,765 hectares teeming with forest landscapes, natural monuments, and rich biodiversity. Guided by Dilijan Park's experts, guests will tour Lake Parz (Parz means "clear" in Armenian) and learn about the Park's 1,150 plant species, 55 mammal species, and 190 bird species. Dilijan National Park is home to several rare and endangered plants and animals registered in the Armenian Red Books of Flora and Fauna. Guides will educate guests about the Park's history and the current challenges and solutions the park faces.

Guests will learn how, in recent years, ecotourism has developed significantly in Dilijan. From the creation of new hiking trails, to attractions such as zip line and paddle boats,

guests will explore the role tourism can play in the park's protection and future.

Additionally, guests will visit Margahovit Village, where they'll tour both the Armenia Tree Project's Ohanian Educational Center for Environmental Studies, and the nearby Hrant Dink Memorial Forest, planted in 2007. They will also visit the Mirak Family Reforestation Nursery, where seedlings for dozens of tree species are grown and cared for by 15 local villagers full time. Since its construction in 2005, Mirak Nursery has served as the birthplace for millions of trees now rooted in Northern Armenia.

### Lake Parz, located in Dilijan National Park

"It's with great pride that we invite the world's forestry leaders to Armenia and into our reforestation process," says Jeanmarie Papelian, ATP's Executive Director. "While each tree tells a story, the best communicators of our mission and the powerful reforestation work we do are our staff and scientists. We can't wait to showcase the work we do to produce millions of healthy trees."

In addition to the field visits, Forest Summit: Global Action and Armenia will offer panels, breakout sessions, a keynote address from Oregon State University's Dr. Anthony S. Davis, and networking opportunities. At its core, the conference will foster discussion and collaborative dialogue on the conservation and reforestation efforts much needed in Armenia and countries across the world.

Also this fall, Armenia Tree Project will celebrate the planting of its six millionth tree in Armenia.

## UEFA President Visits Armenia

YEREVAN – Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) President Aleksander Ceferin, who arrived in Armenia on September 5. The president of the Football Federation of Armenia Arthur Vanetsyan was also present at the meeting.

The Prime Minister welcomed Ceferin's visit to and stressed the importance of close and effective cooperation between the Football Federation of Armenia and UEFA for the development of football in Armenia. In particular, Nikol Pashinyan emphasized the support provided by UEFA to the development of football

Armenia Football partners and noted that the structure he headed would continue to contribute to the development of football in Armenia, including the improvement of infrastructure.

In particular, it was noted that with the support of UEFA it is planned to build 76 playgrounds in the regions of Armenia during this year, to provide AF with the necessary equipment, to implement programs for the development of futsal and women's football.

UEFA president noted that in the modern world football has become a separate branch of economy, where huge funds are circulated. The



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received with UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin.

infrastructures in Armenia and noted that as a result a number of programs aimed at popularizing football are being implemented in the country.

Ceferin thanked Pashinyan for the warm reception and the development of football in the spotlight. The UEFA president expressed satisfaction with the cooperation with the

interlocutors agreed that football plays a big role in social life, in uniting and uniting people.

During the meeting the two touched upon a number of other issues related to the upcoming projects in cooperation with the FFA and UEFA.

At the end of the meeting Ceferin gave Pashinyan a regulation soccer ball.



VivaCell-MTS's Ralph Yirikian with the Hovhannisyans

## New Construction in Gyumri

GYUMRI – The volunteer teams from VivaCell-MTS and the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia have visited Gyumri to support another family. Like many of compatriots, the Hovhannisyans lost their home as a consequence of the 1988 earthquake. This was followed by long hard days of living in a small garage, purchasing a half-built house and years of efforts to make it a home. Parallel to caring the needs of a large family, Armen was able to build the roof, but there were not many achievements in 20 years; the renovation works have remained unfinished.

Creating simple comfortable housing conditions seemed impossible for the family from Gyumri. Yet financial and health problems pushed the construction and the problem of semi-demolished kitchen and the bathroom to background.

This year, the housing program of VivaCell-MTS and the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia brought in volunteers from partner organizations to do the concrete flooring.

"It's no secret we give particular place to borderland villages in our programs. Nevertheless, we cannot limit ourselves with just those borderland communities and strive to reach others, too, as much as we can. Unfortunately, housing is a problem in many settlements of the republic. I know Gyumri oftentimes is unintentionally associated with a town in ruins. I want to believe the day will come and there will be no more wrecked walls, and everyone will have finished beautiful homes wherever they are. And that's one of our project's main purposes," VivaCell-MTS General Manager Ralph Yirikian said.

As a result of many years of partnership, the partners were able to solve the housing problem of over 200 families. Construction works on half-built houses and those in need of renovation have been completed.

"We help families to create better conditions and build a prosperous future for their children. The 3 underage children of this family deserve to grow up in better conditions. It is also important in terms of having a responsible citizen," said Fuller Center for Housing Armenia president Ashot Yeghiazaryan.

With the support of VivaCell-MTS, only in Shirak region, 12 houses have been built.

## Prosecutors, Kocharyan Lawyers Disagree On High Court Ruling

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Prosecutors and lawyers for Robert Kocharyan have offered differing interpretations of the Constitutional Court's decision to partly accept an appeal filed by Armenia's jailed former president.

Kocharyan's lawyers had challenged the legality of two articles of the Armenian Code of Procedural Justice invoked by investigators accusing him of taking bribes and overthrowing the constitutional order shortly before the end of his decade-long rule in 2008.

The Constitutional Court ruled that one of those articles is unconstitutional because it does not take account of current and former senior Armenian officials' immunity from prosecution guaranteed by the country's constitution. But it upheld the other clause that spells out legal grounds for arresting criminal suspects.

The defense lawyers portrayed the ruling as a confirmation of their claims that Kocharyan's arrest and prosecution is illegal. They petitioned a district court in Yerevan on Saturday to free their client and clear him of the charges.

The court has not yet reacted to the petition yet. It is scheduled to resume on Thursday. Kocharyan's high-profile trial was interrupted nearly four months ago.

Meanwhile, Armenia's Office of the

Prosecutor-General insisted on Monday, September 9, that the Constitutional Court did not declare the criminal case against Kocharyan null and void. According to its interpretation of the ruling, it is up to investigators and the judge presiding over the trial to determine whether the ex-president's legal immunity extends to the accusations leveled against him.

Article 140 of the Armenian constitution says: "During the term of his or her powers and thereafter, the President of the Republic may not be prosecuted and subjected to liability for actions deriving from his or her status."

In a statement, the prosecutors stood by their position that this constitutional provision does not apply to Kocharyan's decision to use army units against opposition protesters in Yerevan in the wake of a disputed 2008 presidential election.

The statement also accused the ex-president's lawyers of distorting the essence of the Constitutional Court's decision.

One of the lawyers, Hovhannes Khudoyan, countered that the prosecutors themselves are misinterpreting the ruling. "I would advise the Office of the Prosecutor-General to again familiarize itself with that judicial act in order to finally understand what it is all about," he told RFE/RL's Armenian service.

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## INTERNATIONAL

## International News

## Lebanese Armenians to Build 600-House District in Kotayk

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Lebanese Armenian investors are planning to build a 600-house district on the territory of the city of Yeghvard, Governor of Kotayk Province informs in a Facebook post.

The district will house 2,800 people. Seven houses have already been built in the neighborhood called “Mari.” The construction of the rest is under way.

The district will have a kindergarten, an educational complex, a church, shopping centers and entertainment places.

Investors say they thus want to contribute to the reinforcement of Armenia-Diaspora ties.

The governor said he was ready to support any initiative that meets the interests of the community.

## Special Agency Representing Diaspora Could Be Created in Armenia

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – A pan-Armenian advisory body representing the Diaspora in Armenia could be established in 2020, High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs Zareh Sinanyan said at a meeting with young Armenian entrepreneurs and community members in Moscow on September 9.

Sinanyan traveled to Moscow on September 6 and is expected to spend 11 days in the Russian capital, Saint Petersburg and Sochi.

He said his office is currently creating a road map for the Commissioner’s work with the Diaspora, with three conference slated for as early as 2020.

The Armenia-Diaspora pan-Armenian Conference, he said, will tackle specific issues, including the creation of a special advisory agency to represent the Diaspora in the country.

According to Sinanyan, the second conference will bring together diaspora-based politicians and statesmen, while the third one will serve as a platform for businesses.

## Armenia Denies Friction With Russia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Russia’s refusal to extradite indicted former Armenian officials and Armenia’s decision to grant asylum to a Russian anti-government activist is not a sign of discord between the two allied nations, Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said on September 6.

“Interstate relations between Russia and Armenia have quite strong foundations and we don’t have any differences here,” told a news conference. “We have some processes of legal nature but at the interstate level are able to maintain the important agenda at the heart of which is our intention to deepen our allied relations.”

“There is and there can be no interconnection between these issues,” said Mnatsakanyan.

It emerged last week that the Armenian Migration Service has granted asylum to a Russian anti-government activist who moved to Armenia in January after serving a four-year prison sentence in Russia. The government agency said the activist, Vitaly Shishkin, could be persecuted for his political views in Russia.

Shishkin reportedly used to be a senior member of a Russian nationalist movement that challenged President Vladimir Putin and was banned as extremist in 2015. He was arrested in 2014 and subsequently sentenced him to four years in prison on charges of calling for “mass disturbances” and spreading hate speech. A Russian human rights group recognized Shishkin as a political prisoner.

Yerevan’s decision came almost one month after the Russian authorities refused to extradite Mihran Poghosian, a former senior Armenian official facing corruption charges in Armenia.

Moscow also refused late last year to extradite Mikael Harutiunyan, a former Armenian defense minister wanted by the Armenian authorities on coup charges. It argued that Harutiunyan is a Russian citizen.

# CoE: Armenia Failed to Implement ECRI’s Priority Recommendations

STRASBOURG (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on Tuesday, September 10 published conclusions on the implementation of priority recommendations made to Armenia in 2016.

Each country report by ECRI contains recommendations for which priority follow-up is requested. Two years after the publication of each report, ECRI asks the Government concerned what has been done to implement these priority recommendations and draws up its conclusions.

In its 2016 report on Armenia, ECRI recommended that the authorities bring their criminal law into line with ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No. 7; ECRI concludes that this has not been

implemented as, for example, the list of “prohibited grounds” in the new draft Criminal Code does not contain all those proposed by ECRI. Besides, the adoption of the new Criminal Code is currently only planned for 2020.

ECRI’s General Policy Recommendation No.7 sets out the key elements which should feature in a comprehensive national legislation to effectively combat racism and racial discrimination. The scope of the Recommendation is very wide and covers all branches of the law: constitutional, criminal, civil and administrative. It addresses not only direct and indirect discrimination, but also other legal aspects of the fight against racism, including racist expressions, racists organizations and racially-motivated

offences.

ECRI also recommended that the various action plans for the integration of vulnerable groups include a description of their objectives, a complete set of criteria for assessing the impact on those groups, and a clear financial plan. This has been partially implemented.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a human rights monitoring body which specializes in questions relating to the fight against racism, discrimination (on grounds of race, ethnic/national origin, color, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance; it prepares reports and issues recommendations to member states.

# Syria War: Turkey Warns Europe of New Migrant Wave

ANKARA (BBC) – President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on September 5 called for “logistical support” to establish a safe zone in Syria’s north-east.

“Either this happens, or we will be forced to open the gates,” he said.

Turkey is hosting more than 3.6 million Syrians who have fled the civil war. The US backs the “safe zone” plan.

But the plan is controversial, because Syrian Kurdish forces are wary of Turkey moving many Syrians into the north-east who are not originally from that area.

The ethnic Kurdish People’s Protection Units (YPG), seen by Turkey as a terrorist group, do not want to make way for Turkish forces in that area.

The US military has backed the YPG against so-called Islamic State (IS) fighters, whose territory is now much diminished.

“Our goal is for at least one million of our Syrian brothers to return to the safe zone we will form along our 450km [280-mile] border,” Erdogan said in a

speech in Ankara.

“Give us logistical support and we can go and build housing at 30km depth in northern Syria.”

Exodus from Idlib

Turkey wants US forces to jointly patrol the safe zone, and Erdogan said Turkey was “determined to set it up by the last week of September.”

Turkish officials also fear that heavy fighting in the north-western province of Idlib could push more refugees into Turkey.

Syrian government forces backed by Russian aircraft are pounding rebel and jihadist forces in Idlib. Turkey backs some of the rebel groups there.

Tens of thousands of civilians have already fled north from Idlib to the Turkish border.

Under a 2016 agreement with the EU, Turkey imposed stronger controls to curb the flow of migrants and refugees to Europe.

The deal involved an EU pledge to provide €6bn (£5.4bn; \$6.6bn) in aid to

Turkey to house Syrian refugees.

Erdogan complained that only €3bn of that had arrived so far, though earlier Natasha Bertaud, an EU Commission spokesperson, said €5.6bn had been provided.

Pressure on Greece again

The 2016 EU-Turkey deal helped to ease the crisis on Greek islands near Turkey, whose facilities were overwhelmed by a refugee influx in 2015.

However, the situation remains very tense in Moria, a packed migrant camp on the island of Lesbos. Young migrants clashed with Greek police there on Wednesday.

The aid group Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) says some 24,000 people seeking protection in Europe are now “trapped on the Greek islands in horrendous conditions”.

MSF says the sea arrivals on the islands have reached levels not seen since 2016. More than 100 children in MSF’s clinic on Lesbos have complex or chronic conditions, it says.

## Armenian Rep. Attends UN Amnesty International Event

NEW YORK – On September 6, Armenia participated in an event organized by Amnesty International and the International Service for Human Rights for the UN Human Rights Council candidate countries. The event was attended by the UN member states and representatives of civil society.

The Permanent Representative of Armenia to the UN Mher Margaryan presented priorities and pledges of Armenia for the Human Rights Council for the term of 2020-2022. He underlined, that Armenia’s aspiration to become a member of the Human Rights Council for the first time is anchored on the premise that human rights are universal and interdependent and on Armenia’s significant progress in the fields of democracy and human rights.

Margaryan mentioned that following the Velvet Revolution the Government of Armenia has embarked on the implementation of a comprehensive and ambitious reform programme, aimed at making the process of strengthening democratic institutions and protection of human rights irreversible. Touching upon the priorities of Armenia, Margaryan underscored prevention of genocide and

other mass atrocities and presented the track record of Armenia’s initiatives in this regard within the UN, including in the Human Rights

Representative stressed the importance of cooperation with civil society organizations.

During the event he also addressed



Representative of Armenia to the UN Mher Margaryan

Council. Referring to the role of the civil society in implementation of reforms the Permanent

the questions raised by the UN member states and representatives of the civil society.



## INTERNATIONAL

# Goethe, Poetry and Truth Honored at Weimar Ceremony

WEIMAR, from page 1

whether we will be able to solve our problems or not – relies precisely on this.”

The language used by Shirin Neshat is visual; in her films and photographs, she focuses on the role of women in the Muslim world. Due to a ban on entry into Iran, she lives abroad, and was not able to attend the ceremony in person. A close friend, Vahideh Mahmoodi, accepted the Goethe Medal for her and Neshat addressed



Enkhbat Roozon  
(Photo Courtesy of the  
Goethe-Institut)



Shirin Neshat (Photo  
Courtesy of the  
Goethe-Institut)

the ceremony in a video message, in which she expressed her solidarity with all refugees living in exile in Germany.

In her laudatory speech, the art scholar Britta Schmitz stated, “With all of her delicately and carefully conceived works, Shirin Neshat manages to create a unique narrative entanglement by producing haunting stories and images that are hard to forget and that transcend cultural boundaries.”

## A Poetical Notion of Time

Akhanlı received the award for his literary works and his engagement in civil society to promote understanding, especially among Armenians, Kurds and Turks. According to press accounts, the jury referred to him, saying

“There are some personalities who cannot keep quiet when it is a matter of justice.”

His is a history of speaking out, against the military dictatorship in Turkey in the 1980s, against the policy of denial of the Armenian Genocide and against repression in Turkey today.

In her laudatory speech, literary critic Insa Wilke developed the concept of “time” in the author’s works, his novels, dramas and also cultural activity. What does it mean to put time itself into question? This is a matter that engages Akhanlı in his writing. It may be that one leaves out individuals and entire groups completely, and lets them reappear in other temporal spheres, or sends them running around in bureaucratic circles; this “robs them of the idea of a future and drives them crazy with the question whether what they experienced, and experience, is taking place in their time reckoning, or belongs to another reality.” States also manipulate time this way.

Akhanlı, she said, renders this visible. He “makes the consequences visible, not only for individuals but for entire societies.” Yet, in so doing, “he is not writing political literature; he is writing politically.” In a certain sense, he is old-fashioned, as he wants to “make a difference, to change something.”

To illustrate how Akhanlı makes time visible, she referred to his novel, *The Judges of the Final Judgment*, in which he writes about the real historical events of 1915; but he is using an image that means “much more than the Armenian genocide, it means its narrative and its denial or removal, it means the presence of those killed and, if one so desires, the other side of state terror in Turkey in the 1980s.”

She described how Akhanlı juggles and entangles time intervals, how he combines and mixes historical and fictional figures, and she admitted being confused when she first entered “his literary space.” The confusion emerged “because I knew practically nothing about

Turkish history and absolutely nothing about what it had to do with me. Confused by overlapping and simultaneous events....” By way of explanation, she quoted him as saying, “You cannot tell the story of catastrophes in chronological order.”

Akhanlı deals with the similarities among very different tales of violence, and raises the question of what stories are passed from one generation to the next, “among Turks, Germans, Armenians, Syrians, Black Germans, Herero, Roma, Vietnamese?... How are their stories connected and related? ... What does it all have to do with us sitting here?” Here one encounters what the author calls the “transnational space of memory.”

Insa Wilke drew attention as well to the special qualities of the novelist’s style, in particular, his talent for comedy, which she likened to that of the fantasy master Nasreddin Hodja. Akhanlı deploys the element of comedy when dealing with the horrible and frightening; and this provokes laughter, “the laughter of the theatre of the absurd in repressive systems,” it leads to “an empowerment of self.” In his works, she said, he “seeks out the theatrical, the poetical qualities in the events of the time.”

Akhanlı writes in Turkish and the German reading public knows his works through translation. But he has a fine knowledge of German, and wrote the monodrama “Anne’s Silence” in German. Wilke pointed to his “fine appreciation for the weight of words,” citing an example he once gave of how German syntax manages to deal with “a problematical relationship to responsibility,” by postponing the predicate to the very end of the phrase, in such a manner that the reader can hardly put it in relation to the subject.

In concluding her remarks, Wilke said, “Literature can also change a person,” adding that her encounter with his works had changed her view of society.

In his acceptance speech, Akhanlı seemed to pick up the theme introduced by Wilke, about language. “What I especially like about the German language,” he said, “is the past tense of the subjunctive mood.” This is a form that “opens up for us a world of unreality, of dreams and improbabilities.” In his favorite form of this, “fantasy is projected into the past. This form sometimes looks so complicated and at the same time so beautiful, that I have the feeling that it is not a sentence but a magical formula that lies before my eyes.”

As an illustration, Akhanlı told the story of how he came to win the Goethe prize: “Had my partner not had the desire two years ago to celebrate her birthday together with me in Granada, I would not be standing here. If the Turkish government at that time had ceased criminalizing me further, I would not have been arrested in Granada again and the Goethe-Institut in Spain would not have learned of my arrest, and I would not have been the guest of the Goethe-Institut in Madrid for two months. If all that had not happened, I would not have been invited to Armenia by the Yerevan Goethe-Institut and Ms. Bachsoliani and Ms. Soghomonyan, and would not be standing here now.”

He said that events could have unfolded quite differently. “If the German press had not shown interest in my case; if the German Chancellor and the Foreign Minister had not intervened; if my German lawyer Ilias Uyar and my partner Perihan Zeran had not managed to get tickets to fly to Madrid; if my Spanish lawyer Gonzalo Boye at the time had been in Vietnam or somewhere else in the world. But in the end, everything went well. I was saved in time and stand here now, as a prize winner of the Goethe Medal. And I do not really know whom I should thank for this prize that makes me so proud. But I do know, my persecutors and their attempts to criminalize me have failed. Through the solidarity of so many, which is just as magical as the second case of the subjunctive.”

The author proceeded to thank those many, many people, associations, friends and officials who intervened on his behalf as well as those in the jury who honored him with the award. “I accept the Goethe Medal with pleasure,” he said, “and I dedicate it in tribute to the impris-

oned Cologne artist Hozan Cane, who like tens of thousands of other people has become a victim of state despotism and arrogance in Turkey.”

## Time and Place

Turning to the issue of state violence and terror, which “have accompanied me all my life,” Akhanlı cited a consideration made by the Israeli writer David Grossman, who noted that people usually refer to Holocaust as having happened “then.” Yet, in Yiddish or Hebrew, Grossman said, one doesn’t speak of “then” but rather “over there.” And by this he didn’t mean a place, but an immaterial location, “a place in the human soul.” For Grossman, this “will to destroy” still existed. And, Akhanlı said, “we are at this very moment right ‘over there.’ Weimar is not only Goethe and Schiller, but also Buchenwald, the former concentration camp. But,” he asked, “are we not also ‘over there’ in another sense, in Grossman’s sense?”

Here Akhanlı related his personal experience with the Holocaust, whose dimensions he had not realized before leaving Turkey. “At the end of 1991, I fled to Germany with my family and my memories of the long history of violence of my country. It was at the time that the former Buchenwald prisoner and surviving Spanish writer and Goethe Medal winner, Jorge Semprún, saw that the country that had tortured him and wanted to eliminate him was undergoing a process of change.” In the 1990s, the years of remembrance, Akhanlı witnessed this transformation himself; whereas in his homeland “forgetting was the rule and remembrance was the exception,” in Germany the opposite was the case.

“Remembrance,” he hoped, “could be a means to establish the connections between historical and current violence in my homeland as well, and to come to terms with them. Remembrance could be a key, I hoped, to understand what my personal experience with violence had to do with the victims of the Armenian genocide 100 years ago, with the persecution, despotism and injustice against Kurds, Alevis, Jews, Christians, against homosexuals and women in Turkey.”

Stimulated by his experience in Germany, he began to “think beyond borders and time-frames” and find the links with these victims and others, in other periods and other lands. Because of the work done in Germany to confront and deal with the past, “I was able to identify with this country,” he said. “I liked the fact that people did not like to use words like ‘nation,’ ‘flag,’ ‘fatherland,’ or ‘nationalistic.’”

And yet, there was something Akhanlı still had to learn, and that was that remembrance had its limits. It did not have the protective power to defend us against the destructive lust of the Nazi period and “its resurrection in the minds and fists of Neo-Nazis” today. He pointed to that part of modern-day society which has never embraced remembrance, a part of Germany that “now wants to revive the past and turn back the pages of history.” He identified this group, who “call themselves concerned or angry citizens,” as the members of the extreme rightist Alternative for Germany (AfD), the neo-Nazis (NPD) and the right-wing terrorist cell (NSU), who “insult 6 million Holocaust victims as ‘Vogelschiss.’” This is the term, which means literally “bird sh—,” that was used by an AfD national leader in a cynical attempt to downplay the Nazi period and its crimes as insignificant. These extremists, who kill out of racism and xenophobia, Akhanlı said, “suffer from a sick, blind yearning for the past. They represent the ‘over there’ in the sense of the soul, as Grossman understood it.”

It may be, Akhanlı concluded, that the political realm cannot force remembrance, “but it must defend remembrance daily against the prophets of extermination. The rest, we, as civil society, can achieve.” This means preventing the mental attitude behind genocidal crimes from prevailing again. He closed with a quotation from Paulino José Miguel: “Germany is our Germany; we do not have to justify why we are here or where we came from, but it is our country. Period.”

## Mher Grigoryan Meets with Outgoing EU Ambassador to Armenia

YEREVAN – Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan received the head of European Union Delegation to Armenia, Ambassador Piotr Switalski, who is completing his diplomatic mission, on August 27.

On behalf of the Government of Armenia and himself, the Deputy Prime Minister thanked the ambassador for the work done during his tenure and the valuable contribution to the development of EU-Armenia relations. Mher Grigoryan highly appreciated Ambassador Switalski’s positive feelings towards Armenia.

The Deputy Premier wished Ambassador Switalski every success in his future endeavors and assured that he would remain a friend of Armenia and the Armenian people, and he would always be a welcome guest in our country.

Switalski thanked Grigoryan for his kind remarks and expressed gratitude for constructive cooperation and warm attitude. Switalski noted that he was leaving Armenia with good impressions and memories. He wished the Government every success in the reform process.



Ambassador Piotr Switalski, left, with Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan



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# Community News

## AGBU Inaugural Boston Summer Internship Program Successfully Comes to a Close

By Nicholas Zoraian

WATERTOWN – Interns ages 18 to 23 from around the world spent eight weeks in Boston this summer, as part of the inaugural Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) program here.

The program allowed students to explore fields in STEM, medicine, business, journalism, education and more.

The AGBU program includes opportunities to see the city of Boston, as the students live in the dormitories of Northeastern University (NEU) downtown. The program allowed students to walk the Freedom Trail, go whale watching at the seaport, tour numerous Armenian and American museums, etc.

Considering the nature of an internship, the students were not only able to find experience in a professional setting, but were also able to form lasting connections that will allow them to foster their budding careers. These interns not only form new connections with their employers and fellow employees, but also with interns in the AGBU program who are interested in different careers. This allows the students to explore different aspects of the professional field, while also learning how different fields interact.

The interns were also able to meet many professionals in various industries, forming great business connections with a vast network of people. Interns were given many opportunities to meet with AGBU Young Professionals throughout the program. Interacting with professionals in the field in which one studies gives the interns a sneak peek into the real world they wish to enter.

The interns spoke very highly of the program. One of the interns, Julia Samuelian interned as a research assistant, professor's assistant, and ancient Armenian coin decipherer at Harvard University. She discussed how the program affected her. "I love to be involved with the Armenian community," she said, "and this program has made me even more determined to be involved."

Another intern, Andrey Badalyan, was very positive about the program. AGBU got him an internship at the world renowned Broad Institute.

"The internship itself has been very valuable in terms of experience and getting new skills...It was invaluable for me to gain new skills in specific areas of biochemistry." He continued, "Throughout these eight weeks I had terrific opportunities being exposed to new techniques in the lab. My supervisors have been amazing and helped me along the way and I have gained a very, very important experience for the future"

Another one of the interns, Lea Eknadossian, who was able to work for a surgical pathology and histology lab talked about how this AGBU Summer Internship Program has made her want to become more involved. She grew up in Lebanon where she has been involved with various AGBU programs throughout her life. She said, "This internship program has inspired me to be more engaged and participate more, and be more involved in all the programs and take more leadership positions." She also mentioned that seeing the Armenian Heritage Park and going whale watching were the highlights of the summer.

Among the interns, everyone seems to be very grateful for the life-long friends and connections they made in the program.

At the end of the summer cookout, held at the AGBU offices in Watertown, some of the intern supervisors spoke to the audience. Aram Arkun, the executive secretary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association and assistant editor of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, spoke about how pleased he was with the performance of their intern, Nick Zoraian, and even promised involvement from the *Mirror-Spectator* in next summer's program.



Professor Christina Maranci

## Growing Interest in Armenian Art at Tufts

MEDFORD, Mass. – Enrollment has been increasing annually in the introductory course on Armenian art taught by Dr. Christina Maranci, holder of the Arthur H. Dadian and Ara T. Oztemel chair of Armenian Art in the Department of Art History at Tufts University. Maranci said, "I had 17 students my first year teaching Armenian art, and the numbers have been going up. Usually in the interim years, before now, I would get between 20 and 30.

By Aram Arkun  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

The last year or so, the number has really risen. And now I have 50 and ten more on the waiting list, so it is 60 plus."

Maranci speculated as to the reasons why, stating "I think students are getting more interested in cultures outside of the usual art historically important ones that we all know, like medieval Europe or Impressionism, or contemporary art. I think they are getting curious about other cultures and I try to talk about Armenia as a tradition that can connect to so many different cultures. And it is a way to think about what is important in our history." Looking at art through the Armenian lens, so to speak, leads to questions such as why do we privilege Greek temples and not talk about Garni. How do you write a history of art and why do you choose the cultures that you do? Maranci pointed out that there is nothing absolute about this. For example, she said, there is nothing inherently more valuable about the ancient Mediterranean region than Armenia. Armenia is a great example about how it has really not been served, and there are reasons for that too.

She said that many of her students are interested in political science and international relations, so they are interested in the perspective of cultural heritage, which makes the Armenian monuments living problems.

The recent show at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Armenia!, has attracted more attention to Armenian art, but, Maranci thought perhaps the zeitgeist has changed for Armenia in general. She said that "there is a general curiosity, interest and excitement around Armenian culture. These things go through fashions. You have to capitalize on it when things happen...You can leverage this whole global turn in the humanities and say, you want to be global, then you have to look at this culture, connected to so many other cultures, so mobile, interesting and vibrant." Armenian culture is studied from so many different points of view that, she said, it is a way to learn about much of the world and many disciplines while studying a specific subject very closely.

Finally, though she is too modest to say so, no doubt her teaching style is an important factor for students. Her course may not only be the only Armenian course that these students take but also the only art course, so they will remember it, she said, and some even will want to go visit Armenia afterwards.

The Tufts chair, Maranci has written, has two sets of goals – to educate see MARANCI, page 9

## AESA Conference At Glendale Tech Week 2019: Call For Abstracts

GLENDALE – On Sunday, September 15, the Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America (AESA) Conference at Glendale Tech Week will exhibit cutting-edge STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) related presentations and multidisciplinary panel discussions in a wide variety of technical topics.

AESA welcomes undergraduates, graduate students, and professionals engaged in science and engineering to apply and present their work in the form of a poster or oral presentation. Businesses and university affiliates are welcome to advertise academic programs and scout for bright talented individuals in our community.

"Join us as we lead the local STEM Community into the next wave of innovation through creativity, collaboration, and craftsmanship. The exciting opportunities in our very own neighborhood eagerly await you at the AESA Conference and Expo at Glendale Tech Week," said Shaunte Baboombian, chair of AESA Conference and Expo Organizing Committee.

This is an exceptional collaboration and networking opportunity amongst diverse presenters, program affiliates and local audiences. Students and professionals in science and engineering are expected to present their research and technology-



*"The annual AESA Conference and Expo will help create, foster, enable and empower the Armenian STEM community worldwide to not only reach its fullest potential but also address global challenges through innovative solutions."*

–Richard Ohanian

related advancements to dazzle your mind and imagination! AESA will also host an Expo on September 16 and 17 at the Armenian Society of Los Angeles. Attendees are welcome to bring their resume and meet the various businesses that will be exhibiting at the event.

The AESA Expo at Glendale Tech Week 2019 will showcase creative startups and established companies from Armenia and the U.S. and present their extensive wealth of technology, talent, and world-class entrepreneurial excellence. AESA welcomes all participants to register at [expo.aesa.org](http://expo.aesa.org).

"The annual AESA Conference and Expo will help create, foster, enable and empower the Armenian STEM community worldwide to not only reach its fullest potential but also address global challenges through innovative solutions. AESA strives to be the leading platform for achieving this because our mission, vision, values and core competency mandate us to be the leading organization to do so," said Vice President of AESA, Richard Ohanian.

The expo is open to all businesses here in the US and abroad.

General admission is free.



## OBITUARIES

# John Devedjian

## Pillar and Unifier of Greater Philadelphia Armenian-American Community

PHILADELPHIA – Just days after celebrating his 85th birthday with family and friends, John Devedjian passed away at home in West Chester, Penn. on August 30; he died after a long battle with cancer. He was 85.

He was the husband of nearly 59 years of Florence (née Hagopian), younger brother of Samuel S. Devedjian, father of Deborah and Jacquelyn (Timothy DeMirjian), and grandfather of Jenika, Derek, Caprice, and Brielle DeMirjian.

Devedjian was born in Camden, NJ to Armenian Genocide survivors, Gadar Araxie (née Ayjian) and Vahan Avedis Devedjian. He graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School at the age of 16. Beginning as an apprentice at John C. Meyer & Son, he quickly worked his way up to foreman, leading a team of typography specialists for four decades.

Devedjian was happiest while serving the Armenian-American community of Greater Philadelphia. He chaired the Board of Trustees of the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church and directed the church's annual Fourth of July picnic for 44 consecutive years, semi-retiring in 2019 to "focus on the sponsors." He also served on the church's Endowment Committee, led its Christian Youth Fellowship, and in 2007, spearheaded and co-chaired its 100th anniversary gala.

Devedjian believed in unifying communities. For many years, he served on the Board of Directors of the Armenian Sisters Academy, a private K-8 Montessori school in Radnor, whose board has consisted of two representatives from each of the five Philadelphia Armenian churches – one Catholic, one Protestant, and three Apostolic. His daughters were among the school's first graduates. John and his wife Florence also served on the school's annual silent auction Preserving Our Armenian Heritage ("POSH") Committee, the school's biggest fundraiser, for two decades.

A problem solver and man of action, he got the job done, letting others shine in deeds accomplished. In 1981, Mr. Devedjian and his six poker and pinochle pals lamented that there was no family-oriented place to celebrate New Year's Eve. So, they co-founded Philadelphia Armenian Nor Daree (PAND), bringing together Armenian families for a multi-day New Year celebration; for nearly 40 years, the Philadelphia-based event has drawn thousands from across the country.

He helped establish and co-directed the St.

Sahag and St. Mesrob Medical Fund whose proceeds benefit Armenian families with onerous healthcare costs.

In honor of the country's bicentennial in 1976, Devedjian served on the committee for the Thank You, America! gala at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York. The banquet honored 12 self-made business entrepreneur-philanthropists—including eight Armenian Genocide survivors—for their contributions to the United States and society. At the gala, the committee also announced the donation to the Metropolitan Museum of Art of 21 silk wall tapestries by American muralist Albert Herter chronicling the founding of America.

Mr. Devedjian was an avid sportsman and a proud member of the Cam-Phi Athletic Association, supporting Armenian youth in Camden and Philadelphia. Beginning as a teenager, for seven decades, he played basketball for Cam-Phi, then co-managed the team, taking them to a national victory in California in 1974 to the surprise of competing teams. Until his death, his early Cam-Phi buddies and their wives have been lifelong friends.

Inspired by Camden neighbor Jersey Joe Walcott's world heavyweight boxing championship in 1951, Devedjian often talked about his and his pals' pride in celebrating Walcott's victory. In his youth, he also played basketball against future Philadelphia 76er Wilt Chamberlain.

His mantra was, "Never complain. Complainers are a dime a dozen. If you have a problem, come to me with suggestions, and we'll get it done."

A man of integrity and laughter, he took active care of others.

"He was one of a kind. Whether you were a newcomer or an old friend, you walked into the church and got the Johnnie Dee handshake. You knew you were welcomed and belong," said Mark Momjian, a family law partner with Momjian Anderer in Philadelphia.

"Mr. Dee was loved and respected by everyone. He was always taking care of others. We gave him tickets to a Phillies game, so he took along an Afghan War vet with PTSD who'd always wanted to go to a baseball game. And it wasn't just little things, he was constant and steadfast. Who else would have directed the ushers and organized coffee hours after church each week for 25 years? For Mr. Dee, it was a labor of love," said Karen Bogosian, CEO of Visual Sound of Broomall.

"John was truly a winner and touched so many whom he encountered with genuine support and caring love," wrote Rev. Dr. Carnegie Calian, former president of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Family and friends were everything to him. Even his grandchildren's friends considered him family. "We can't express how much PopPop meant to us over the years. He always brought so much light into the lives of those around him," co-wrote seven long-time friends of Mr. Devedjian's 32-year old granddaughter, Jenika DeMirjian.

Devedjian's body has been donated to the University of Pennsylvania Abramson Cancer Center.

A memorial service will be held at the church on Saturday, November 16, at 11 am for family and friends. Visitation at 10 am.

To sign up to donate your body to science, contact Humanity Gifts Registry, P.O. Box 835, Philadelphia, PA 19105 or info@hgra.org.



# Marian (Sanders) Bandazian

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. – On September 4, Marian (Sanders) Bandazian, passed away in her home here.

She was born on July 23, 1940, in Teaneck, NJ. She was the wife of Dr. Walter Bandazian;

mother of Peri and Lori Bandazian; grandmother of Lily and Lucy Montorio; daughter of Kohar and Vahram Sandrakortzian; and sister of Armen Sanders.

Marian was a graduate of Fairleigh Dickinson University, and taught school in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

She was a supporter of the Armenian Assembly and participated in many of its activities. She was a member of the Bogota, NJ chapter of the AYF, and attended St. Vartanantz church in Ridgefield, NJ, and St. Leon church in Fair Lawn, NJ. She was an avid supporter of the Democratic Party.

Her contributions to the Armenian community were vast: she assisted with local Armenian cultural events as well as donating books and supplies to schools in Yerevan, Beirut and Syria. While residing in Beirut from 1972-1975, she taught children in the International High School while her own children attended the Nishan Palandjian Jemaran; Marian also volunteered her time to provide help to the earthquake victims in 1988, in the New York hospitals.



# Asdghig 'Starrie' Alemian Dies

ALEMIAN, from page 1

She liked to celebrate her birthdays at the Red Parrot in Hull.

She was skilled at needlepoint, Armenian needle lace, piano and cooking.

She was a proud and devoted mother, active in the PTA and the DeMolay Mothers Club.

She opened her home to anyone who needed her

She was the wife of the late Sarkis Edward Alemian; mother of Alan Alemian of Maryland, Susan Alemian Bentley of Pennsylvania, Stephan Alemian and his wife, Sharon, of Weymouth, Claire Alemian of Weymouth, the late Edward Alemian and his widow Alice McMasters of Fla., the late Sylvia Pope and the late Commander Haig Alemian, United States Navy, and his widow Jeanette of Virginia; sister of the late Anna Kaprelian; She also leaves 12 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great-grandchildren as well as many nieces and nephews.

Her funeral was on Monday, September 9, at the McDonald Keohane Funeral Home, South Weymouth. A funeral service was held at St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church, Watertown, on Tuesday. Burial was in Old North Cemetery, Weymouth.

A story in the *Patriot Ledger* by Sue Scheible in 2015, detailed some of the tragedies she witnessed as a child, as well as her later life, filled with a large family and lots of hard work and love: "Asdghig (meaning Little Star) Tetezian,

12 years old, arrived in this country in 1922 and lived with her uncle in Weymouth, in the Sunny Lea apartments, called 'the block.' She worked in a slipper factory and through relatives, met Sarkis Alemian, also from Armenia. When she turned 16, they were married in 1926, and from the start, their home welcomed relatives who needed a place to stay. She raised seven children, as well as her uncle's daughter, and 'she did all this without ever one thought about it,' her son, Stephen, says.

The couple worked in the family store, taking off only Sunday afternoons, and as they saved their money, they bought some property, including a place in Marshfield. Alemian thought nothing of packing up a picnic, including the shish kebabs and grille, taking the children to the beach, and climbing down with the youngest on her back.

The article continued: "Alemian's sunny disposition veers off course only when she begins to talk about her memories of the genocide: the long forced walk, how family members were promised food and "instead of bread they got the bullet." For years, those painful memories were wiped out and then "little by little," they came back. Claire quickly redirects her to happier memories – making popcorn for her uncle's parties, large family picnics."

To see a portion of her *Patriot Ledger* interview, visit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LaCHW5Btz0Q&feature=youtu.be>

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# Dr. Myron Allukian to Address St. James Men's Club Dinner Meeting

WATERTOWN – On Monday, October 7, there will be a St. James Armenian Church Men's Club dinner meeting at the St. James Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center in Watertown. The guest will be Dr. Myron Allukian, an internationally-recognized public health expert and the former Dental Director of the City of Boston for 34 years.

Allukian is a past president of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the second dentist in APHA's then 118-year history and the first Vietnam Veteran to be President of APHA. He served as Chairman of the US Surgeon General's Work Group on Fluoridation and Dental Health for the 1990 Prevention Objectives for the Nation, and the Dental Advisory Committees for Healthy People 2000, 2010, and 2020, the National Prevention Objectives.

He is on the faculty of the Schools of Dental Medicine of Harvard, Boston University and Tufts and was elected to the National Academy of Medicine and National Academy of Sciences in 1991. He is also an Honorary Fellow in the Royal Society of Health of Great Britain.

The title of Allukian's presentation is "Healthy Is Wealthy: How to Live a Healthy and Longer Life." It will include a discussion of health care in the United States with an

emphasis on what determines good or poor health and the impact on our lives by the US health care system and big business and what each individual, family, and society can do to help ensure healthier lifestyles and healthier lives.

Raised in Boston's South End, Allukian is a product of the Boston Public Schools and a graduate of Boston Latin School. He received his BS in psychology from Tufts College, his dental degree from the University of Pennsylvania and his master's degree in public health from the Harvard School of Public Health. He was also a meritorious fellow at Harvard.

Both his parents were from Aintab, Turkey and his mother, Mary Nahabedian Allukian, was a Genocide survivor.

He is a member of the Knights of Vartan and has been a member of the American Memorial Church for many years. He has six children and lives with his wife, Ruth, in Boston.

Allukian has extensive experience in access, policy, vulnerable populations, prevention, education and delivery systems and was an Associate Editor of the Journal of Public Health Dentistry.

A trustee of the New England College of Optometry, Allukian was also on the Board of



Dr. Myron Allukian

Directors of the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) and was the dental clinical director of the New England AIDS Education and

Training Center.

He has received over 50 awards including both the Distinguished Faculty and Distinguished Alumni Awards from Harvard, the Alumni Merit Award from the University of Pennsylvania, the Sedgwick Memorial Medal for Distinguished Service to Public Health from the American Public Health Association (He is the 1st dentist to receive this, APHA's highest award), recognition from the American Dental Association, U.S. Department of Labor and US Public Health Service.

Allukian is currently the President of the Massachusetts Coalition for Oral Health, Vice Chair of the Oral Health Working Group, World Federation of Public Health Associations, Vice President of the American Fluoridation Society and former Treasurer of the Commission of Dental Competency Assessment (formerly NERB). He has been called "The Social Conscience of Dentistry."

This St. James Men's Club dinner meeting will begin with a social hour and mezza at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. Mezza and Losh Kebab & Kheyma Dinner \$17/person. Ladies are invited.

The program will take place at the church's Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center, Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn St.

## Growing Interest for Armenian Art at Tufts

MARANCI, from page 7

undergraduates, non-specialists, and the general community in Armenian art and to train students for advanced work in the field. Her introductory survey course in the fall is followed by a spring seminar on various interesting aspects of Armenian art, such as manuscripts, architecture or even wall painting.

She only teaches two courses at the moment because of her concomitant responsibilities as chair of the art department. She is free to focus on Armenian art, because of the way her chair was set up by Dr. Lucy Der Manuelian, her predecessor.

Maranci has been teaching at Tufts since 2008. When she has taught the general art survey class at Tufts, she includes a lecture on Armenian art, so that it is one of the few places in the US where "Art 101" includes Armenian material.

Maranci's graduate students receive master's degrees, and since there is no doctoral program at Tufts, go on to places like Columbia University or Princeton. The master's degree students write their theses on Armenian subjects but for their doctorate work with a Byzantinist, Islamic Art specialist, or a medievalist. She continues to advise them as they advance in their work. They keep their interest in Armenia, and Maranci said, their primary doctoral advisors also become more familiar with it.

Thus, she said, "It is a way of planting or embedding Armenia in these big doctoral programs." Afterwards, they will be able to combine Armenian art history with their broader field. Maranci added that all the old traditional categories of specialists were breaking down, partly because universities no longer have the financial resources for separate specialists, so that having Armenia as a field may be useful to these students in various ways.

Maranci cofounded a graduate student workshop called East of Byzantium, which also gives graduate students exposure to the latest research on the Christian East, including, among other places, Armenia, Georgia, Syria, Central Asia and Georgia. Specialists are brought from outside in these fields.

In addition to her own research and writing, Maranci wrote her most recent book, *The Art of Armenia: An Introduction* (2018), in response to her students' needs, she said. She compiled a synthesis of new research in the field.

Maranci noted that Tufts was fortunate in having two chairs in Armenian studies. The second one is held by Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Darakjian and Jafarian Professor in Armenian History, who supports the students and is a good colleague and accomplished specialist in her own field.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

# Armenian Americans in Politics Join Panel at Armenian Assembly's National Advocacy Conference

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America announced that Armenian Americans active in politics are joining a panel on “The Importance of Advocacy” during the Assembly’s National Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C. on Monday, September 16.

California State Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian; President Donald Trump’s Transition Team Executive Director and Nahigian Strategies President and Founder Keith Nahigian; Michigan State Representative Mari Manoogian; and President George W. Bush Administration’s US Department of Transportation Maritime Administrator and former Michigan legislator John Jamian will join a panel moderated by Elise Kenderian Aronson, Vice President of Government Affairs at MacAndrews and Forbes Holdings and a former chief of staff on Capitol Hill.

“This panel discussion of Armenian Americans with experience in government relations and media messaging alongside current and former elected officials offers an important opportunity to inspire conference participants to advocate for stronger US-Armenia relations,” Assembly Congressional Relations Director Mariam Khaloyan said.

Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian represents California’s 46th Assembly District, which includes the Hollywood Hills, Lake Balboa,



Elise Kenderian Aronson with the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program Class of 2019

North Hills, North Hollywood, Panorama City, Sherman Oaks, Studio City, Toluca Lake, Valley Glen, Universal City, Van Nuys, and Valley Village. He has led many efforts in support of Armenians in California since his election in 2012, including the Turkish Divestment Bill and formal reaffirmation of the Armenian Genocide, as well as his work strengthening ties between the Republic of Armenia and

California, spearheading delegations of fellow state elected officials and business leaders while visiting Armenia and Artsakh.

Prior to being elected, Nazarian served as Chief of Staff to Paul Krekorian in both of Krekorian’s capacities as Assistant Majority Leader in the California State Legislature and as Los Angeles Councilmember. He was also an aide to Congressman Brad Sherman, participated in the prestigious CORO Fellowship in Public Affairs, and was appointed Special Assistant to the California Trade and Commerce Agency by former Gov. Gray Davis.

A 27-year veteran with top-level experience advising, designing, and managing some of the largest political campaigns in US history, Keith Nahigian has worked for governors, members of Congress, and served in the White House under the first Bush Administration. His work has

taken him around the world to dozens of countries and almost every state in the nation. Among other roles, he has served as Special Assistant to the vice president of the United States, special assistant to the Governor of New Jersey, consultant to the secretary of health and human services (HHS), and campaign manager to Rep. Michele Bachmann in her 2012 presidential campaign.

In 2000, he founded Nahigian Strategies, a full-service strategic communications and public relations firm based in Washington, DC, spanning diverse industries in the public and private sectors. Among his many career achievements, Nahigian has worked for six presidential campaigns, managed the messaging priorities for the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) at the request of the Secretary, and orchestrated both the Medicare Part D prescription drug enrollment campaign and the HHS Prevention and Value Driven campaign. He has significant experience working with the media and has been a frequent source of commentary for national news outlets, including the Washington Post, New York Times, Boston Globe, Wall Street Journal, ABC, CNN, NBC, CBS, Fox News, NPR, and others.

Michigan State Rep. Mari Manoogian is serving her first term representing the 40th House District, which includes Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, Bloomfield Township, and a portion of West Bloomfield Township. At 27, she is the youngest woman serving in the 100th Legislature, and the first Armenian-American woman to serve in the Michigan House. Prior to joining the legislature, Manoogian served in various capacities at the United States Department of State.

Manoogian is a third-generation American whose great-grandparents came to the US in



California State Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian with Armenian Assembly Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan, Armenian Assembly Southern California Regional Council Member Helen Haig, and Deacon Daniel Aydenian

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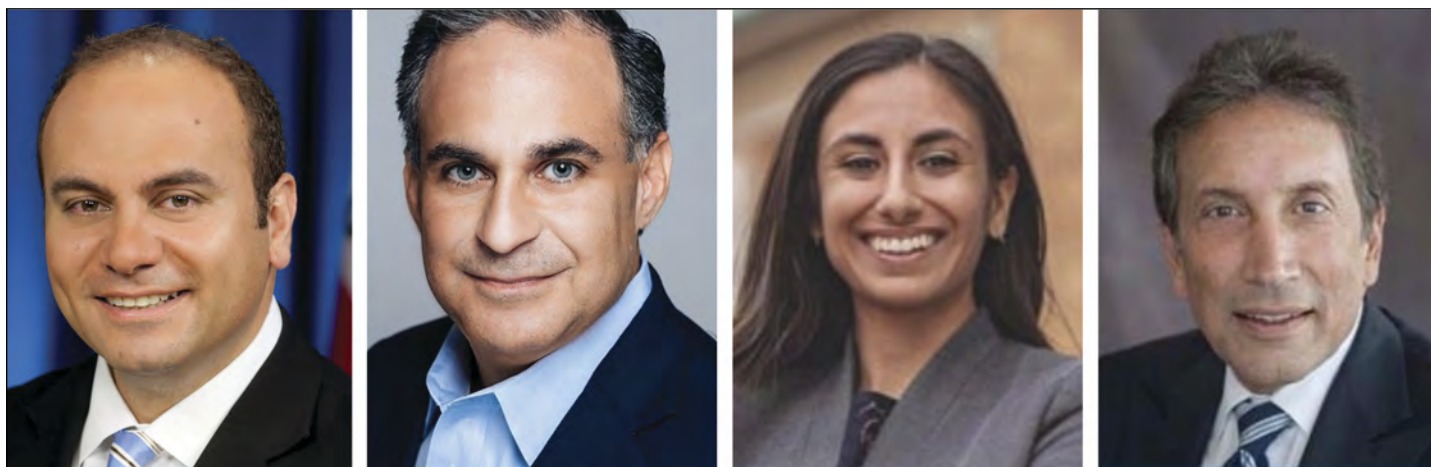
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*Ms. Shames's appearance is graciously underwritten  
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The presentation will be held in English.*



COMMUNITY NEWS



California State Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian; President Donald Trump's Transition Team Executive Director and Nahigian Strategies President and Founder Keith Nahigian; Michigan State Representative Mari Manoogian; and President George W. Bush Administration's US Department of Transportation Maritime Administrator and former Michigan legislator John Jamian

the 1920s to escape the Armenian Genocide, and she is a Board Member of the Armenian Genocide Education Committee in Michigan. She earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University. She is a member of Saint Sarkis Armenian Church in Dearborn.

Prior to his appointment and United States Senate confirmation to serve as Deputy Director of the Maritime Administration in the US Department of Transportation, John Jamian served as Executive Director of the Armenian Assembly of America from 2001 to 2002. Today, he is the Armenian Assembly's volunteer Michigan State Director, where he spearheads Assembly initiatives throughout the Great Lakes region.

Jamian is the first Armenian-American official to be elected to the Michigan House of Representatives. He served Michigan's 40th District from 1991-1996, and sponsored Genocide Resolutions in the Michigan House while in office. During his tenure as a Michigan legislator, he served as Chairman of the House Task Force Committee on Port and Maritime

Affairs. His work also included reporting on Intermodal Transportation Initiatives for the State of Michigan.

A longtime community activist, Jamian has co-chaired events honoring former Senator Bob Dole (R-KS) and President George W. Bush, and organized numerous fundraisers for local and national

politicians. He was instrumental in introducing the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues Congressman Joe Knollenberg (R-MI) and many other public officials to the Armenian community. He also helped establish Michigan's first Armenian American Public Affairs Committee. He is a member of St. John's Armenian Church of



Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program alumna Keith Nahigian with the Internship Program Class of 2019

Detroit and the Knights of Vartan Men's Lodge, as well as an active member of the Armenian Genocide Education Committee, which he helped for the passage of the 2016 House Bill 4493 - the "Genocide Education: Governor's Advisory Council and Curriculum and Assessment."

Elise Kenderian Aronson is senior vice president for Government Relations at MacAndrews and Forbes Incorporated, a private diversified holding company with interests in a broad portfolio of publicly traded and privately held companies. Current holdings include leading participants across a wide range of industries, including cosmetics, biotechnology, intelligent media delivery, education services, financial services, and national defense.

Prior to her current position, she spent more than 12 years on Capitol Hill, beginning in 1996, working for the then-House International Relations Committee. She left the Committee in 1997 to work for Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) as a Legislative Assistant from 1997 to 2000, covering military and health issues. In 2000, Elise joined the office of Congressman Jim Saxton (R-NJ) as the Legislative Director, responsible for managing the legislative staff in his Washington office. In 2003, she was promoted to Chief of Staff, overseeing all of his legislative and political operations in Washington, serving this in capacity until 2008.

The keynote speaker for the Advocacy Conference is David Bohigian, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) Acting President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Bohigian is the highest ranking Armenian American official in the Administration and traveled to Armenia last year in his official capacity. OPIC has helped finance numerous projects in Armenia over the years.

In addition to the luncheon, the National Advocacy Conference and Gala includes panel discussions, meetings on Capitol Hill, and a congressional celebration of United States-Armenia relations.

For more information on the National Advocacy Conference, visit [www.aimhye.com](http://www.aimhye.com).

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# Arts & Living

## Hagopian Rugs Receives 'Partners with The Arts' Award In Michigan

BIRMINGHAM, Mich. – The Cultural Council of Birmingham Bloomfield announced recently that Barbara Heller of Birmingham, has been selected as the 24th Annual Birmingham Bloomfield Cultural Arts Award Honoree. A jury of community arts enthusiasts selected Heller as the 2019 honoree because of her immense impact on the arts not only in the Birmingham/Bloomfield area, but also nationally and internationally.

As director and conservator of special projects at the Detroit Institute of Arts, and former chief conservator, she has her unseen hand on most of the DIA's greatest works, including the conservation of the Diego Rivera Detroit Industry Frescoes, as well as on projects throughout the country and Europe. Locally, Heller is an active volunteer. Heller has chaired the Public Arts Board in Birmingham for many years and has been responsible for overseeing, promoting and facilitating the installation of public sculptures throughout the city. She is an energetic worker on many other boards including the Michigan Legacy Art Park, and the Marshall M. Fredericks Sculpture Museum.

The Cultural Council will also present its first "Partners with the Arts" award to Hagopian World of Rugs. The new award honors a non-profit, business or organization that supports the arts in the Birmingham Bloomfield community. Hagopian is being recognized for their philanthropy especially as major benefactors of the DIA, as well as their collaborations in the community which include their annual rug-design scholarship competition in conjunction with the College



From left, Angela, Edmund and Suzanne Hagopian

of Creative Studies, their Friday Nightnotes concerts of Jazz, pop and a 25-year collaboration with Detroit Chamber Winds & Strings, an annual statewide student design competition in association with the American Society of Interior Design, and an annual student writing contest on the Armenian Genocide for middle and high-school students.

The Birmingham Bloomfield Cultural Arts Awards are sponsored by the Cultural Council of Birmingham Bloomfield, in partnership with The Community House, The Observer and Eccentric Newspapers, and the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center. Link Wachler, of LINK Jewelry Designs will design the 2019 presentation award.

The public is invited to the awards recep-



Michel Hallet Eghayan

## Michel Hallet Eghayan

### 'The Rhythm of My Dances Is the Rhythm of Charents' Poetry'

YEREVAN – On July 24, ballet fans here had the great opportunity to enjoy one of the best contemporary ballet companies of France, named after its founding director, Michel Hallet Eghayan. Six dancers presented the new piece of Hallet Eghayan, named "Hurrah!"

**By Artsvi Bakhchinyan**

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Before that they performed it in Gavar and Sevan – towns, where ballet is totally absent...

Hallet Eghayan was born in 1946 in Lyon, to an Armenian mother and a

French father. In 1973, in New York, he studied with eminent ballet teachers Margaret Craske and Merce Cunningham. Back in his hometown in 1976, he founded his eponymous company at the same time as the school. He is also the co-founder of the Maison de la Danse de Lyon. Since then, he has created about 100 performances ("Back Forward," "Orlando Furioso," "The Creek Island," "Tribute to Kandinsky," etc.).

I conducted this interview with Michel after watching the general rehearsal of "Hurrah!"

**Michel, barev, lav es? (Hi Michel, are you fine?).**

Parev, lav em... (Hi, I am fine).

**You were in Armenia 23 years ago.**

That's right, we came here, and you remember that, in spring 1996, you saw our piece named "Hommage a Kandinsky." It was extremely impressive for us to perform that piece at that time at that opera. And we came again in December 2018 with a special mission in Gegharkunik province, where we ran workshops for children in Gavar and Sevan, organized by the municipalities of Grenoble and Lyon. The current trip was also organized by politicians in France, who are involved in culture and who link relations with Armenia, and especially the department of art of the city of Grenoble. They approached me through the beautiful museum Saint-Antoine-l'Abbaye, which has a huge, gorgeous convent with a wonderful museum led by Geraldine Mocelin, who fell in love with the work of our dance company.

She saw my production based on Armenia, "Le chante de Karastan" (The Song of Stoneland, i. e. Armenia), was absolutely impressed and asked me for a new piece, so I staged this new performance and now we are here in Armenia to be linked to its art and maybe heart.

**And Tigran Hamasyan's music was the most suitable piece for your performance?**

I just fell in love with his music. He is a musical genius. When I first met his music, he was only 29, and I said to myself: wow, he is so young and where he is going? If he is going too high, his music might be in danger. He came to my studio in Lyon and said: 'OK, Michel, go ahead with the performance.' It is a pity he was not here, but with his wife Ellen in Los Angeles, I guess, they are happy and continue making beautiful music and a lot of other beautiful things.

**Going back to Kandinsky, I could see some similarities between it and "Hurrah!" particularly, in both productions we see the dancing in silence.**

I would love to do that, but you know, that is not something new. Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Merce Cunningham did that same. For me it is a source of happiness, because the rhythm of dance you get is pure, absolutely direct and wonderful.

see DANCE, page 13

## Apcar Event Dedicated to Armenian-Japanese Friendship

LOS ANGELES – The Western Diocese of the Armenian Church and the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles, supported by the Little Tokyo Service Center, the Japanese American National Museum, and the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, will co-sponsor a special presentation by Dr. Meline Mesropyan of Tohoku University (Japan) speaking on the legacy of Diana Apcar, who lived in Japan from 1891-1937 and is known for her major impact on Japan-Armenia relations and aid to Armenian refugees.

The program will take place on September 17, at 7 p.m. at the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, 3325 N. Glenoaks Boulevard, Burbank. Doors open 6:30 p.m.

Mesropyan's presentation will focus on Diana Agabeg Apcar's (1859-1937) humanitarian work. Between 1915 and the late 1920s, about 1500 out of several hundreds of thousands of



Diana Apcar

Armenian refugees managed to reach Japan where they found Apcar's enormous support. Through her crucial assistance they were able to go to the US and other final destinations. This talk focuses on how being a single woman in Japan, she could overcome various problems she faced in carrying out her humanitarian work.

Mesropyan will be joined by the great-granddaughter of Diana Apcar, Mimi Malayan. In 2018, Malayan released a documentary on the life of Diana Apcar entitled "Stateless Diplomat," which has won several awards including the Armin T. Wegner Humanitarian Award (Arpa International Film Festival, 2019), Best Biographical Film (New Hope Film Festival, July 2019) and Audience Choice for Best Documentary (Pomegranate Film Festival, November 2018).

Dr. Meline Mesropyan was born and raised in Yerevan and initially earned her bachelor's degree in Japanese linguistics. She graduated in March 2019 from the Graduate School of International Culture at Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan. She has spent the last six years as a Master's and PhD student researching the life and work of Diana Apcar. Her PhD dissertation, written in Japanese and making extensive use of Japanese archival data, deals with the Japanese government's processing of Armenian refugees during World War I and Diana Apcar's role. She lives in Sendai and is currently in the process of developing her PhD dissertation into a book on the life of Diana Apcar.



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# 'The Rhythm of My Dances Is the Rhythm of Charents' Poetry'

DANCE, from page 12

**For me Kandinsky's final was the best part with its flashing movements of lights and shadows.**

Listen, listen, listen, you have a wonderful memory. It was Maurice Ravel's music, named *The Mourning Song of Kaddish* or *Two Hebrew Melodies*. I am happy you remember the final, because it means that hopefully the dance was a bit of the level of the music.

**And "Hurrahs" final was also very impressive, as it was unexpected. Generally, in big contemporary choreographic productions with no dramaturgy involved, I think it is always a challenge how to end it.**

You speak about the theatrical, literal or philosophical dramaturgy, but in dancing, for me the dramaturgy can be also inside of the soul. The dramaturgy is the necessity of what the soul needs. But in art we have to fail so many times, I have not succeeded so many times, I was sad so many times, so I always tried to find the right solution, and often what you did find is not right, but hopefully the final of Kandinsky was right. I hope for "Hurrah!" it was right too.

**It was absolutely right for both cases... You always say dancing is a facet of thinking. Every choreographer has his own facet of thinking. What is your characteristic facet?**

It is so hard to say. I thought you were a good guy, but you are not! I cannot answer such a question (laughing). The right point at the right time depends on what we are living now. We cannot decide like that, as it is not an intellectual process, but a mental process. The mental is the point when the breath of you goes ahead with the breath of God. It happens sometimes once or twice in life. When it happens once or twice in our life, we have a beautiful life.

**Great answer. And now please tell me about your influences and inspirations.**

You know, just now I have an influence from you, as I am very glad to meet in Yerevan such a kind man with a glance so deep and serious...

**Michel, please! I am not going to write about myself.**

Actually whatever you write you write also about yourself. Aragon's wonderful book on Henri Matisse is not only about Matisse, but also on Aragon himself.

**Well, but what about your inspirations as a choreographer? You studied in United States, and in some parts of your current productions I could see the principles of George Balanchine, who used to illustrate the music with dance movements...**

Very clever, very clever, very clever! This guy is clever! You know, my teacher Merce Cunningham loved Balanchine's works. He loved to speak with me (sometimes in French) and he was saying: you know, Michel, each time when Balanchine was making a new piece, I go,

and music. This means something very important – we just love each other, that's the point! In art there is not "this one" or "this one," there is "this one" and "this one." And in France there is always this tendency to create a new style. I don't like when they say "this is old fashioned" or not. There is just good work and bad work.

**Many contemporary French choreographers have begun with your company. Yesterday at our Opera and Ballet Theater I attended your practice with the dancers and was amazed the way you run it – balanced, always in a positive mood, with humor. You are the first choreographer and dance teacher**

India and after coming back she trained almost all the stars of that time, including Margot Fonteyn. I took classes with her, when she was 83; she was so wise, deep and knowledgeable. She was in the truth of dancing, so how can you shout at your students? I myself am not so calm at all; I am half Armenian, but when I teach dancing, I am also in the truth of dancing. When you are in the truth of prayer or loving, are you nervous? And don't ask me what is the truth, because I will never answer! (laughing).

**Instead I will ask you to tell about the roots of your Armenian family.**

I don't know about my grandfather Kirkor Yeghiayan's side. My grandmother Takuhi

**productions? Music, movements, spirit?**

I would love to show "Le chante de Karastan" in Armenia. It is one of most important pieces that I have ever made. I used the music of Arno Babajanyan, then arrangements of a French composer of Armenian music. In this regard let me tell you something. In 1994 the first dance biennial took place in Lyon. The director asked me to make a new piece, and I staged "Retour en Avant" (Return to Ahead) with Johan Sebastian Bach's music. It was a huge success, which we repeated for many times always with packed audience. After the premiere, ministers and many other people came to congratulate me, and at the end a man approached me and



Dancers performing the choreography of Michel Hallet Eghayan

**whom I saw working without yelling. How you will explain this phenomenon?**

I am a dance teacher; I shape dancers, so how can you train them without loving them? You know, I was very lucky in my dancing life to have had two great teachers – Margaret Craske and Merce Cunningham. British choreographer and dance teacher Craske was a one-time star of Ballet Russe de Serge Diaghileff, known as Margareta Krasova at that time, who trained

comes from Izmit. They married in Constantinople and went to Smyrna, just before of the fire of Smyrna. They escaped to Samos. My grandmother remembered how the city was burning and they were crying. Then they moved to Thessaloniki. My grandmother was telling me: "Michel, at that time the Greeks had nothing to eat, but they gave us food to eat." Then they went to Bulgaria, but this country was also poor. There they heard that France needs workers, as after the devastations of the World War I more than one million Frenchmen had died. So my grandparents left for France and eventually settled in Lyon. Here my mother Elizabeth Yeghiayan was born. The family name was transcribed in French as Eghayan. By the way, my company first was called "Companie Michel Hallet," but when I saw it I felt that something remained empty. So I added my mother's surname, and since it is "Companie Michel Hallet Eghayan."

**And how did you become a dancer?**

Ask God! I don't know. If you grow in an immigrant family, you should not be an artist, but a part of the society, becoming a doctor, an engineer, a lawyer... I started as an amateur dancer when I was 20, but I decided to devote myself to dance when I saw the movie "Westside Story." When I told Takuhi I want to be a dancer, she shouted, yelled, cried so much that I stopped dancing for years, from age 20 to 27. I understood that dancing for my grandmother was frightening. For her being a dancer was associated with the Ottoman times, when beautiful girls were taken to harems and forced to dance. I studied psychology, economics, kinesiologic therapy... but when I saw Merce Cunningham's performance "Un jour ou deux (A Day or Two)" at Paris Opera, at 27, my further life as a dancer and choreographer was determined!

**What do you have so far Armenian in your**

presented himself as the bishop of the Armenians in Lyon, Monsignor Norvan Zakarian. He is one of the hugest people I met in my life. After congratulating me he told me something absolutely fundamental, while putting his palms in a certain way on the air: "Mr. Eghayan, if I put my hands like this, then the feet and legs will have Armenian movements." It was very rough time for the Armenians: hard political situation, war, Karabakh... and this guy after such successful evening is telling me something like that! I hated what he said!

Six months later a friend of mine, a beautiful lady, invited me to a lecture about the poetry of [Yeghishe] Charents. I did not know the poet, so I went there with two of my good dancers, and we heard Charents' beautiful poems in Armenian and French translation. And just all of a sudden I was rather terrified; my two dancers turned to me and we were watching to each other, as the rhythm of poetry was the rhythm of my dances! Can you believe that? It was impossible! And my dancers, who do not speak Armenian, also said that the rhythm of the poems is identical to that of our dances! In my body I had a feeling of dancing, which means: over the language there are energy and rhythms, which are mathematical patterns that go through the memory and bodies. The rhythm is a physical, not cultural or any national other issue. We, Armenians, have various cultures, but there is civilization, which is first the civilization of a cross and the civilization of special rhythms, which is being analyzed mathematically and physically, and which compose the Armenian understanding of the world. Thus, since that time it was a revelation for me that we all are kids of vibrations, that belong to mathematics and physics and which structure us and Armenia as a special kind.



Michel Hallet Eghayan at work

It is very impressive, as Balanchine was extremely strict regarding the relationship with music, but Merce's choreography was absolutely independent in relationship with music. But the guy who created pure independence between dance and music loves the guy who is the cleverest in interrelations between dance

her students with the Cechetti method, getting them to be prepared for training not only physically, but also mentally and spiritually. And she was also a Buddhist, she had a *Baba* in India, a great man, who convinced Margaret upon the beginning of World War II to leave England and move to India. For almost five years she lived in

## BOOKS

# The Armenian Church. An introduction to Armenian Christianity by Aram I Catholicos of Cilicia

By Rev. Dr. Vrej (Nerses) Nersessian

Aram I [Keshishian] Armenian Catholicos of the See of Cilicia is an internationally recognised ecumenical church leader. He served for two terms (1991-2005) as Moderator of the World Council of Churches and two terms (2006-2016) as president of the Middle East Council. His many publications include *The Challenge to Be a Church in a Changing World* (1997), *The Christian Witness at the Crossroads in the Middle East* (2004) and *L'eglise face aux grands défis* (2001).

In the words of the author, the purpose of The Armenian Church is not to present an all-encompassing history, theology, or mission of the Armenian church, rather, to highlight those specific features of the Armenian Church that ensure its identity and spell out its particular mission, in the life of the Armenian people.

What attracted this reviewer to the volume was to read what the Catholicos had to say on Two Catholicosates within One Church (pp.73-75).

The origins of this schism in the Armenian church, despite being clothed in ecclesiastical garb and reference to theological precedent, are essentially political, going back to December 13, 1922, when Armenia became a constituent part of USSR. The Armenian Revolutionary Party (Dashnak) were unhappy with the situation in communist-dominated mother church at Echmiadzin (Descent of the Only Begotten Son), whose head Catholicos Khoren Mouradbekian was murdered by the Bolsheviks in 1938. Few years earlier the primate of the diocese of North America Archbishop Ghevond Durian was murdered by a group of the Dashnak assailants on 24th December 1933, while the celebrant was processing through the congregation in the Church of Holy Cross, New York for his support of Soviet Armenia.

In 303 AD, the Armenian Catholicate was founded in Holy Echmiadzin in the city of Vagharshapat (now Echmiadzin). Its ecclesiastical jurisdiction spread over all the dioceses in Great and Minor Armenia, which numbered 13 bishoprics. The title of the catholicos at that time was "Catholicos of Great Armenia" which was conceived as a geographical definition. As the only and longest surviving institution of the Armenian nation it adapted itself to the exigencies of the political turmoil and instability following the migratory habits of a majority of his spiritual flock. Following the division of Armenia between Persia and Byzantium in 387 and 391 respectively, the seat of the Catholicate moved to the several locations, where the political centre of the nation was - Holy Echmiadzin (301-484/5), Dvin (484-927), Aghtamar (927-947), Argin (947-1001), Ani (1001-1051), Sebastia (1051-1062), T'avlour (1066-1090), K'souni Karmir Vank' (1090-1116), Dsov'k' (1116-1149), Hromkla 1149-1292), and Sis (1293-1441). When the Armenian Cilician Kingdom seized to function in 1375, a religious-national council convened in Holy Echmiadzin and took the decision to transfer the See to its place of origin in Vagharshapat. By political necessity, thirteen regional errant Catholicos emerged from 1113 to 1895 all recognising the legal Apostolic primacy and jurisdiction of the Catholicos of All Armenians in Echmiadzin including the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem (638) and of Constantinople (1461). In the fourteenth century the situation for the papacy was also chaotic.

In 1309 Pope Clement V moved the papal court to Avignon because of the persistently dangerous situation in the city of Rome and in 1378 Pope Gregory XI transferred the papacy

back to Rome. The French cardinals rejected the move and elected rival popes at Avignon, thus instigating the Great Schism which lasted until 1417. But it is worth stressing but never did the rival popes question the primacy of the See of St. Peter.

On March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill on a historic visit to the United States, delivered his "Iron curtain" speech in Fulton, Mis. in which he warned western democracies against the dangers of the spread of Soviet Communism. On March 12, 1947, US President Harry S. Truman announced his resolution to resist communist aggression around the world, which became the pivot-point of American foreign policy. The Cold War intensified, aggravating the fissures that already existed between the worldwide Armenian diaspora and its Soviet-dominated homeland.

When Archbishop Garegin Hovsepeants (1943) a member of the Brotherhood of Holy Echmiadzin was elected Catholicos of the See of Cilicia, none

of the parties raised any objections to his candidature, since there was at the time a united Armenian front. However when he died in 1952 the situation changed: "the cold war had sunk its icy blade into the Armenian community." Moves which had been afoot in 1945-46 to reunite the parts of the church which had been virtually separated following the murder of Archbishop Ghevond Durian in 1933 came to an abrupt end. The Dashnak party were preparing to win the election of the succeeding Catholicos and extend the gulf between the two jurisdictions that was mostly played out in the Middle East and the United State under the dictates and manipulation of the Dashnak Party in Syria and Lebanon. In their single-minded resolve to participate in the ongoing worldwide political struggle between the Soviet Union of which the Republic of Soviet Armenia was a member, and the western World led by the United states of America. The leaders of the Dashnak party literally hijacked a branch of the hierarchy of the Armenian Church in the diaspora, thus sundering the integrity of the only traditionally unifying centuries-old institution. By promoting the misguided notion that the Catholicos of all Armenians was a "tool and agent" of the communists, the Dashnak party succeeded in dividing the loyalties and sense of unity among section of the Armenian communities in the Diaspora. In 1950 on the request of Catholicos Georg VI Tchorekchian (1945-1954) two delegates representing Holy Echmiadzin (Archbishop Ruben Drambian and Prof. Ashot Abrahamian) were sent to attend the election of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem. In his letter to the Minister of Religious Affairs the Catholicos emphasises the importance of this visit as "this will also provide the opportunity for them to meet Garegin I Catholicos of Cilicia and know from him about the divisive activities of the political parties and their supporters against the Armenian church and to be aware of their unforgivable methods so that we can prepare the required counter actions. Several years before in 1938, Garegin Hovsepeants writing to the Spiritual Council in Echmiadzin on the prevailing atmosphere in California and the Eastern Diocese of America following the murder of the Primate recommends that "his presence in the diaspora is doubly important both morally and financially until the election of the new primate takes place. Without the presence of candidate from Holy Echmiadzin we are bound to lose a lot from the point of view of the entire nation and Holy Echmiadzin during this period of vacancy. He draws his conclusion " We must have in front of our mind, that the Dashnak media in particular through disinformation and exaggerated rowdiness are sowing the seeds of enmity in the minds of the faithful to confuse them and reduce and cut their ties as much as possible

from the Armenian government and Echmiadzin. My presence here will act as a dike against such tendencies. As early as 1925 Archbishops Khoren Mouradbekian ( future catholicos from 1932-1938) and Garegin Hovsepeants in a report to His Holiness Catholicos of All Armenians Georg V Sureneants (1911-1930) inform His Holiness that in their meeting with the first commissar of the Armenian Communist Party Aramayis Erznkian( 1878-1937) the minister had "complained that some primates of Holy Echmiadzin in the diaspora, particularly in Tabriz, America and Europe were co-operating and collaborating with representatives of the Dashnak party in their anti-Armenian activities. It is our wish, that the church through its representatives adopt a neutral stance in the political orientation of the diaspora.' Among the few names directly mentioned are Bishop Grigoris Palak'ian (Europe), Tirayr Ter Movsessian (America), Nerses Ter Melik'Tangian (Tabriz)[« ibid.pp.399-40] .

The schism in the Armenian church was aggravated with the election in 1956 of Catholicos Zareh I Paysalian February,20, 1956) and his consecration by three bishops in attendance two Armenian and one Syrian, which Holy Echmiadzin quite understandably declared "defective and un-canonical." On February 23,1963 Catholicos Khoren I Paroyan succeeded Catholicos Zareh, who upon his election declared himself "Catholicos of All Armenians in the Great House of Cilicia in the Diaspora," an incongruous and fallacious claim with no historical legitimacy and canonical precedence, placing himself as the equal of the catholicos of All Armenians. In a short period of time under duress and against the will of the communities the dioceses of Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Greece, Kuwait were forced to transfer their allegiance to Ant'elias and under intense political pressure creating parallel prelaties in the United States, Canada and France. Since the elevation in 1994, Catholicos Aram I of Cilicia has actively encouraged the encroachment of the temporal jurisdiction of the

Catholicos of All Armenians, ignoring the reality of the demise of the Soviet Union and the independence of the state of Armenia.

In the section on "Hierarchy and Decision-making," the author gives a unique and conflicting account for the emergence of the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia. On the one hand he attributes it to the "growing tension caused by the openness of the Cilician clergy and the conservatism of the clergy of Armenia" and on the other hand because "much of the diaspora was virulently anti-Soviet." The present schism in the Armenian Church should not be legitimised by suggesting that it is a continuation of the event in 1441, when after the collapse of the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia, the Catholicosate was transferred to her place of origin in Vagharshapat. It is worth noting the term used is "transfer or return"[P'okhadrut'iwn] the feast of which is marked on the same day as the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord. This term is employed for very important ecclesiological reasons. The movement of the See from one location to another does not affect in any degree, the standing, the jurisdiction and authority of the incumbent catholicos. The catholicos is not the catholicos of Echmiadzin but in Echmiadzin. The site itself is entirely secondary. But the unity of the jurisdiction of the first minister of the Church is primary. Some cities have sacred associations attached to them. Our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified and rose in Jerusalem, the Apostles Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome, Echmiadzin is the site where the "Only begotten Son of God" descended. The Patriarch of Antioch now resides in Damascus, but calls himself Patriarch of Antioch, the Pope of the Coptic Church resides in Cairo but retains the title of Patriarch of Alexandria. The Pope of Rome while in exile in Avignon continued to call himself the Bishop of Rome and the Armenian catholicos while in Cilicia retained the title Bishop of Vagharshapat.

The desire to transfer the Holy See to Armenia proper was not prompted by the see CILICIA, page 15

**Ant'elias - Lebanon: Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2016, pp.241[ii]. ISBN 978-9953-0-3710-3.**

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## The Armenian Church. An introduction to Armenian Christianity By Aram I Catholicos Of Cilicia

CILICIA, from page 14

“conservative” clergy back in Armenia but also by such famous Catholicos in Cilicia such as St. Grigor III Pahlavuni (r.1113-1166) and his successor Nerses IV Klayetsi, called Shnorhali (r.1166-1173) who in his ‘General Epistle’ [‘T’ught’Endhanrakan] calls himself ‘Catholicos of All Armenians’ replacing the definition ‘Catholicos of Great Armenia’ [‘Kat’oghikos Hayots’ Medsats’].

In its ecclesiology the Armenian church follows the Apostolic Canons and the canons of the first three Ecumenical councils. The Apostolic credentials of the Armenian church is based on the teachings of the Apostles Saint Bartholomew and St Thaddeus. Apostolic authority and jurisdiction is not transferable and hence it is confusing to say that “The two catholicos are equal in rank and they possess the same ecclesial authority, responsibilities, rights, and privileges within the Armenian Church” (p.74). There cannot be plurality of Catholicosate in different locations.

Canon 2 of the Council of Constantinople clearly states:

“Let the bishops refrain from interfering in churches outside the limits of a diocese and from causing trouble in the churches[...].If they are not invited, let the bishops refrain from going outside a diocese for an ordination or for any other ecclesiastical act’ [ Archbishop Peter L’Huillier, The church of the ancient councils, New York, 1996, p.115, Kanonagirk’ Hayots’, vol. I, p. 274]. This ecclesiology involves catholicity, the realisation of which is linked indissolubly with primacy. The primacy should be assumed in the spirit of the thirty-fourth Apostolic canon:

“The bishops of each local church should recognise the one in their midst who is first and consider him as their head, while undertaking nothing exceptional without his knowledge. Each of them should occupy himself only with the concerns of his own diocese and of dependent lands. Thus concord shall prevail and God shall be glorified – Father, Son and Holy Spirit”[ Kanonagirk’ Hayots, vol. I, pp.83-84]

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 resulted in an unprecedented role for the Orthodox Church in Russian society. The Moscow Patriarchate, after 80 years, re-incorporated into its fold the rival faction set up in the West by monarchists fleeing the Soviet Union. The diaspora restored ties with their mother church in a lavish cathedral ceremony. Patriarch Alexy II called it an historic day: “a day of bringing together the resettled children of our motherland and church. Following the death of Catholicos Vazgen I, the people in 1995 elected Catholicos Garegin II of Cilicia to succeed as Catholicos Garegin I in Holy Echmiadzin, hoping that the rivalry between the two sees would be put to rest. The present Catholicos and author of this volume latching on to a false and irrelevant premises has assiduously avoided the challenge he set himself when he became Catholicos of the Great See of Cilicia. These were the words of his sermon given at his consecration ceremony on 1st July 1995: “Unity is a gift of God; it is also a call. Let us not lose this golden opportunity for the sake of our church and people. Let us respond to this call of God in courage, in humility and in faithfulness to our forefathers and our common goal” (The challenge to be a church in a challenging world, p.13). Catholicos Aram I like his predecessor have devoted considerable effort within the WCC for the cause of unity among churches and it is ironic that the schism in the Armenian church which was a result of the “cold war” still remains as a symbol of the era of the “cold war.”

## Author Raffi Bedrosyan to Discuss Armenians in Turkey at Watertown Talk

WATERTOWN – Author Raffi Bedrosyan will discuss his recent publication *Trauma and Resilience: Armenians in Turkey—Hidden, Not Hidden and No Longer Hidden*, at the AGBU New England Center, 247 Mt. Auburn St., on Wednesday, September 25, at 7:30 p.m.

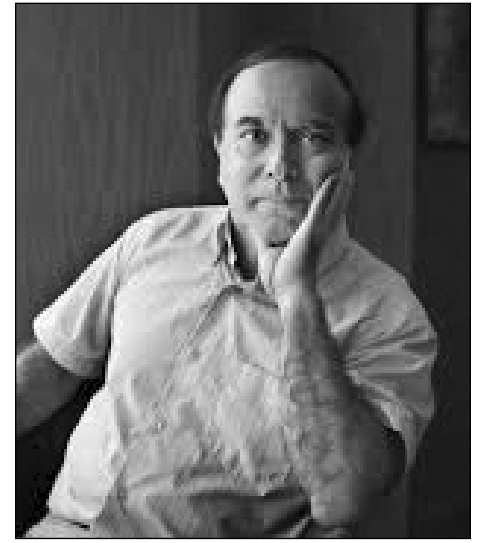
The event is co-sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and the AGBU New England District. The program will be moderated by George Aghjayan.

*Trauma and Resilience* (Garod Books, 2018) is a collection of articles about events in Turkey which have profoundly affected the lives of Armenians, hidden Armenians and no longer hidden Armenians who have recently returned to their roots. The genocide in 1915 not only caused the disappearance of 1.5 million Armenians from their historic homeland, but also resulted in the assimilation and Islamization of thousands of Armenian

orphans, creating the “hidden Armenians,” the living victims of the genocide. Almost 100 years later, certain events encouraged the grandchildren of the hidden Armenians to re-awaken and return to their Armenian roots, language and culture.

Bedrosyan is a Toronto-based civil engineer and concert pianist. He was involved in organizing the Surp Giragos Diyarbekir reconstruction project and, in 2012, gave the first Armenian piano concert in the church since 1915. A second concert was held on April 23, 2015, to commemorate the centennial. George Aghjayan is a researcher as well as a member of NAASR’s Board of Directors and chairman of the ARF Eastern Region Central Committee.

This event is free and open to the public. A reception and refreshments will take place before and after the program. *Trauma and Resilience* will be available for purchase and signing by the author.



Raffi Bedrosyan

# Recipe Corner

Guest Recipe



by Christine Vartanian Datian

## Saghi Bourma (rolled pastry with walnuts) and Egg-Lemon Sauce

Writer and author C.K. Garabed (a.k.a. Charles Kasbarian) shares his version of a traditional Dikranagerdtsi recipe from his Armeniapedia.org Dikranagerd Cookbook, which is currently under development.

### SAGHI BOURMA

#### INGREDIENTS:

1-1 lb. package filo dough, at room temperature  
1 lb. chopped walnuts or pistachio nuts  
3-4 tablespoons granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
2-3 sticks unsalted butter, melted

#### PREPARATION

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Be sure filo dough is thawed according to package's directions.

Lay out filo dough on a work surface. Place a piece of plastic wrap directly on the dough and then a slightly moistened towel on top of the plastic wrap. This will keep dough from becoming brittle while you work.

Mix the chopped nuts, sugar and cinnamon in a bowl. Take a single filo sheet and fold it in half. Brush with melted butter, especially the edges. Sprinkle a tablespoon of the nut mixture over dough.

Place dowel on top of dough at the end closest to you, and loosely roll dowel away from you. (What is a dowel? A wooden dowel, about 3/8" in diameter and 18" long, the kind that you can purchase at any home improvement center, is the key to shaping bourma.)

With one hand on either end of dough, squeeze inward toward the middle, crinkling dough. Gently slide dough off the dowel, and place on a greased baking sheet.

Continue to do this until all filo sheets and filling are used. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until bourma is golden brown. Cool completely. Once bourma is cooled, drizzle with simple syrup before serving.

Yield: Makes approximately 3 dozen.

#### SIMPLE SYRUP

##### INGREDIENTS

2 egg yolks, beaten  
Juice of 1 lemon

#### PREPARATION

Make the simple syrup by bringing the sugar and water to a boil, stirring. Add lemon juice, and stir again. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved and liquid reduces by a third, about 10 to 12 minutes. The syrup should coat the back of a spoon. Cool until ready to use.

#### References:

<https://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/search?q=boorma>

<https://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/2009/05/boorma-paklavas-deliciously-delicate.html>

For recipes by C.K. Kasbarian, see the Dikranagerd Mystique Armenian Cookbook: [http://www.armeniapedia.org/wiki/Saghi\\_bourma\\_\(Rolled\\_pastry\\_w/walnuts\)](http://www.armeniapedia.org/wiki/Saghi_bourma_(Rolled_pastry_w/walnuts))

\*This recipe is a reproduction of a classic bourma recipe that appears at thearmeniankitchen.com website created by the late Arpie Vartanesian, and is published with the approval of Robyn and Doug Kalajian. For a useful how-to-make bourma video featuring the late Arpie Vartanesian, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZ14hVCIOAw>.





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## ARIZONA

**NOVEMBER 2-3 — ARMENIAFest at St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church.** Weekend food and cultural festival featuring traditional Armenian foods, beverages, exhibits, music and dance performances. 8849 E. Cholla St., Scottsdale.

## CALIFORNIA

**NOVEMBER 23 — Armenian EyeCare Project Gala.** Join the Armenian EyeCare Project for its annual Gala celebrating another year of great accomplishments in Armenia. Held at the beautiful Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach, CA at 6:30pm. Evening begins with stunning cocktail reception and silent auction followed by an exquisite five-course dinner, live Armenian music by the Hosharian Brothers Band, an exciting live auction and more! Tickets are \$450/person if reserved by Oct. 10; \$500/person after Oct. 10; and \$250/person for those age 35 & under. All proceeds to benefit the AECF's many sight-saving programs in Armenia. To RSVP or for more information, call 949-933-4069, email info@eyecareproject.com or visit eyecareproject.com/gala

## CONNECTICUT

**OCTOBER 24 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*, University of Connecticut's Office of Global Affairs, UConn, Hartford, Hartford Times Building, Room HTB 210 – 10 Prospect Street, Hartford, from 5 to 8 p.m.** For information: (860) 486-5184 or zahra.ali@uconn.edu. Book sale/signing during reception prior to the presentation and after. All proceed from the sale of the books will be donated.

## FLORIDA

**DECEMBER 13, 14, & 15 — Friday, Saturday, & Sunday - Friday - 6pm to 10pm; Saturday - 9am to 10pm; Sunday - 1pm to 6pm;** - St. David Armenian Art & Food Festival, 2300 Yamato Road, Boca Raton, FL. Join us for an afternoon of delicious homemade Armenian food, fun, fellowship, raffles, and children's activities while you shop for Christmas gifts at our vendors. For more information, call the church office at 561-994-2335. Admission is free and there is ample parking on the church grounds.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**SEPTEMBER 15 — Armenian Church of the Holy Translators will hosts its annual Armenian Food Festival.** Come and enjoy a day filled with traditional Armenian food, music, dancing and fun children's activities. Sunday. Noon to 5 p.m. The Armenian Church of Holy Translators, 38 Franklin St, Framingham. For further info, contact the church office at 5-8-875-0868.

**SEPTEMBER 15 — Trinity Annual Picnic, 12-5 pm, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge.** Delicious Armenian food – shish, losh, and chicken kebab - paklava, khadaif, and more with take-out available. Armenian music for listening and dancing, featuring the Greg Krikorian Ensemble with Greg Krikorian, oud and vocals, Mark Der Mugrditchian, clarinet, Kevin Magarian, guitar and vocals, Arthur Chingris, dumbeg, and Steve Surabian, tambourine. Activities for children including the Moonwalk. Blessing of the Madagh at 4 p.m., followed by raffle drawing for cash prizes. For information, [www.htaac.org/calendar/event/716/](http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/716/), contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

**SEPTEMBER 16 — Registration is now open for the 2019-2020 sessions of the Abaka Dance Academy,** 101 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, MA. Principal/director Apo Ashjian. Classes begin September 16 for grades Nursery II - Grade 10 students. Check the schedule and enroll at [www.abakadanceacademy.com](http://www.abakadanceacademy.com). For info, email [abakadanceacademy@gmail.com](mailto:abakadanceacademy@gmail.com) or call 617-283-2010.

**SEPTEMBER 18 — Celebrating Contributions of Our Nation's Immigrants – Gala Benefit for the Endowed Fund for Care of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway** Honoring Dr. Noubar Afeyan, Leader & Philanthropist Recognizing Organizations Serving Immigrants & Refugees InterContinental Hotel Boston. Advance Reservations only. For information,

[hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

**SEPTEMBER 20 – St. James Hye Café. Friday. Join us for delicious food and fellowship – with LIVE ARMENIAN MUSIC!** Kebab, Falafel, Imam Bayeldi, and more. Doors open at 6:15pm. For more information visit [www.stjameswatertown.org](http://www.stjameswatertown.org). St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

**SEPTEMBER 22 — “Timeless Classics,” Music of Bach, Handel & Vivaldi, performed by the Karapetyan String Quartet** with Sargis Karapetyan, violin, Victoria Avetisyan, mezzo-soprano, Gregory Newton, bassoon, and Nune Hakobyan, piano and organ; 1 p.m.; Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA. Event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact the Church Office at 617.354.0632, or e-mail office@htaac.org.

**SEPTEMBER 22 — Sunday Afternoon for Families and Friends.** Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. 2-4 pm. Wonderful afternoon with The Hye Guys Ensemble featuring Ron Sahatjian and Joe Kouyoumjian. Hoodsies, Face Painting and more RSVP appreciated [hello@armenianheritagepark.org](mailto:hello@armenianheritagepark.org)

**SEPTEMBER 26 — Annual Fall Dinner and Drawing sponsored by the Friends of Holy Trinity 1000 Club, 6:30 p.m.;** Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge MA. All are invited; you don't have to be a member of the 1000 Club to attend and enjoy a delicious losh kebab and pilaf dinner for \$9.99/person. Dinner tickets on sale at the door. Raffle drawing will follow at 8 p.m., for monthly prizes of \$2,000, plus five \$25 door prizes. Special offer: purchase five “one-time” numbers for \$20, save \$5. For more information, contact the Church Office at 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

**SEPTEMBER 28 — Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR) New England 8th Annual Walk of Life.** Registration 10:30-11:00am at Armenian Educational and Cultural Center (ACE), Nichols Avenue, Watertown. Walk begins promptly at 11 am and goes down to Watertown Square. Registration is \$25 (\$10 for students). For more info, visit [www.abmdr.am/ne](http://www.abmdr.am/ne)

**SEPTEMBER 29 — Sunday, 6 p.m., the screening of “The Stateless Diplomat,” a documentary by Mimi Malayan** on the heroic life and legacy of Diana A. Apar (1859-1937), Armenia's Honorary Consul to Japan in 1920 at Mosesian Center for Arts, Watertown. Organized by the Armenian Cultural Foundation and co-sponsored by Amaras Art Alliance, Arlington International Film Festival, co-Armenian International Women's Association, Armenian Museum of America, Armenian Women's Welfare Association, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, and Tekeyan Cultural Association. The tickets will be available in the Dorothy and Charles Mosesian Center for the Arts through the following link: <https://web.ovationtix.com/trs/pe/10450012>

**OCTOBER 2 —Joint Sts. Vartanantz – Hye Point Golf Outing at the beautiful Butter Brook Golf Club in Westford.** Proceeds to benefit scholarships to Diocesan youth programs. 10 a.m. Shotgun start. Golfers with all skill levels most welcome. Single players will be grouped into foursomes. \$150 for Golf, lunch, and Dinner. \$165 will include 25 raffle tickets. Awards dinner to follow golf outing at Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford. For registration and sponsorship information, please contact Steve Sarkisian at 978-808-2820, [Stsgolf@earthlink.net](mailto:Stsgolf@earthlink.net).

**OCTOBER 7 — St James Men's Club Dinner Meeting - social hour and mezza at 6:15 PM and dinner at 7 p.m.,** St James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown. Guest speaker Dr. Myron Allukian, public health expert and the former Dental Director of the City of Boston for 34 years. The title of Dr Allukian's presentation is Healthy is Wealthy: How to Live a Healthy and Longer Life, which is a discussion of health care in the United States with an emphasis on what individuals, families, and society can do to help ensure healthier lifestyles and healthier lives. He will also discuss the impact on our lives by the US health care system and big business. Dr. Allukian is currently the President of the Massachusetts Coalition for Oral Health and Vice Chair of the Oral Health Working Group. He has been called “The Social Conscience of Dentistry”. Mezza and a Losh Kebab & Kheyma Dinner \$17/person. Ladies invited. For addi-

tional information call the St James Church office at 617-923-8860 or call Hapet Berberian at 781-367-6598.

**OCTOBER 18-19 — St. James 72nd Annual Bazaar, Delicious Armenian Food and Pastries. Silent Auction,** Attic Treasures, Booths and Vendors. Raffles, Children's Activities, and more. Friday and Saturday. Details to follow. St. James Armenian Church – 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information contact 617.923.8860 or [info@stthagop.com](mailto:info@stthagop.com) or visit [www.stjameswatertown.org](http://www.stjameswatertown.org).

**OCTOBER 19 — The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) 100th Annual Meeting Banquet** celebrating the Armenian Evangelical Church. Westin Hotel, Waltham, 70 Third Ave., Waltham. 6 p.m. reception, 7 p.m. Dinner, \$125. RSVP by October 5. Tickets and sponsorships available online at [amaa.org](http://amaa.org). Checks payable to the Armenian Missionary Association of America, and mail to 31 W. Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652

**OCTOBER 19 — The Vosbikians are coming to the Merrimack Valley.** The Armenian Friends of America proudly present their Annual HYE KEF 5 Dance, featuring The Vosbikians. The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Andover, MA. Tickets Purchased before 9/13/19 will include the Great Venue, Outstanding Buffet, The Vosbikian Band and 5 Free Raffle Tickets Adults \$75.00 & Students 21 & under \$65 Specially priced AFA Rooms available through 9/17/19. For Tickets and more information, Contact: Lu Sirmaian 978-683-9121 or Sharke' Der Apkarian at 978-808-0598 Visit [www.Armenia-FriendsofAmerica.org](http://www.Armenia-FriendsofAmerica.org)

**OCTOBER 20 — Annual Banquet of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston,** Celebrating the 58th Anniversary of the Consecration of Holy Trinity and honoring Bruce Newell as the “Parishioner of the Year,” 12:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

**NOVEMBER 1,2 — NAASR Grand Opening and Gala. Friday, November 1 – Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting,** NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, at NAASR's new world headquarters, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA. Saturday, November 2 – NAASR 65th Anniversary Gala, at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, Cambridge. 6 pm Reception, 7 pm Dinner and Program. Honoree Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; Master of Ceremonies David Ignatius, columnist for the *Washington Post* and novelist; Featuring renowned soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian, accompanied by the Borromeo String Quartet, performing a program of songs by Komitas. Further details to follow.

**NOVEMBER 16 — St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School 35th Anniversary Celebration.** Keynote speaker: Dr. Diran Apelian, Professor of Engineering & Former Provost, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Distinguished Professor, UC Irvine. Entertainment: singer Artur Hakobyan (Mister X). Emcee: Lisa Gulesserian, Ph.D., Harvard's Preceptor on Armenian Language & Culture. @ The Westin Hotel Waltham-Boston. 6:30pm Cocktails / 7:30pm Dinner and program. More to follow...

**DECEMBER 6 and 7 — Friday and Saturday, Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12 noon-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.;** Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. For further information, contact the Church Office, 617.354.0632.

**DECEMBER 15 — Christmas Holiday Concert – Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra,** 3:00 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA. Save the date; details to follow. For further information, call the Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

## MICHIGAN

**OCTOBER 26 — Kef Time Keghi IV 6:30 p.m. Saturday, at St John Armenian Cultural Hall, Southfield,** headlined with Traditional Kheghetzi Pagharch feast, full buffet dinner with dancing, music by the Keghi All-Star Armenian Band. Reservations call Laura Negosian Lucassian at 248-376-3794 or email at [Llucassian@TBEonline.org](mailto:Llucassian@TBEonline.org). Donation: Adults \$45, Children under 17, \$20. Cash Bar. Mail checks to Karen Nigosian, 21919 Michigan Ave, Dearborn, MI 48124. Checks payable to Nor Keghi Association. Proceeds to support continuing renovations at public schools and community projects in Nor Keghi, Armenia. Supported by parishioners of the four Armenian churches in Greater Detroit.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE





ARTS & LIVING

# Lens on Armenia 2019

## Photo Series

YEREVAN – The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* is pleased to present a series of photo essays prepared by the students of Professor Ken Martin at the American University of Armenia Summer Program of 2019 in Yerevan. Martin teaches during the regular school year at Suffolk University, at the Communication, Journalism and Media Department in Boston. But first, please read Martin's introduction below.

Students in our Lens on Armenia: Photojournalism in Yerevan 2019 summer course at the American University of Armenia produced final photo essay projects about topics that they each had interest in. The projects were a culmination of everything they had studied in class including basic photography, camera works, professional photojournalism practice and history of photography and the great photojournalists. Photojournalism in our definition, beyond being the picture of the day, is photo reportage at the intersection with fine art. Creation of a visual narrative is a tough job for many advanced students and emerging photographers, but I think viewers may agree that our students have done exceptionally well in present interesting aspects of life in Armenia today!



From top left, clockwise Michaela Zepure Walkup's Armenia's Environmental State; Alicia Asmarian's Armenia As It Is; two from Karolina Gharibyan's The Process of Making Ice Cream and center, from Walkup.

# CALENDAR

## MICHIGAN

**FROM PREVIOUS PAGE**

**NOVEMBER 16 – The Knights of Vartan, Nareg-Shavarshan Lodge #6 and the Daughters of Vartan,** Zabelle Otyag #12 will celebrate their respective 100th and 70th organization anniversaries. Featuring: Kevork Artinian and his All Star Band at St. Mary's Cultural Hall, 18100 Merriman Rd, Livonia. This is a fundraiser Dinner/Kef Dance to celebrate Knights and Daughters as well as a chance for future members to observe how our community puts our heritage on display. All proceeds to fund renovation of school gymnasium, Knights of Vartan #106, Elementary School, Yerevan, Armenia. For Reservations Contact: Laura Lucassian, (248) 376-3794, Cost \$75 per person, \$40 after 9:30 pm

## NEW JERSEY

**SEPTEMBER 22 – Annual Picnic, Sunday, 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. St. Stepanos Armenian Apostolic Church,** 1184 Ocean Avenue, Long Branch. Louleh and Shish Kebab, Dolma Dinners. Armenian Cuisine featuring Cheese Boereg, Pastries, Baklava and more. Armenian Music and Children's Games.

**OCTOBER 25 – Banquet Honoring Dr. Taner Akcam Abajian Hall St. Leon complex Fair Lawn, NJ** Sponsored by Knights & Daughters of Vartan- Under the Auspices of His Grace Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate. For Reservations please call Sona Manuelian 551-427-8763. \$125 p.p. early reservations recommended.

## NEW YORK

**SEPTEMBER 17 – Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir** Forced into

Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army. Luncheon at 12:00 noon (\$45) sponsored by the WNRC Foundation located at 3 West 51st St., New York City. Book sale/signing following the presentation. All proceeds to be donated to the foundation RSVP: anna@snapandstyle.com or (615) 934 – 3873.

**SEPTEMBER 26 – A GREEN Evening Celebrating Armenia Tree Project's 25th Anniversary.** Wine, hors d'oeuvres, and a brief update from Executive Director Jeanmarie Papelian. Proceeds will support ATP's new Forestry Fund. 7:00 to 9:30 pm at Affirmation Arts, 523 West 37th Street, New York. A minimum donation of \$100 is requested. Please RSVP via www.getrooted-nyc.eventbrite.com or call (617) 926-TREE.

**NOVEMBER 15 – Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir** *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army* - Fordham University Armenian Society, Fordham University, 113 West 60th St. N.Y., N.Y. 10023 – Room 602 – 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. For information – Takoosh@aol.com Book sales/signing following the presentation. All proceeds from the sale of the books will be donated to St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.

## RHODE ISLAND

**SEPTEMBER 20 – The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church,** Providence will host a book presentation, "The World of Konstantin Petrossian" (English and Armenian), Published by Institute of Arts National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, and Composers Union of Armenia. Friday at 7 p.m., Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson street, Providence. Details to follow.

**SEPTEMBER 22 – The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church,** Providence Presents Meet With The Doctors - Questions & Answers.

We invite everyone to avail themselves of this opportunity and "Meet with our Armenian Doctors" Dr. Martin Papazian, ear, nose and throat specialist. Steven Zaroogian, Moderator. Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

**SEPTEMBER 29 – The Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island (AHARI) will host an afternoon with Susan Lind-Sinanian,** renowned museum curator and educator at the Armenian Museum of America as she presents her upcoming book. Sunday. Refreshments 12.30 p.m., lecture at 1 p.m. Attendees are invited to bring their own family textile treasures with them for an "Antiques Road Show" style evaluation. AHARI, 245 Waterman St., fifth floor conference room, Providence.

**OCTOBER 20 – The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church,** Providence Presents Meet With The Doctors - Questions & Answers. We invite everyone to avail themselves of this opportunity and "Meet with our Armenian Doctors" Dr. Herman Ayvazyan Internal Medicine. Topic: New Trends in Primary Care Medicine. Ara Boghigian, Moderator. Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

## WASHINGTON, DC

**SEPTEMBER 16-17 – Armenian Assembly of America's National Advocacy Conference and Gala** will take place. It will include the Conference, Gala honoring Armenian American Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill, and a Congressional Reception celebrating U.S.-Armenia relations. Special room rates available at The Wharf InterContinental Hotel. Visit www.aimhye.com for tickets, sponsorships, special hotel room rates, and more information.

*Calendar items are free. Entries should not be longer than 5 lines. Listings should include contact information. Items will be edited to fit the space, if need be. A photo may be sent with the listing no later than Mondays at noon.*

# Mirror Spectator

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## Tension in Armenian-Russian Relations

By Edmond Y. Azadian

To state that Armenia and Russia are on a collision course does not make one an alarmist. Indeed, the anti-Russian rhetoric is heating up in Armenia's media and in political discussions, and Russia has been retaliating discreetly, perhaps saving a major or possibly devastating response for a later date.

No one should be naïve enough to believe that anti-Russian sentiments and insults spewing out of certain media outlets have their origins in Armenia. They arrived in Armenia on the heels of the Velvet Revolution and they are being orchestrated from abroad.

This view should not take away anything from what the revolution brought to society in Armenia. No one is shedding tears for the demise of the old regime, except certain holdovers from the past.

However, if the orchestration intensifies to blur the delineation between the genuine goals of the revolution and an anti-Russian campaign, the revolution itself may end up as a casualty.

At this point, we have enough historic distance to note the parallels between the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the Rose Revolution in Georgia and the revolution in Turkmenistan, to see that all three have been carried out through the same methods, bear the same signature and consequently are meant to serve the same purposes.

It would be disingenuous to dissociate the Velvet Revolution from the others. And every day, new problems are springing up to drive another wedge between Armenia and Russia, which only seem to demonstrate the veracity of the above statement.

Hasmik Vartanyan, a political analyst, stated in a recent interview with Aysoram: "Despite the official pronouncements about the brilliant Armenian-Russian relations, the authorities in Armenia after the Velvet Revolution have failed to dissipate Russia's distrust of Armenia and on the contrary, have been exacerbating the situation through anti-Russian domestic actions and adverse rhetoric."

She also referred to a situation where both parties have given political asylum to activists wanted in their home countries. Moscow has refused to extradite Mihran Poghosyan, an official in the previous government charged with embezzlement and abuse of office, to Armenia and Yerevan has given sanctuary to Vitaly Shishkin, an anti-government activist in Russia who has already spent four years in jail, in response. According to Vartanyan, the standoff is only the tip of the iceberg of the problems driving apart the two allies.

Some charlatans in Armenia have claimed that Armenia has given an adequate response to Moscow and that is a sign of asserting one's sovereignty, without realizing that a country's sovereignty is defined by its relative strength, which is commensurate with its political power and clout.

In addition to the standoff in the case of the asylum seekers, there are other immediate factors increasing tensions between the two countries:

- The chorus of "grant-eaters" involved in the anti-Russian campaign
- The activities of the Sasna Tserer militant group
- Russian President Vladimir Putin's forthcoming visit to Yerevan and his planned meeting with former President Robert Kocharyan
- Nikol Pashinyan's inflammatory statements.

The "grant-eaters" are individuals or groups who receive grants from foreign governments or agencies to promote a certain political agenda under the benign goals of promoting democracy, social reform, family values, etc. Some of these activists operate and publish under assumed names because they are part of the current administration. Just to name a few, Mariam Grigoryan, Hakop Patalyan, Sarkis Arzruni, Aram Amoduni, and Siranoush Papyan, among others.

They publish day in and day out, accusing Russia of treating Armenia as "a vassal state" and pointing to greener pastures in the West under NATO or the European Union. They count on the ignorance of their public, who, supposedly, cannot guess at a potential place for Armenia in the NATO structure, where Greece is the underdog for the NATO leadership, whose priority is appeasing Turkey, despite their misgivings about Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's belligerence.

These pundits also would like to disguise the lip service that Georgia received from the West when it tempted Russia into a war.

The militant group Sasna Tserer acts as a political party but does not avoid armed confrontation as evidenced by its overrunning a police station and killing three officers. Their leaders are out of jail

because Pashinyan's government found a loophole in the law to set them free. One of its leaders, Varuzhan Avetissyan, has stated: "Armenia is Russia's colony and Nikol is refusing to take action and liberate our homeland."

Another leader, Jirayr Sefilian, has warned that Moscow is plotting to overthrow Pashinyan." Both Avetissyan and Sefilian are heroes of the Karabakh war and they confirm the adage that war heroes or revolutionaries should never aspire to become rulers or statesmen.

Another problem which is increasing tensions is President Putin's visit to Yerevan on October 1, to attend the Eurasian Economic Union's annual meeting. On the sidelines of the meeting, he has decided to visit Kocharyan, who is currently in jail. Now a national debate has erupted in Armenia, whether to "entertain" Putin in Kocharyan's cell or to set the latter free based on an act of the Constitutional Court, whose president, Hrayr Tovmasyan, is already mired in a controversy.

Putin's plan to visit Kocharyan has triggered another scandal by a leader of the Velvet Revolution, David Ioannisyanyan, who has written on his Facebook page, "If Vladimir Putin wishes to visit Robert Kocharyan in his jail cell, he should make sure we don't close the door behind him."

This incident is compared to another one in Georgia, where Giorgi Gabunia, an anti-Russian TV host, showered Putin with swear words. Although Georgia is not on friendly terms with Russia, the government sacked the director of the TV station. But nothing similar has happened in Armenia. Ioannisyanyan is a confidant of Pashinyan who had recently given him a \$70,000-grant from the state coffers to go and monitor the presidential elections in Karabakh. That grant has already touched off a wave of resentments.

Some statements by Pashinyan are touching a raw nerve in the Kremlin. One example is his long interview with the French-Armenian magazine *Nouvelles d'Armenie*, where answering a question he said: "When Russia sells arms to Azerbaijan, it is a cause for concern. By this statement I want to say that we have to rid ourselves from our centuries-old complexes. We are sovereign partners. If they have concerns about our actions, we also have concerns about their actions."

This statement has been cheered by one of the

"grant-eaters" called Sarkis Arzruni, who writes, "The above statement is a crucial part of Nikol's interview. I believe here Nikol is riding himself from his fetters and he is sending sovereign messages to Moscow on Armenian-Russian relations. That, of course, is a positive sign."

But Russia has reacted to the intensifying anti-Russian sentiments indirectly. Indeed, on September 5, Maria Zakharova, the spokesperson of the Russian Foreign Ministry, commented on Pashinyan's other statement on August 5 in Karabakh, where he said, "Artsakh is Armenia and that is all."

She said, "Of course, we understand that there are internal rhetorical settings which reflect opinions and political movements and parties, given that we speak about a democratic country. There is also a peace process, with its participants and co-sponsors, and international efforts to reach a peaceful settlement. The statements should be in tune with the context of the joint efforts aimed at peaceful settlement."

In simple terms, the Russian Foreign Ministry is chiding Pashinyan for jeopardizing the peace process. But one could also ask where Ms. Zakharova was when Azeri President Ilham Aliyev claimed the entire territory of Armenia as part of historic Azerbaijan?

The simple answer to those questions is that Russia has been irked enough to air its pro-Azerbaijani bias.

All those cases and statements have been contributing to rising tensions between Armenia and Russia. But to what end? Does this escalation help Armenia in any way or is it orchestrated by outside forces that do not take into consideration Armenia's interests?

Russia may not be a perfect ally but by geostrategic default, Armenia has developed relations with Russia over the centuries.

Today, Russia is Armenia's major trading partner and its primary arms supplier. Its military base is certainly self-serving to project its power in the Caucasus and beyond in the Middle East. But it is also a hedge against existential threats from Turkey.

Armenia does not have the luxury of too many choices to play its security against a sense of virtual sovereignty, which is a de facto result of its political standing.

No major country will shape its foreign policy based on sentiments, charity or moral principles; only interests will define foreign policy. Armenia must understand this fact, accept it as a norm of international relations and participate in the game on those terms.





## COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Armin Wegner Asked Franz Werfel Not to Write His *Forty Days of Musa Dagh*

Part II

This is the continuation of the letter written by Armin T. Wegner to Franz Werfel in 1932 which is being published for the first time:

"Already in 1915 I became friends with Johannes Lepsius. As I traveled by train, from Constantinople through Asia Minor to Baghdad, I witnessed the entire deportation. I repeatedly sent material to Lepsius for his collection. I have lived in close relationship with Armenians and Turks for several years, and have spoken their language, albeit very imperfectly. Hiding under my stomach bandage, I smuggled the pictures that I had taken of the horror scenes in the desert. I transported them, at the risk of death, across the border along with the refugees' letters to the American embassies.

In 1919, in a public event in Urania [a scientific society in Berlin], with the help of Johannes Lepsius, I showed the pictures in a sensational lecture. As a result, almost a pogrom broke out between the immigrant Armenians and Turks. Soon afterwards I published my book, *The Road of No Return* ("Der Weg Ohne Heimkehr"), revealing personal experiences from that time. I related most of the experiences from the days of the deportation, for my Armenian novel.

At short intervals, two more books were published – *In the House of Happiness*, ("Im Hause der Glückseligkeit") and my "Turkish Novels," ("Türkische Novellen") which also include two stories from the persecution of Armenians. At about the same time, in 1921, my novella "The Storm on the Women's Bath" ("Der Sturm auf das Frauenbad") – the description of an Armenian mas-

sacre - appeared in the Berliner Tageblatt. In the same year I published the stenographic report *The Court Case of Talaat Pasha* ("Der Prozess Talaat Pascha"), to which I was invited, along with Johannes Lepsius and others, as a witness.

In 1925, I began to write my Armenian novel, which I had already planned during the war. The first announcements of the work can be found around the same time in the Kirschner, and in Albert Sörgel's history of literature, where the book had been announced with the title *The Expulsion* ("Die Austreibung"). But, as I set out to portray the vast epic of deportation and extermination of an entire race of people, I soon realized that my work would be piecemeal if I confined myself to describing only the end of this tragedy.

So the work grew under my hand, more and more, beyond what I originally had planned. The entire fate of the people, and the struggles of the peoples of the Middle East, should be presented in it. The antagonism of races, religions and classes were laid bare. It was not my will, but the inner nature of that work, which became a four-volume novel. I'll give you a short outline of the blueprint that I shared with the academy two years ago.

The first volume deals with the prehistory of the novel – the youth of the main hero, who was born in a small Asian town in 1890. In 1896, during the massacres of Abdul Hamid, he loses his parents and grows up an orphan in the Syrian orphanage in Jerusalem. The actual content of the first volume, then, describes life in a small Asian city, the contrast of the Turks and Armenians, their conflicting as well as common revolutionary activities, and it finally leads to Constantinople in the court of Abdul Hamid. This volume will be titled "In the Shadow of God."

The second volume, titled *Eternal Hatred*, leads first into the mountains of an Armenian village. It shows the differences between Kurds and Armenians, and finally depicts the outbreak of the revolution of 1908 in Asia Minor and Constantinople, the removal of Abdul Hamid and the victory of the Young Turks, and ends in a general fraternization and reconciliation of Turks and Armenians in the age of the Constitution.

The third volume, which will probably carry the title "The Scream of Ararat," begins with the outbreak of the World War. This volume will also contain the conversation between Lepsius and Enver Pasha, which Lepsius himself has so

impressively recorded. The novel always shifts between the ruling classes, the leading authorities, and the people. The Young Turkish leaders, and the whole diplomacy of Europe, play their part. The book ends with the actual beginning of the deportation.

The fourth volume, titled "The Desert," then brings the extermination of the Armenian people in the steppes of Mesopotamia. This part also contains the scenes of those two thousand refugees who had rescued themselves on a mountain and were then brought to Egypt by a ship of the Entente - scenes that I suppose to be the inspiration for the title of your planned book, "The Forty Days Musa Dagh." An epilogue to the last volume describes the murder of Talaat Pasha in the streets of Berlin.

The entire work is expected to retain the repeatedly announced title "The Expulsion."

Although I began writing the Novel as early as 1924, it was interrupted by my other poetic and journalistic works. In the years 1925 to 1927, the project matured to its full extent, and from the beginning of 1930, I had to start the whole work once again. In 1928 my novel "Moni" (the novel of a two-year-old child) was published in the "Berliner Tageblatt." At the same time, I offered the book to the publishing house Zsolnay in Vienna (in March 1928), and declared my readiness for a contractual bond for my planned work in progress, the Armenian novel, as a great portrayal of people. But Zsolnay refused. I then signed a contract with the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt in Stuttgart (in the spring of 1928), for my multi-volume novel on the Armenian deportation, and at that time I received a considerable advance.

The great economic hardship, the pressure to feed a family and the not quite satisfactory sales of my other books, slowed down my work. Driven by financial obligations, I had to accept extensive journalistic work, again and again, which required long trips to foreign countries. In 1930, Thomas Mann applied on my behalf to the Prussian Academy of the Arts (Section of Poetry), referring to my work. At his instigation, I submitted to the Academy a more detailed plan of my great Armenian novel. I enumerated the various stations of the above listed individual volumes. Fortunately, the academy gave me considerable support for this work. But unfortunately, all of these sums were not enough to allow me to labor on the huge work with peace of mind."

# A Brief History of My White Privilege

By Aris Janigian

**G**O BACK a couple of generations and nobody called us "white," so we had no way of really knowing about our privilege. We were Armenian and Christian, third-class citizens – that we knew for sure. The first-class citizens were Turks and Muslims. They killed one-and-a-half million of us.

My paternal grandfather had a wife and two kids. After it was all said and done, only my grandfather was left.

He escaped to America in 1918, but not as a white person – not yet. It wasn't until 1925 that an Armenian successfully argued in United States v. Cartozian that he was white. The first Armenian arrived here in 1618 and settled in Jamestown, so it was some 300 years before we enjoyed white privilege.

In America, my grandfather married a widow with four kids, and named the two children they had together after the two that had been slaughtered. In a place called Weed Patch, he picked onions and later bought a farm a little west of Fresno. He had privilege. Still, from the lingering grief there were times when he'd lie in a ditch and throw dirt on himself until you couldn't see him if you passed.

My maternal grandmother's village was pillaged and the Armenians rounded up. A beauty, grandma was saved when a Turkish officer snatched her from the death caravan. The two had a baby. My grandma's brother then found passage for her out of Turkey into Egypt. She crossed the Mediterranean on boat with the infant, but he died on the voyage. She buried him at sea. A white infant

by a white mother.

When I hear the word "survivor" these are the people I think of.

Nobody wanted a woman who was once married to a Turk, so she married a much older man, and they had four children. They did well in Alexandria, until World War II, when the Italians dropped their bombs. As the sirens sounded, they'd scuttle into shelters night after night. One morning they returned home, only to discover that it and the little basement workshop where my grandfather made shoes was blown to bits. Shortly thereafter, my grandfather died from cancer, but maybe, too, from heartache.

The family was living hand to mouth. My mom was sent to a "family friend" because my grandmother couldn't care for her. There she was repeatedly raped. After the war, she and her sisters learned to do pedicures and manicures to make ends meet. But because they were Armenian and Christian, work got harder and harder to keep. My grandmother had escaped a genocide in Turkey and now Arab nationalism was driving her out of Egypt. Five days a week, she walked to the American consulate to see if her immigration papers had come through. That's how it was for the whites.

Both my Dad's parents were dead before he was old enough to drive. He had polio. One leg was tapered like a baseball bat, and to compensate some for his stunted foot – so malformed it was frankly hard to look at – he wore two pairs of socks. He was a farmer, and so, by hook or crook, he had to work with that foot, row after row, ditch after ditch.

One day his half-brother pointed a shotgun at him in the middle of the 50-acre farm they'd inherited, and said, "You have no place here anymore." My father, barely thirty years old, never stepped foot on that farm or talked to his half-brother again.

To keep a roof over our heads, my father drove a semi-truck full of peaches or nectarines or cucumbers from Fresno to Los Angeles and back, all in the same day.

Trucks in the 1960s were nothing like they are now. In the blink of an eye, you could lose control of an 80,000-pound semi a hundred different ways. In the summertime, you could pass out from heat-stroke at the wheel since there was no air conditioning. At the end of the Tehachapi, there was a steep slope dropping into the Central Valley. There, they had a special uphill ramp that truckers could divert to when their brakes gave out. My Dad used this ramp twice.

I'd sometimes lie awake until well past midnight listening for his truck to roll in.

"Dirty black Armenian" or "low class Jew" – or worse "Fresno Indian," a phrase of comparable hostility and contempt as calling a black person "n#@@er" – is what they called us back then. "No Armenians allowed," was inscribed in housing tract covenants, right through the first half of the 20th century. "Janigian," not "Janigian," is how my father pro-

nounced his name to strangers.

From what they'd been through, "wild" Armenians were everywhere in Fresno those days. You can read about them in Saroyan's short stories.

We had no money, barely enough to make the \$60 a month rent for our two-bedroom house. The carpets were so threadbare you could see right through to the wood. When it rained, we'd catch drops from the ceiling in empty coffee cans.

My mother got up before the sun rose and took a bus across town where she'd worked waxing women's legs and digging scum from beneath their toe nails.

My dad got drunk a lot. He'd take a bottle of whiskey out on the patio and tell us "leave me be." He looked sad and worn-out with his "privilege." Once, my mother brought us into their bedroom where he lay with his eyes closed, but not sleeping. He was thinking of suicide, and my mother felt that if he had his children near, he'd think twice. We stayed at this bedside all night long, in shifts.

During the summer, when the heat could run in triple-digits for two months in a row, we'd toss and turn in our own sweat because we didn't have the money to get our little swamp cooler fixed. By midnight, the heat stored up in my body would turn it white as coal.

Even some of my closest friends don't know these things. I can't decide if they are too painful to talk about, too embarrassing, or if I'm afraid of inviting pity.

My parents knew some actual white people. We occasionally visited them in their all-American air conditioned homes. I didn't want to leave. White was air conditioning, white was shag carpets. White was Marie Tyler Moore that I loved to watch on their color TV.

My brother and I pulled a little Radio Flyer filled with fruits or vegetables that my father farmed (when he wasn't hauling other people's produce) around the block, knocking on doors. The old genocide survivors, all "white," all "privileged," would haggle over a nickel a bag. Some had beat back starvation by eating weeds on the death marches, so we didn't take it personally.

My first hired job was picking onions with a little shovel, just like my grandfather did in Weed Patch. When my brother was old enough, he washed dishes until midnight in the steamy smelly kitchen of a third-rate steak house for \$1.50 an hour.

Our junior high school was probably 90 percent black and brown. I first learned that I was white and privileged there. I had no idea about it in elementary school. We were all just kids.

Random Mexicans wanted to kick my ass because I was white (strangely, the black kids didn't seem to care one way or another). "La Raza," they'd yell, almost spitting in my face.

see PRIVILEGE, page 20



# A Brief History of My White Privilege

PRIVILEGE, from page 19

I learned to run fast. I set a school record for push-ups and sit ups. I could fight pretty good.

One day, my Mexican metal shop teacher called me a “Fresno Indian.” He had a sick smile on his face when he said it, but I had no idea what he meant, so I asked my dad when I got home. He threatened to kill the teacher with his bare hands, and for many months afterwards I believed he would.

Another day, Hector Ramirez came up from behind as we filed into the gym. He sniggered “white boy,” and slapped me in the back of the head. The guys made a circle around us, howling “WOOOO.” “Let’s go puto,” Hector said, squaring off. I hit him once in the face. He fell backward. I hit him again and he went down, blood spurting from his nose. I got in a couple of kicks to his stomach before the guys broke it up. In revenge, Hector’s gang vowed to jump me after school. They had knives. Sometimes this is what happens to people who have privilege.

There was fighting at home too. Once my parents got in a huge fight because my father had to hock my mom’s wedding ring to make the rent. Another time they got in a fight because my mother wanted to take welfare, but my father refused. He was too proud for welfare. Mexicans and blacks took welfare. Armenians, never!

After living on the bad side of town for 14 years, my parents finally moved us to the good side. It was a grand house with clean carpets and air conditioning. For the first time in my life I had my own bedroom. Now, I could go to school and not worry about being jumped. Now I could sit in a classroom that didn’t erupt into chaos. Now I didn’t have to worry about being a “white boy.” I was grateful to my grandparents, my parents, for giving me this privilege.

My brother and I worked like hell through college and finished our degrees.

The fear of being poor never subsided, even when I had a little money. As a graduate student, I lived in a house in Pomona for \$200 a month with a friend. The neighborhood was so riddled with crime that police would sometimes stop by and tell me I should move. Choppers just outside my second story window woke me

up nearly every night. One day I came home only to find a black guy carrying my TV out the front door. He actually said “sorry,” politely handed it to me, and ran away. Another time, a black man strode right into the house. He was trying doors, and ours was unlocked. He pointed a gun at me, saw that for whatever reason I wasn’t scared, and left.

My dad started a big farm with a “partner” who illicitly siphoned money from their business accounts until they had run dry. To cover the business’ bills and fund a lawsuit, my father tapped my parents’ personal accounts until they too had run dry.

Maybe he would have figured a way out of this mess, and won his suit, but before he could do either, he died of a sudden heart attack. My mother declared bankruptcy and had to start all over again, like she’d just arrived here from Alexandria, working 12-hour days popping white heads and manicuring mostly white feet.

I got a PhD and my brother an MD. My mother got multiple myeloma, cancer of the bone marrow. She did her cosmetology in a tiny room with no ventilation, all to save a few dollars a month rent. Probably, the carcinogenic fumes she inhaled from the polishes, cleansers, scrubs, and waxes she worked with for decades are what triggered the disease that took her kidneys – before it had even finished crumbling her bones – and killed her.

Today, my brother lives in a beautiful house with his wife and two kids on the Riviera in Santa Barbara. They can see the ocean from their back yard. I live in a handsome home on a nearly one-acre lot in one the loveliest neighborhoods in Fresno, where two generations ago I wouldn’t be allowed. One of my kids goes to Stanford and the other to University of California, Santa Barbara. But since my wife is Korean, I tell them, “Don’t worry girls, you may sneak by yet. Remember, you’re only half-white.”

(This essay originally appeared in the Los Angeles Review of Books blog. Aris Janigian is the author five novels, and co-author, along with April Greiman, of *Something from Nothing*, a book on the philosophy of graphic design.)

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