Beirut Tekeyan School and Center Suffer Great Damage

Need Our Help

By Aram Arakun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BEIRUT — The August 4 explosion in Beirut has caused great loss of life and property. Among the many Armenian institutions damaged are the Tekeyan School in Bourj Hammoud and the Tekeyan Center in Gemmayze.

The Tekeyan School serves a largely low-income Armenian population in Bourj Hammoud, and, like many other Lebanese institutions, was already struggling during the difficulties of the recent Lebanese economic crisis, compounded with the arrival of the novel coronavirus. The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada (TCA) agreed earlier this year to increase its school financial assistance this year, but now it is clear that the need is much greater and much more urgent.

The principal of the Tekeyan School, Galina Gemmayze, relating the situation the day after the explosion, on August 5. Still clearly shaken, she said, “Yesterday, we lived through an utter nightmare. We did not understand what happened. Only now are some explanations emerging about the situation and its causes. It took place yesterday at approximately 6 or 6:30 p.m. our time. While I pulled myself together, I received photographs from the school’s guard. I rushed to the school this morning.”

“We can’t start! How can I explain it! Everything is topsy-turvy. The Tekeyan School has no doors or windows. There are no offices, no computer room, no kitchen, no music room, no laboratory. Everything is ruins, the library, the hall, the sound system.” The iron gates of the school were also destroyed.

Armenia, Artsakh Send Aid To Shell-Shocked Lebanon

Aid from Armenia leaves for Beirut. See story on page 2.

Treaty of Sèvres Centennial and Cilician Armenia

This week, we commemorate the centennial of the Treaty of Sèvres and the declaration of independence of Cilicia with a special section, including mention of the courage and diplomacy of Mihran Damadian. See pages 8–14.
Armenia, Artsakh Send Aid To Shell-Shocked Lebanon

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — The Armenian government on Friday, August 7, pledged more than $300 million (253 million euros) to help Lebanon recover from last week’s massive explosion in Beirut.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said another 84.3 million drams will be allocated to repair buildings destroyed in the explosion, which came as part of a week’s deadly fighting at a nearby section of Armenia’s border with Azerbaijan.

"The assistance is in the form of food," Harutyunyan said. "And this isn’t all, because I am going to convene a meeting on this issue tomorrow and I will inform on our decisions. Artsakh stands by Lebanon in overcoming this difficult challenge," he said.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan disclosed a concept of "Armenia’s closest friends," implying the existence of a sizable and influential Armenian community in the Middle Eastern nation.

"On behalf of the Armenian Government, I wish to express my condolences to the families of the victims and wish speedy recovery to all those who were affected," he said.

"We have many things to do," he added. "We share the fate of a people who have lost their homes. Beirut is the capital of the Republic of Lebanon, a nation with a population of 4.5 million people.

Pashinyan stressed that Armenia will provide as much assistance as it can to Lebanon.

"The blast and its devastating consequences have become a symbol of the ethnic Armenian nations’ will to emigrate to Armenia. Some opposition politicians and public figures as well as Lebanese-born citizens wish to emigrate to Armenia. The world leaders, including the US President Donald Trump, called for an impartial, credible and independent inquiry into the blast that killed at least 138 people and injured about 6,000 others.

(Stories from Pasdarmen.am, Armenpress and RFE/RL were used to compile this report.)
BEIRUT, from page 1

She exclaimed, “It is as if we went through an earthquake or a war. Windows are hanging outside in pieces. Pieces of glass are all around the courtyard. The enclosed kindergarten playroom is destroyed. We still have to see whether the building itself is usable conditions, with its foundation and columns.

She would have not been able to leave alive if she was in her office at the time of the explosion, she said. Shemeniian Nadjarian was principal for 9 years, and has worked at the school for 18 years in all. She said that the loss is so great because even getting one desktop computer was difficult in Lebanon, let alone paying teachers’ salaries.

There is a guard who lives in the building with his family. Fortunately he was unharmed, and there were no lives lost at the school, though some of the parents and children have been wound-up in the blast. The Armenian church in Beirut, which is in ruins. The photo below captures the extensive damage to the Tekeyan Center, which is in ruins. The photo below captures the extensive damage to the Tekeyan Center.

The building is a commercial site and the foundation and columns are working hard to this effect. The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada will continue its historical role of helping its eponymous institutions in Beirut, and the school in particular, which helps so many Armenian families secure a good education for their children irrespective of their own financial situation. American Armenians have been involved in the development of the school from the start and now they will help it rebuild and overcome this new tribulation. Those who wish to help the school financially can send their donations online by credit card at https://givehot.

ter.com/34H43 or by check to the Tekeyan Cultural Association (memo: Beirut Tekeyan School), at its headquarters (755 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown MA 02472). For more information, email tca.director@aol.com or call 617 924-4455. All administrative costs for this campaign will be borne by the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

Istanbul’s Dadyan Varjaran Gets New Principal

ISTANBUL (Jamanash) — Varanashi Belai has been announced as the new principal of Istanbul’s Dadyan Varjaran, located in the Bakirkoy neighborhood. The school was led for many years by Ali Bayram. The parish council of Holy Mother of God Church in Bakirkoy decided to give the reins of the school to Varanashi Belai, who is experienced worker in the field of education.

Belai has been a math teacher at the school. She has also been vice-principal.

Belai is a graduate of the Essayan Varjaran.

Greece Accuses Turkey Of ‘Threatening Peace’ In the Mediterranean

ATHENS (DWN) — Greece has called a military meeting after Turkey resumed a mission looking for gas reserves near a Greek island. Erdogan has meanwhile called for talks to resolve ongoing issues between the two NATO members.

Greece on Monday, August 10, accused NATO ally Turkey of “threatening peace” in the eastern Mediterranean after Ankara resumed searching for oil and gas near the remote Greek island of Kastellorizo.

The Greek foreign ministry said that Turkey’s decision to deploy a seismic research ship constituted a “new serious escalation” and “exposed Turkey’s destabilizing role.”

The Greek ministry said the country “will defend its sovereignty and its sovereign rights.”

The office of Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said he had spoken to EU Council President Charles Michel and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

Stoltenberg urged respect for international law during his conversation with Mitsotakis.

“The situation must be resolved in a spirit of Allied solidarity and in accordance with international law,” Stoltenberg tweeted.

“Let us all come together as Mediterranean countries and find a formula that protects all of our rights,” Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Monday in a national address after a meeting with his own ministers, striking a comparatively conciliatory tone.

“We cannot allow [nations] to ignore a big country like Turkey,” he said, urging Turkey to stop searching for gas.

Turkish-Armenian Artist

ANKARA (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Turkish-Armenian artist Aram Tigran was not allowed to be buried in his ancestors’ hometown, which was not permitted at the time because he was not a citizen of Turkey. Aram Tigran was not allowed to be buried in his hometown.

Tour of Sporadic Talks Held in the Past Month with Greece and the EU’s current presidency holder, Germany.

Paylan Seeks Reburial of Turkish-Armenian Artist In Diyarbakir

ANKAARA (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Turkish-Armenian lawyer Paylan Paylan of the People’s Democratic Party (HDP) on August 11 submitted a parliamentary question as to why Armenian composer Aram Tigran was not allowed to be buried in his hometown.

Paylan asked the following questions to Minister of Culture and Tourism Mehmet Nuri Ersoy: Will you make any attempt to keep the memory of Aram Tigran, whose art and personality was loved by the peoples of Turkey? Why don’t you allow Aram Tigran to be buried in Diyarbakir in accordance with his will?
Appeal for Lebanon and the Tekeyan School of Beirut

APPEAL, from page 1

Now, on top of the existing difficulties, the school building suffered extensive damage, as did the Tekeyan Center, which during its heyday would help the school locally. The costs to repair both buildings will run in the hundreds of thousands. It is urgent to help the school rehabilit and become operational before the start of the fall school year.

Armenians have suffered many calamities in recent history – wars in Lebanon, Artsakh and Armenia, earthquakes in Gyumri. These experiences should have taught us to create a pan-Armenian structure, enjoying the confidence of all segments of the Armenian diaspora, as well as of the Armenian republic, to raise funds worldwide and allocate them to recovering sufferers without any discrimination.

TCA appeals to the alumni of the Tekeyan School, Tekeyan supporters in North America, and the generous Armenians of the diaspora to join in this campaign to make sure that our compatriots in Lebanon are not left alone. There are many worthy aid efforts taking place now. We hope that among them you will consider adopting this school’s cause and support the provision of education as a means of improving the lives of Beirut Armenians.

Donations may either be made online by credit card at https://givebutter.com/bXn8Lm or as checks mailed to the Tekeyan Armenian Community Association (memo: Beirut Tekeyan School), at its headquarters (755 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown MA 02472). For more information, email teamdirector@aol.com or call 617-924-4455. All administrative costs for this campaign will be borne by the Tekeyan Cultural Association.

Indian Soldiers Reveal Secrets of Armenian Genocide

...Here, you can have this doll! It is my daughter’s. You can keep it!”

One hundred years ago, these were probably the last words that a British soldier said to an Armenian orphan lost in the endlessness of the Mesopotamian desert handing her the precious memory of his once peaceful civilian life.

However, this is not an excerpt from a novel, but a real story attested from a descendant of Sikh soldier who once served in the British army during WWI.

Arjan Manhas, a young community historian, had as classmates two Armenian brothers. He remembers one day he was invited to their house for a party. It was a typical Armenian party with an immense quantity of food and lots of guests. Arjan noticed an old man, a grandfather, sitting away from the crowd, browsing through the pages of an old photo album.

“He told me that they were his ancestors in these photos, survivors of the Genocide that happened a century ago,” he recalled.

Arjan is sharing with me his memories on the other side of the computer screen during our online interview from Canada, home to nearly half a million Sikhs.

Arjan started to dig deeper through the history’s less known pages of his own nation’s losses and triumphs. He soon discovered that both his paternal and maternal grand great-grandfathers used to serve in the British-Indian Army from 1916 to 1919. Among his findings was a journal of a soldier who served with his great-grandfather. The journal included material about the deportation camps in the present-day Iraqi desert, where tents were sheltering Armenian women and children.

“The women had a ring. But no husband was there. There were two boys and two girls inside the tent,” revealed the journal. Sikh soldiers shared their food with the starving children, play with them letting them play with their beards and turbans.

Arjan remembers that the journal included some dark pages, both the mothers and children were sexually assaulted, traumatised. Arjan doesn’t like to talk about these horrible details; perhaps they remind him of the suffering of his own nation.

In 1984, according to independent sources, about 8,000 to 17,000 Sikhs were killed in India as a result of a series of organized pogroms. These events are also known as the Sikh Massacre.

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion, that originated in Punjab in 15th century and is the fifth largest religion in the world.

During WWI Sikh soldiers served as well as the British were prisoners of war and had been placed in the camps with the deported Armenians. In fact, the Ottoman army separated British and Muslim prisoners from Hindus and Sikhs, sending them in to the “worst camps” in Ras Al’Am to work on the rail line.

“The Turkish soldiers bullied the Sikh soldiers, forced them to eat meat, cut off their hair, take of the turbans...” Arjan Manhas continues his story.

During the march to their final destination, these prisoners witnessed the entire horrific picture of the atrocities perpetrated by the Ottomans in a small Armenian village.

“When we went to look into a well a swarm of bees flew out. It was not advisable to drink from these wells; there were Armenian corpses rotting in many of them.”

These are the memories of another Indian Prisoner of war, Siir Sarbhakhari, shared in his self-published book, Abhi Le Baghdad (On to Baghdad).

Arjan Manhas has only one picture of one of his great-grandfathers, Tara Singh, and his application to join the British-Indian Army. Another great-grandfather, Dommans Singh, was suffering from PTSD after the war and no records, nor stories about him Arjan is able to add to his precious collection.

At Least 13 Armenians Die in Beirut Tragedy

DEATHS, from page 1

They were residents of various parts of Lebanon, but at the time of the explosion were in the city center, which is close to the beach.

The names of most of the Armenian victims are known. They are Nazar Najarian, Jessica Bedalian, Delia Papazian, Jack Barnakian, Anahit Berberian, Liza Kasoukjian-Gounbougian, Vartoujan Tosumian, Gaye Fyodorian, Sarkis Tekian.

The names of the other victims have not yet been released. In addition, there are several who are missing and not yet confirmed as dead.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ara Naghdalyan puts the number at 13, however.
AMAA Mobilizes To Help Lebanon

By Zaven Khanjian

PARAMUS, N.J. — The explosion that took the lives of scores of innocent Lebanese citizens, and wounded thousands, in Beirut yesterday is beyond devastating. Whether an accident or the canceling delusional effects of 15+ years of political and economic negligence, Beirut yesterday saw its beauty and the warmth of its people to the region and beyond. It is where my alma mater, the American University in Beirut, and may the Holy Spirit console loved ones and families with its power which is beyond understandable. Lebanon, now, more than ever, desperately needs two things.

Peace, first and foremost.

Since independence in the 1940s, and because of the abundant vital freedoms the country has for ages offered the world in the region, the sphere of free expression, free press, free access and the beautiful natural amenities the country is blessed with and has offered, Lebanon has been the focal point of center and point of all clandestine and covert operations, intrigues and conspiracies plotted in the region. This small, once-majority Christian nation in the heart of the Near East, lying on the shores of the Mediterranean is tired of theivities and duels, strives and struggles carried out on its soil. Lebanon today, beyond its corrupt political elite, has been subjected to collective punishment through direct or indirect sanctions, and have suffocated its economy, paralyzed its trade and is on its way to starve the country and its population.

In a nutshell, now, they have met with our values, it is imperative that inhumane sanctions in the region leading to and resulting in the suffering of millions be lifted immediately. Rival powers in the region should settle their differences around a negotiable table and not the dinner tables of the peaceable and innocent population. Peace is imperative and top priority in Lebanon and beyond.

Rebuilding

Struck with the curses of political, eco-
nomic, financial plus COVID-19 ailments, Lebanon now needs all decent, living and caring hands in the world to come to its rescue. Emergency assistance including, food, provision, medicine, shelter that was ubiquitous yesterday are supplement-
et today with the simplest of needs; cover glass or other) for the shattered structural steel and solar windows and doors of the country. All destructive hands off Lebanon. This is no time to do all peace lovers, compassionate and Christ centered hands and hearts to reach out and save Lebanon and the region.

The AMAA is committed to unashamedly continue its indiscernible emergency assistance to our communities in Lebanon. AMAA is proud to work with organizations like DIOP and Aviva.

Garegin Khanjian is the AMAA Executive Director/CEO.

LA City Councilor Kerkorian Condemns Remarks by US Ambassador to Azerbaijan

LOS ANGELES — Following Azerbaijan media reports that the United States had “apologized” for protests in Los Angeles by American citizens against Azerbaijan aggression, Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Krekorian formally demanded a response from the US Ambassador to that country.

After Azerbaijan attacked Armenian border villages last month, protests against the aggression took place around the world. In some places, including Los Angeles, Azerbaijan nationalists initiated provocative actions to disrupt the exercise by Armenian-Americans and others of their constitutionally protected rights.

According to the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, reports, United States Ambassador Lee Litzenberg disparaged Armenian-Americans years to the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry, blaming them for “provoca-
tion” as they exercised their First Amendment rights. These media reports also reported that the US ambassador had claimed that local Los Angeles officials had also apologized—a claim that is false. Especially troubling, the US ambassador supposedly assured this foreign govern-
ment “that an investigation will be carried out regarding this issue and appropriate measures will be taken.”

In his letter to the ambassador, Councilmember Kerkorian demanded clar-
ification and/or retraction from the Ambassador, since there is little reason to assume that unsubstantiated reports from Azerbaijan state-influenced media are factual.

Kerkorian wrote: “As an elected leader of the City of Los Angeles, I would be shocked and disturbed to learn that an ambassador of my country would com-
municate or intervene in any way in an investigation by a local law enforcement agency within the United States, let alone to reach a conclusory characterization about such an investigation. Moreover, I would be deeply concerned if the United States Department of State or one of its ambassadors believed that they (or any Federal agency) had the authority to ‘investigate’ occurrences that took place in Los Angeles that do not involve Federal law, let alone to take any ‘measures.’ Finally, I would certainly hope that no ambassador of the United States of America would ever apologize to any foreign government for the exercise of constitu-
tionally protected rights by Americans at home.”

Paul Krekorian

COAF Soiree to Raise Funds for COVID-19 Relief In Rural Armenia

Featuring Sebu Simonian, Mary Basmadjian, Araksya Karapetyan, and Sona Movsesian

LOS ANGELES/NW YORK — The Diamond Anniversary Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) Summer Soiree will be held virtually this year on August 15 to raise funds for the organization’s COVID Emergency Relief Fund. COAF has been at the forefront of rural development in Armenia for 16 years, provid-
ing youth with opportunities for advancement through improved infrastructure, and state-of-the-art education, health, social and economic programs.

COAF’s existing rural health and social services programs have been the focus of attention during the pandemic. Partnerships with the European Union (EU) Delegation in Armenia and the Austrian Development Agency have provided humanitarian assistance to vulnerable families throughout 64 beneficiary com-
nunities, along with medical equipment to village health centers. The organiza-
tion has also increased online education programming for students and is in the process of assisting small rural businesses that have faced financial hardship.

The COAF Summer Soiree is an annual benefit historically held in New York City. Like most fundraising events during the pandemic, this year’s Soiree will be available virtually, allowing Armenians worldwide to register for free to learn more about COAF and its COVID outreach in Armenia. Funds raised this year will be reinvested into COAF’s health infrastructure in rural Armenia, providing critical sup-
port to village medical facilities in the form of equipment, supplies and capacity-building.

This year’s Soiree is being hosted by Araksya Karapetyan of Good Day L.A. on FOX 11 Los Angeles. Born in Armenia, Araksya moved to the US at a young age and was inspired to become a journalist after visiting her homeland for a summer vacation where she found herself documenting on camera the everyday reality of life there. Araksya also hosted the Annual COAF Holiday Gala last December in New York City, helping raise over $6 million.

Special performances this year include musician/singer/songwriter and one of the Los Angeles-based indie pop duo, Capital Cities’ Sebu Simonian touring the COAF SMART Center last year while in Armenia, where he met with students and treated them to a concert. Popular comedian Mary Basmadjian, a recent guest on COAF’s INSTALIVE series on Instagram, will also deliver a comedic sketch during this year’s Soiree. Conan O’Brien’s right-hand woman Araksya Karapetyan will also be featured with a special appearance.

COAF’s team of child musicians from Armenia will also participate, including kanonplaying duo Meri Musinyan and Kristine Yengoyan, along with pianist Araksya Karapetyan and Sona Movsesian will also be featured with a special appearance.

COAF’s fund-raising efforts have served to support the efforts of the Delegation in Armenia and the Austrian Development Agency have provided humanitarian assistance to vulnerable families throughout 64 beneficiary communi-

COAF Village

About COAF

Co-founded by Paul Krekorian, COAF was established in Armenia to expand educational, health, social and economic opportuni-
ties at grassroots levels in the rural areas of the country.

Since independence in the 1940s, COAF’s rural development work has been at the forefront of rural development in Armenia for 16 years, provid-
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in...
SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — St. Mark Armenian Church’s annual Armenian Festival, which has become a favorite in the Greater Springfield area, will this year be an Armenian Fest-to-Go, offering its traditional Armenian dinners and baked goods in a drive-thru format. The drive-thru will be a two-day event, taking place on Saturday, September 5 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., and Sunday, September 6 from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the church, 2427 Wilbraham Road in Springfield.

The Fest-to-Go drive-thru will allow members of the community to bring home the same meals and baked goods always offered at the parish’s traditional festival, right from the comfort and safety of their own cars.

An online ordering system has been set up on the church’s website, https://www.stmarkarmenianchurch.org/2020-aftg-order-form, which is an easy way to read descriptions of each food item, select a pick-up time and pre-pay to make the drive-thru process quick and smooth.

Quantities will be limited, and online pre-ordering and pre-pay is strongly recommended by September 3.

A printable order form can also be downloaded from the St. Mark website, stmarkarmenianchurch.org, and mailed to the church (2427 Wilbraham Road, Springfield, MA 01129) or those wishing to place their orders over the phone can leave a message on the church phone.

Though online ordering is encouraged, card, check (made payable to St. Mark Armenian Church) and cash will be accepted for drive-up orders.

The church will donate $1 from each purchased dinner to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.

The event will be observing CDC guidelines, and ask that attendees remain in their cars and wear a mask at all times.

In addition to the donation to the Food Bank, proceeds from the FEST-TO-GO will benefit the ministries of St. Mark Armenian Church. Sponsorships are welcome, which can be made by going to the church website, stmarkarmenianchurch.org.

For more information, visit stmarkarmenianchurch.org and its Facebook page. For questions, contact the church.

**OBITUARY**

**Kiraz (Edmond Kirazian)**

Noted French Illustrator

PARIS – Illustrator Kiraz (Edmond Kirazian) died on August 11. Born in Cairo (Egypt) on August 25, 1923, he died in Paris at age 96.

Passionate about drawing, he began his artistic work very early and published his first political drawings to 17 years old, for newspapers such as Image, Parade, the Réforme d’Alexandrie or in Al Moussavar, under the name of “Kiraz.”

He arrived in Paris in 1945 and began drawing for the newspaper La Bataille (1950-51). He then continued at the Rouge et le Noir (1951-52), Samedi Soir (1952-54), and Ici Paris (1955-59).

But it is thanks to the great industrialist Marcel Dassault, owner of the magazine Jours de France, that Kiraz owes his reputation by publishing every week, until 1987, the famous drawings of the “Parisianettes,” young mischievous women, with elongated silhouettes, huge eyes, mainly concerned with shopping and fashion.

During his long career, Kiraz created a total of 25,000 drawings.

— Jean Eckian
BELMONT, Mass. — As part of its Zoom Series Lecture series, the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) is organizing a Zoom Panel titled “Transition Tremors: Armenia Two Years after the Velvet Revolution.” Co-sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR)/Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, the Zoom Panel will take place on Saturday, August 22, at 12 p.m. ET (9 a.m. Pacific).

In 2018, a democratic breakthrough via mass-scale nonviolent disobedience campaign led by Nikol Pashinyan, brought down Armenia’s soft-authoritarian system headed by then President-turned-Prime Minister Serge Sargsyan. Since then, the country continues to face challenges to consolidate its still fragile democracy. The task of the current government to transition to a full-fledged democracy has been hampered by various factors, including the still persistent of the ancien régime, unreformed judiciary, weak political party system, spread of misinformation and fake news. The most recent global health crisis brought on by Covid-19 pandemic further complicated reform initiatives. In an attempt to take stock of gains and challenges towards democratization, this panel will contextualize Armenia’s domestic politics over the past two years, doing so in a global comparative context. The discussion is geared towards identifying some of the key issues/challenges that the post-Velvet government faces.

The panel, moderated by Prof. Jirair Libaridian (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor-retired) will feature Prof. Anna Ohanyan (Stonehill College) who is going to talk about “Velvet is not a Color: Armenia’s Democratic Transition in a Global Context”; Prof. Jenny Paturyan (American University of Armenia) will discuss “State Capacity Building & Institutions: Changing Role of Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches in Armenia Since 2018”; Prof. Asbed Kotchikian (Bentley College) will discuss “The Reconfiguration of the Political Landscape in Armenia and the Ensuing Challenges”; and Prof. Armine Ishkhanian (London School of Economics and Political Science) will talk about “Changing Role of Civil Society in Post-Velvet Revolution Armenia.”

“This is a very timely panel that will critically assess the political and socio-economic developments in Armenia since the Velvet Revolution. The panellists are among the most important scholars of contemporary Armenian affairs. This will be a unique opportunity to listen to them. I highly encourage everyone to participate in the Zoom Panel,” said Prof. Bedross Der Matossian, president of the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS).

To Register for the Zoom Panel visit: https://bit.ly/armeniantremors
By Aram Arkun

What happened in Cilicia after World War I can be viewed as a tragedy on its own, or as part of the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide. Either way, it was a great blow to the Armenians who had survived the World War and the efforts of the Ottoman Empire to uproot and annihilate them as a people.

The Armenians had been deported from their homes in Cilicia and in other parts of the Ottoman Empire to sites now found in Syria, Iraq and Jordan starting in 1915. At the end of the war, both the British and the French occupied Cilicia as well as various other parts of the defeated Ottoman Empire. The Armenians began to return to their homes, encouraged that the victorious Western powers would ensure their safety and allow them to rebuild their lives. Cilician Turks and some other Muslims viewed the Armenian return as an occupant with hostility.

Background

Cilicia is located today in southeastern Turkey, extending from the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea to mountainous areas. Armenians had begun emigrating there in the 19th century, fleeing Seljuk Turkish invasions of the region and building a community which, lost its independence in 1913 after attacks of love, historians save their surviving counterparts and hope to create an Armenian state after the war. The French as well as the British and the Ottoman Empire attempted to end the autonomy enjoyed by some Armenian communities. The Turkish, Kurdish, Arab and Circassian origin. Settled.

The Armenians of Cilicia formed National Unions in each city and town, and city which helped in the resettlement of Armenians as administrators attempted to appeal to both Muslims and Armenians. The unions served as administrators attempted to appeal to both Muslims and Armenians. At their head was the Armenian Legion, volunteers who came from the Armenian communities. The unions served as administrators attempted to appeal to both Muslims and Armenians.

The unionists were subject to three sets of massacres in the span of little more than a generation.

Attempts at Justice

When the Armenians returned, they sought lost family members, relatives, and children. Women and children had been taken by Muslim families as servants or concubines. Homes, lands, animals, and various items of personal property had been taken by either the state or region.

The French and British attempted to facilitate this process by creating local commissions, which had both Armenian and non-Armenian members. The return of property was uneven. Where Armenians were more numerous, such as in towns like Kharpert, they were more success in obtaining properties (and even in a few cases may have gone beyond what was legitimate). Where they were less numerous, the applications were more successful for the population of the whole region.

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constantly interrupted in the Amaran in Feb and March and Bozanti fell at the end of May.

At the end of May, the French handed over Sis, Bozanti, Antab (later retaken), and areas to the north of the Cilician railroad line to the Turkish Nationalists as part of a shortlived armistice, and thousands of Armenians from the Sis area were evacuated. The abortive international Treaty of Sèvres of August 10, 1920, beloved by some Armenians today, only included the territories of Erzerum, Bitlis, Van, and Trebizond from the Ottoman Empire as part of an Armenian state (Art. 89). Adana and most of plains Cilicia as well as mountainous northern Cilicia were left to the Turks, while Baghche, Uria, Antab and Birjik as well as a portion of coastal Cilicia were included in Syria.

At the London negotiations in March 1923, the French agreed to relinquish more land to the Turks, including the Dort-Vol area. The Franklin-Bouillon agreement of October 1921, also known as the Treaty of Ankara, confirmed this and handed over the rest of Cilicia. It was ratified by the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923.

Armenians attempted to organize themselves militarily but they were largely dependent on French acquiescence and lagged behind the Turkish Nationalists. Nonetheless they played an important role in the defense of Armenian populations. In places without French troops, like mountainous Hajin, the Armenians sometimes lasted for months against much larger forces, but without French help Hajin fell in October 1920 and thousands of Armenians were massacred or enslaved. Several unsuccessful attempts were organized to assemble volunteers to go to the aid of Hajin from plains Cilicia. Other Armenian volunteers, upon French request, were formed into militias to help defend villages and agricultural work in the summer of 1920 in the Cilician plains area.

Damadian and the Cilician Armenian National Union, with the support of other local Christian communities, proclaimed Cilician independence on August 4, 1920. This was a desperate act to preempt the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres on August 10, which provided for the French evacuation of much of Cilicia in favor of the Ottoman Turks.

Unfortunately, the situation devolved quickly into a farce. Several of the Armenian political parties separately issued their own declarations of independence for Cilician territories a few days earlier. On August 5, Damadian and his new cabinet were ejected only a few hours after taking possession of the Adana government building by French soldiers, ending this episode, and of course the Treaty of Sèvres was signed (though never ratified).

Furthermore, in September 1920, the Armenian Legion was formally disbanded and the French began to disarm and expel Armenian volunteer forces and Adana National Union leaders from Cilicia. French victories over the Kemalists in the Adana area were followed by the French evacuation of much of Cilicia in favor of the Ottoman Turks.

The Armenians all began fleeing Cilicia after the Oct. 20 1921 Franklin-Bouillon Agreement and prior to the Turkish takeover in January, 1922, as they had no trust in the provisions of the Franco-Turkish agreement for their protection. Some fled south to Alexandretta, but fled once more when they had no trust in the provisions of the Franco-Turkish agreement.

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The result of massacres and persecution led to the ethnic cleansing of the remaining Armenians in Cilicia. Turkish Nationalist commander Selaheddin Adil Pasha’s instructions concerning Hajin, exclaimed during the fighting, made clear this goal: "Well then, this has become the head of a boil. Let us lance it and cause this disgusting thing to shrivel up from its root. Let a problem called Hajin not remain in the Tarsus. In these clean areas, do not let the Armenians remain any longer. Let us get our hands on them and cause them to boil. Let us lance it and cause this disgusting thing to shrivel up from its root. Let a problem called Hajin not remain in the Tarsus." Wyndham, trans. "Let us lance it and cause this disgusting thing to shrivel up from its root. Let a problem called Hajin not remain in the Tarsus." Wyndham, trans.

Armenian students digging trenches around an Armenian school near Adana for defense against Turkish Nationalists (John Amar Shishmanian collection, Hoover Institute)
A century has passed since the signing of the Treaty of Sèvres on August 10, 1920, in the town of the same name in France. The treaty sought the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and recognized the smaller nations in the empire as well as relegated the empire’s influence from the Arab regions.

The treaty had stemmed directly from the surrender of Germany on November 11, 1918. On June 28, 1919, Germany and the Allied Nations (including Britain, France, Italy and Russia) signed the Treaty of Versailles, formally ending the war.

As an ally of Germany during World War I, the Ottoman Empire was then targeted by the Allies. The Allies, in addition to punishing the Ottoman authorities, believed in a new type of existence, one in which justice would prevail. In this case, justice applied to the smaller nationalities of Armenians, Kurds, Greeks and Arabs in the Ottoman Empire.

The official name of the treaty, The Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Turkey, pitted the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, with their associated nations, Armenia, Belgium, Greece, the Hedjaz, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Serbo-Croat-Slovene State and Czechoslovakia. “

The pact also provided for an independent Armenia for an autonomous Kurdistan, and for a Greek presence in eastern Thrace and on the Anatolian west coast, as well as Greek control over the Aegean islands commanding the Dardanelles. According to the treaty, whereby on the request of the Imperial Ottoman Government an Armistice was granted to Turkey on October 30, 1918, by the Principal Allied Powers, it was ordered that a Treaty of Peace might be concluded, and the Allied Powers are equally desirous that the war in which certain among them were successively involved, directly or indirectly, against Turkey, and which originated in the declaration of war against Serbia on July 28, 1914, by the former Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian Government, and in the hostilities opened by Turkey against the Allied Powers on October 29, 1914, and conducted by Germany in alliance with Turkey, should be replaced by a firm and durable Peace.

President Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points

To understand how the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres were reached, we have to go back again to the end of World War I, a bloody four-year war the likes of which the world had never seen. Lands were drenched in blood and many participants who survived could not shake off the horrors they had seen. Many leaders, 19 President Woodrow Wilson included, hoped to draw up and arrive at a new world order, one in which a global war, which had seen more than 20 million dead and even more injured, could not take place.

It was this tragic event, which led Wilson to draw his Fourteen Points, one base on guaranteeing peace and respect for human rights. Number 12 on the list addresses Armenia. They appear below, abridged.

1. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understanding of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

5. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.

6. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, though Cilicia, the most important one, was not part of this new Armenia.

The Ottoman delegation of Sèvres comprising the three signatories of the treaty. Left to right: Riza Tewfik Bölböök, Grand Vizier Damat Ferid Pasha, the Ottoman education minister Mehmed Hâdî Pasha and ambassador Resad Halil. 

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9. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

11. Armenia, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated: occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by a frontier line, along historic and cessionally established lines of allegiance and nationality, and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmo-lested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under interna-tional guarantees.

13. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea.

14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guaran-tees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

Back to Sèvres

The Treaty of Sevres was drawn up as a direct result of the Fourteen Points, replete with Wilsonian idealism. The following articles in the treaty asked for the creation of an independent Armenia from the Armenian provinces in the Ottoman Empire, though Olicia, the most important one, was not part of this new Armenia.

The Ottoman delegation of Sèvres comprising the three signatories of the treaty. Left to right: Riza Tewfik Bölböök, Grand Vizier Damat Ferid Pasha, the Ottoman education minister Mehmed Hâdî Pasha and ambassador Resad Halil.

ARTICLE 88.

Turkey, in accordance with the action already taken by the Allied Powers, hereby recognizes Armenia as a free and inde-pendent State.

ARTICLE 89.

Turkey and Armenia as well as the other High Contracting Parties agree to submit to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the frontier to be fixed between Turkey and Armenia in the vilayets of Erzerum, Trabzon, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to access for Armenia to the sea, and as to the demilitarization of any portion of Turkish territory adjacent to the said frontier.

In the event of the determination of the frontier under Article 89 involving the transfer of the whole or any part of the territory of the said Vilayets to Armenia, Turkey hereby renounces as from the date of such decision all rights and title over the territory so transferred. The provisions of the present Treaty applicable to territory detached from Turkey shall thereupon become applicable to the said territory.

The proportion and nature of the financial obligations of Turkey which Armenia will have to assume, or of the rights which will pass to her, on account of the transfer of the said territory will be determined in accordance with Articles 241 to 244, Part VII (Financial Clauses) of the present Treaty.

Subsequent agreements will, if necessary, decide all ques-tions which are not decided by the present Treaty and which may arise in consequence of the transfer of the said territory.

ARTICLE 91.

In the event of any portion of the territory referred to in Article 89 being transferred to Armenia, a Boundary Commission, whose composition will be determined subse-quently, will be constituted within three months from the delivery of the decision referred to in the said Article to trace on the spot the frontier between Armenia and Turkey as estab-lished by such decision.

ARTICLE 92.

The frontiers between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Georgia respectively will be determined by direct agreement between the States concerned.

In either case the States concerned have failed to deter-mine the frontier by agreement at the date of the decision referred to in Article 89, the frontier line in question will be determined by the Principal Allied Powers, who will also pro-vide for its being traced on the spot.

ARTICLE 93.

Armenia accepts and agrees to embody in a Treaty with the Principal Allied Powers such provisions as may be deemed nec-essary by these Powers to protect the interests of inhabitants of that State who differ from the majority of the population in race, language, or religion.

Armenia further accepts and agrees to embody in a Treaty with the Principal Allied Powers such provisions as these Powers may deem necessary to protect freedom of transit and equitable treatment for the commerce of other nations.

What Happened

The good intentions of Wilson and the other powers became simple ideals that were not followed through. The treaty was never signed by the United States of America. The treaty was signed but never ratified by
A Missed Opportunity and The Revenge of History

By Edmond Y. Azadian

World War I and its aftermath represent an era complicated to understand, analyze and make sense of. It was even more challenging for the Armenian people, who had experienced the Genocide. This planned massacre by the Ottoman regime was intended to annihilate the Armenians, for good, eliminating all chances for their recovery. This destruction was an ideological necessity as the Ottomans, before the Sultan, and after them the Kemalists, had similarly subscribed to an overarching philosophy of creating a unified state composed of Muslims only. That way, they could bar once and for all any interference by Christian powers under the guise of protecting the minorities of the empire. The plan for the Genocide was executed with mathematical accuracy so that there would be no survivors, let alone a leadership that would plan any recovery. But the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in the war left many questions unanswered about the perpetrators of the crime.

Armenians, after losing their homeland and two-thirds of their population, were able to rise again and attain their independence in the Caucasus and create a home rule in Western Armenia, particularly in Cilicia, where an Armenian kingdom had existed from the 10th to the 14th centuries. It is this saga of Cilician Armenians which has not been properly studied and understood, for a variety of reasons.

During World War I, the Allies (including Britain, France, Russia and the US) fighting the German-Ottoman forces approached the Armenians and in particular, Boghos Nubar Pasha, who was heading the Armenian National Delegation, to join the Allied forces and as payment, rule over their lost homeland of Cilicia. Some historians claim that the Allies had never signed a document with the promise of home rule in Cilicia and thus it was not valid. However, the Armenians did not have an independent entity which could represent the nation under international law. As well, the Allies had repatriated the dispersed Armenians to Cilicia, through their own means, which indicates more than a promise.

The Allies expected the Armenians to join the war effort. A legion would be created under Allied Command to be named for the Legion of the Orient (later to become the Armenian Legion) to recruit volunteers. Three Armenian political parties undertook the task of recruiting, sending their representatives to the US, Britain and France.

The delegation was composed of Mihran Damadian, Arvazav Hanumyan and Stephane Sahab-Galian. They traveled to the US, braving French gunboats, and visited many cities where the immigrant Armenians had been starting new lives. They recruited young men who first were trained in New Jersey and later in Cyprus, where they joined volunteers from Musa Dagh. They formed the French contingent of Senegalese forces and ordered Damadian and his cabinet to vacate the premises commanded by the French forces in Cilicia, Gen. Edouard Brémond, who in return, sent a contingent of Senegalese forces and ordered Damadian and his cabinet to vacate the premises, where a huge tricolor flag was already hanging.

Damadian made a last stand, believing that the French would appreciate his valor. He cited the words of one of the leaders of the French Revolution, Honore Mirabeau: “If you have been instructed to make us leave this place, you shall seek permission to use force, for only the power of bayonets will dislodge us.”

Sure enough, the bayonets were pointed at Damadian, who was forced to leave. This intriguing chapter of history has not been thoroughly studied. Damadian himself has left scant memoirs, insufficient to develop a sound theory. To this day, a lot of controversies remain and many questions are left unanswered. Damadian, in the last pages of his memoirs, answers only some of the questions:

- The Armenians had to take their defense into their own hands, as the Kemalist forces were harassing the Armenians.
- Cilicia’s independence movement did not take place to counter the independent Republic of Armenia, as blamed by Avedis Aharonian and Alexander Khadjian.
- On the contrary, it was supposed to complement the Republic of Armenia by acting as its window to the Mediterranean.
- Armenians did not create the Cilician issue. It was thrust on us by the international community, which then failed to defend us.
- The controversy will certainly continue because, as the saying goes, success will have many godfathers, while defeat is always an orphan.
- Indeed, how many real and fake founders do we have for our First Republic? As for the Turkish Republic, it is said that independence of the First Republic was thrust upon Armenians, when they were least ready to embrace it. The major factor in the collapse of the Cilician dream was French treachery. The French government not only refused to inform Armenians about its intentions, even the local army officers were unaware of what was going on in the corridors of power back home.

The French retreated from Marash, for example, on a snowy night, silently, leaving the Armenians to the mercy of the marauding Kemalist hordes. Many Armenians who were alarmed by the French retreat tried to follow the soldiers, but they froze to death.

One weakness in the Armenian position is that they placed too much trust in the French and ignored the military component of the plan. Had they secretly armed themselves, as the Kemalists did, they could have put up a good fight, as they had done in Marash, Haji Urfa, Aintab and Zeitoun and they could have delayed the advance of the Kemalist forces, if not outright defeated them.

Cilicia is one of the most fertile regions of Asia Minor. Today it serves as Turkey’s breadbasket. The Cilician movement was a missed opportunity for the Armenians, but its lessons were not learned.

The Cilician dream was an opportunity lost, and the lesson is not lost. Armenia should not have to wait another century to regain its lost lands. Cilicia is one of the lost pieces. The Armenians would have stopped the Kemalis. The Armenians would have stopped the Kemalis. The Armenians should have visited the site of their past victories whenever they felt like it.

As a result of the efforts of the French, over 300,000 Armenians fled to Cilicia, where they enjoyed greater freedom and a better life. They managed to achieve a semblance of independence, and even established a republic, which is in some ways comparable to the Republic of Armenia.

The final Turkish and Armenian borders were internationally agreed upon in the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 which stipulated the generally unratified and unimplemented Sèvres Treaty. By Edmond Y. Azadian

The proposed boundaries incorporated the Ottoman vilayets of Erzurum, Bitlis, and Van. This region was extended to the north, up to the west side of Trabzon to Kars. This region was incorporated to the north, up to the west side of Trabzon to the Ottoman Empire. The government of the new Armenian republic agreed to the boundaries as its territory, and the Ottoman Empire recognized them as the northwestern border of Turkey. This resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey.

The Treaty of Sèvres, signed with Russia, was never ratified by the Ottoman Empire. The proposed boundaries incorporated the Ottoman vilayets of Erzurum, Bitlis, and Van. This region was extended to the north, up to the west side of Trabzon to Kars. This region was incorporated to the Ottoman Empire. The government of the new Armenian republic agreed to the boundaries as its territory, and the Ottoman Empire recognized them as the northwestern border of Turkey. This resulted in the establishment of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Turkey.

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The Armenian Legionnaires
In Cilicia

By Susan Pattie

Often when the Armenian Legionnaires are mentioned, it is in the context of their important role at the Battle of Arara, part of the decisive Battle of Megiddo where they fought as part of the Allied Forces under General Allenby. Though they won that battle decisively and the Armistice followed soon afterwards, the active role of the Legionnaires had really only just begun. This moment comes midway through the book The Armenian Legionnaires: Sacrifice and Betrayal in World War I as the Legionnaires continued to fight until August 1920 when the last of the Armenian Legionnaire battalions was demobilized.

1920 brought devastating new destruction to towns and villages being rebuilt by returning Armenian refugees. Marash, Hadjin, Urfa and many more were abandoned by the French, increasingly weak and distracted by their own geopolitical ambitions, and crushed by the Kemalist forces, increasingly strong, motivated and led by the charismatic Mustafa Kemal. Surviving Armenians gathered in Adana and Mersin or dispersed to other countries.

In Adana, Lt John Shishmanian was appointed the head of the remaining Armenian Legion troops and also ordered to organize commissioned Legionnaires still in the area as well as civilians who were willing and able to help. Their primary work was to protect Adana from guerrilla attacks on transportation and communication networks. Born in Kentucky of Armenian and Scottish-American heritage, Shishmanian was also the liaison between the French officers and those remaining Armenians rebuilding homes and some still making plans for a semindependent Cilician Armenia.

General Brémond was seen as too partial to the Armenians and sent back to Paris while other officials began arresting Armenian Legionnaires, including Shishmanian, on false pretenses. Some such as the highly respected Lt. Vahan Portukalian were threatened with death sentences until false evidence presented in the military court was thrown out.

The “final act” of the Legionnaires’ work in World War I was as heroic as the earlier stages had been but much more complex. Contradictions and unrealistic demands, backtracking and lack of protection left the men feeling betrayed both for themselves and for their compatriots when they had come to help.

Closings his concise summary of the historical context in Chapter Two of The Armenian Legionnaires, Varak Ketsemanian points out that the Legion’s achievements concern a people who attempted to come to grips with the destruction and devastation of their nation. Its story also shows the union of hundreds of Armenians from different backgrounds for a greater cause. … those who fought to keep the vision of an Armenia alive.”

An excerpt from a letter from Jim Chankalian (in English) dated 1920 is included in this description.

“Many women under my care have been taken from Turkish harems. Previously they were in an abominable state but, after a little care, they became entirely new women. I don’t have access to funds to carry out such work. I am spending all my monthly salary on them, but this is not enough. “This is the greatest and most necessary work that we can do. These unfortunate women are all young. They fly from Turkish houses almost naked. It is impossible for me to see all this and not be affected. I enjoin them to be good, but how can they be content with half a loaf of bread daily? When they are naked and hungry, how can we expect them to be virtuous? My friend, this is the state of our exiled sisters. It has been eight months that I am busy with this work, but I have yet to receive any support from Armenian organizations. The funds given to me from the French government are absolutely inadequate.”
Evidence accumulates that when a true history of the Near East during the last five years comes to the printed page, there will be revealed to the world a record of inefficiency, expedience, cruelty and promise-breaking by those from whom the Christian peoples of that part of the world had expected protection, deliverance and salvation from the Turk, which will astound the world’s sense of justice and righteousness.

The historian who seeks proof of the injustice inflicted upon those Christians may find some of it in the experience of Lieutenant John Shishmanian, native of Kentucky, USA, of Scotch and Armenian ancestry; American ambulance driver in France preceding entrance of the United States into the war; wounded at Verdun; second lieutenant in the French Army, instructor of Armenian troops on the island of Cyprus; commanding officer of Cilician Armenian Volunteers, organized to defend the Christians in the City of Adana, Cilicia; while still wearing the uniform of a French officer, and without specific excuse, except the political expediency of the Treaty of Sevres, “railroaded” out of Cilicia by his own superior French officers, and only set free when an inquiry by the Secretary of the State of the United States had apparently convinced the French of the urgent advisability of denying that he had ever been so much as arrested.

Lieutenant Shishmanian told the story in detail to a representative of the Christian Science Monitor. He made it clear that he did not mean to criticize adversely the French officers in Cilicia as being responsible for the policy under which the Turks and Kurds have been favored and the Armenians, Chaldeans, Assyrians and Greeks oppressed. Responsibility for this, he held, rests with higher officials in Paris, whom he described as attempting to manage things in the Near East for the selfish purposes of some individual Frenchmen, and without a proper understanding of the people upon whom great wrongs are being inflicted.

“I was born in Kentucky,” said Lieutenant Shishmanian, “and years ago had experience with the Kentucky militia in feud troubles. Before we entered the war I went to France as a member of the American ambulance field service. Some time after that, in order to see active service, I enlisted in the French Army and rose to the rank of second lieutenant. After serving at Verdun, I was ordered, with about a score of other French officers, in January 1918, to go to Cyprus and drill Armenian troops into an Armenian legion.

“This drilling was done in Cyprus to conceal the organization of the Armenian legion from the Turks. There were about 5,000 men, 1,600 from America, and they saw service in Palestine and Syria, and later occupied Cilicia for the French.

“The legion was organized because France was short of troops and had to have Armenians to help keep the Turks engaged on the Palestine front; and also because France was afraid that without sufficient troops there she would lose her prestige in the Near East, and because of her desire, after the Sykes-Picot treaty, to have good reason to say a strong word in her behalf, after the war, in connection with the Near East.

“Remember that more than 200,000 Armenians were brought back from exile, under the British and French regime, and were encouraged to rebuild their homes in Cilicia. That was just after the armistice, and that was how Sta. Hadjin. Urfa, Marash, Adana and other places were repopulated. During the year and a half when the Cypress Legion (sic), almost alone, occupied Cilicia, these people were perfectly happy and safe.

“Now, as soon as the British had evacuated Cilicia, the trouble began. The French have shown a stupid, inefficient and vacillating policy in everything they have done in Cilicia. But they had so few men in comparison with the number the British had that they were terrified. Because of this they kept concentrating the people in the towns, and this precipitated the Turks, when they saw that we would not attack, to guerrilla warfare.

“The case of Marash. The 6,000 French troops evacuated that city after the Turks had flown the white flag. Let me emphasize that: the French evacuated after, not before, the Turks had signaled for truce.

“The situation today is the result of the same policy. All the Armenians have been disarmed, in the sense that none is allowed to go on the streets armed, and he is not supposed to have arms even to defend himself from attack.

“Now the Cypress Legion (sic) was due to be demobilized last June. The demobilization order came. My service expired June 5. I asked permission to go home. The French-Colonel in Adana told me that 20,000 Kemalists were coming against the city. The only communication with Europe lay through Mesirna, and the Turks, he said, might destroy that railroad any day.

“In Adana at that time there were almost 100,000 people. The inhabitants of Is, Aintar, Urfa, and other places, back to which they had been brought by the British and French, had now been forced to seek refuge in Adana: the place was much overcrowded and the people were on the verge of starvation. There were attacks by the Kemalists almost daily.

“The Colonel said that he was organizing a big column to go to Mesirna and drive the Kemalists off the railroad along the way. He asked me to organize Armenian volunteers to defend the city during the column’s absence and make me their commanding officer.

“There were 1,000 volunteers and we defended the city for three months. This force was completely armed, equipped and clothed by the Armenians themselves, who made great sacrifices for this purpose. When the colonel asked me to raise the volunteers, he provided me with no arms or equipment. I was told to go out and hustle for them. I did, any way I could. The people cut down their own scanty food to clothe and feed us and we found our arms. Our 1,600 defended the city against the daily and nightly attacks of some 15,000 or 20,000 Kemalists for three months.

“On the night before the French left Adana, during the first week in July, the Colonel asked the Armenians to furnish 2,000 more volunteers before dawn. The request was made at 9 o’clock. The volunteers had to be found, assembled, armed, equipped, officered. The Armenian officials said this was impossible, the time was too short. The Colonel said it must be done.

“That night the Armenians hustled around and did their very best, but by dawn, only 85 new volunteers had been found. Now I understand that General Garegnad has recently reported that although Armenians keep declaring that they can furnish men for an army in Cilicia, when they called for 2,000 for the relief of Rasuras, they furnished only 18! But he should also tell of the preposterously unreasonable shortness of time imposed upon them, and that when given more time later, they did the job and did it efficiently.

“And here is what the job was, what the colonel wanted those extra men for. He wanted them to go down into the wheat plain south of Adana, clear it of Turks so that the wheat could flow into the city and, something quite important to him, to open up and keep open the automobile road to the seaport of Karsahan, an avenue of escape for his staff and anyone else who wanted to come along, in case the big column toward Mesirna was defeated.

“It should be stated that this area could have been occupied and cleared of the brigands or Kemalists long before this time and a continuous supply of wheat assured the city. But for reasons best known to the French, this was not done until after they had prevailed upon the Near East Relief to supply flour six months longer.

“After the column came back, Armenian laborers, including boys and girls who went out to the vineyards and vegetable gardens just outside Adana, began to be kidnapped and killed by the Turks. Soon this was done right in the streets of the city. Many children were killed. The parents came to me. I went to the Colonel one day and told him my office was full of weeping women. He said nothing could be done. Later I gave him names of 138 cases, with witnesses and all, and still no action. The result was that on July 10, the whole Christian population got out of hand, to put it mildly. The Armenians, Chaldeans, Assyrians and Greeks simply ran wild, and by midnight nearly all the Turks, except a few around the headquarters of the French governor’s residence, had fled to Konia.

“After that the French officers decided that the Turks must come back. They told me that the Armenians were refugees, they massacred the Turks, and the French must control them. The French general told me I must disarm the Armenians. I responded that it would be impossible for me to execute that order. Then he ordered me to give him a list of those with arms and collect the arms into depots. I told him it was impossible to get such a list. Apparently the French did not want to try to do this work themselves. After that, French officers would walk into houses and, if they found arms, the men in the house would be arrested and hung. Six or seven Armenians were hanged that way. And it was such a hanging that eventually led to my release.

“There were no French white troops in Adana to speak of. They will not go out to Asia Minor. The French forces are mostly Senegalise Negroes and Algerians. The former fight well and are loyal, but the latter are Mohammedans and desert in great numbers to the Turks, always managing to take arms and ammunition with them, even machine guns, which is rather remarkable.”
President Sarkissian Says Treaty of Sèvres is Essential Document for Fair Resolution of Armenian Question

SÁRKHÍSSIAN (Armenpress) — Armenian President Armen Sarkissian sat down with the Syrian Al-Azmenah newspaper for an exclusive interview on the Treaty of Sèvres. The questions and answers below are the official translation of the published article provided by Sarkissian’s Office.

**Question:** Mr. President, August 10 marks the 100th anniversary of the Treaty of Sèvres. Where were you when this document was signed at the Paris Peace Conference by the 13 victorious countries of the Entente on one side and the defeated Ottoman Empire on the other side? The question is that the Treaty was called to solve the tortured for decades Armenia Issue and end sufferings of the Armenians. Your opinion? **Answer:** The Treaty of Sèvres was a peace treaty and with this regard it really could have solved fundamentally one of the thorniest issues for our region problems — the Armenian Question.

The Treaty of Sèvres was preceded by the first conference, which took place in February-March 1920 in London where a political decision was adopted recognizing the unification of Western Armenia under the Ottoman Empire. The deal was sealed when Britain and France accepted the agreement, which was de facto recognized on January 19, 1922.

The Treaty of Sèvres was accepted as the basis for the establishment of the independent state of Armenia. The second concern is Azerbaijan's attempt to create an impression that Armenia poses a threat to the international infrastructure, which is going through Azerbaijan. This is total nonsense, there is no infrastructure, no problems, and Armenia has never had any intention to destroy it. My message is that Armenia has never been and will never be a threat for anyone because we are the successors of those peoples, who went through the Genocide and survived. We know all too well what suffering means, we know the human values. I am convinced that when the time comes, the world will realize it, to keep its advice.
'Together for Armenia' Digital Concert Series

raises Money for Fund For Armenian Relief Projects

NEW YORK – Thousands tuned in to hear the sweet-sounding melodies that echoed in solidarity from New York to the homeland during the inaugural ‘Together for Armenia’ digital concert, held virtually on Thursday, July 28. Led by pianist Sahan Arzruni and featuring violinist Ani Kavafian, oudist Ara Dinkjian and opera singer Christopher Nazarian, the virtual effort benefited the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) and its humanitarian programs.

During a precarious time when the music industry has been altered and live concerts have shifted to the digital world as the pandemic stretches on, the passion for music – from musicians and audience members alike – has not waned. Instead, musicians have turned to support causes, such as through the ‘Together for Armenia’ concert series that aims to support the critical initiatives of FAR – an organization that provides aid to the most vulnerable in Armenia and Artsakh by effectively impacting issues from child protection to healthcare to education and to the elderly.

The inaugural concert featured works by Komitas, Bach, Cusan Ashot and Arno Babajanian and as the series continues, Arzruni plans to include Armenian sacred folk, jazz, pop, as well as compositions from the standard repertoire.

“The audience is there to be entertained so I selected pieces that are familiar,” said Arzruni, an ethnomusicologist who offers commentary about the music in between sets. “The most important criteria is to maintain a very high standard.”

While the 30-minute concert was a seamless watch that delighted audiences, Arzruni acknowledged the diligent work behind the scenes.

“The main challenge in organizing the concert was to have it all synchronized,” said Arzruni, who noted that each musician recorded separately at their local time.

“When I played with Ani, for example, she was in her home and I was in mine playing Komitas’s Kontra, separately, but together.” He credited FAR’s technical team who arranged the recordings and editing with great efficacy and mastered them.

The bi-monthly concert series, which will have a run of at least 12 performances over the next six months, will feature a mix of performers and musical genres while incorporating artists beyond the United States to provide an even more fulfilling experience for viewers.

“Judging from its premiere tribute to Armenia, FAR is mounting an engaging series featuring celebrated musicians of the Armenian heritage who perform gems of Armenian music and other classics as we listen and enjoy,” said pianist Cheryl Seltzer.

The concert series provides a means for change before we step into 2021.

“This year will be remembered for washing hands incessantly and obsessively, wearing masks, or refusing to wear them, staying home, or disobeying the rules, keeping our social distance even from loved ones as they die, or catching the virus and praying we will recover. It will be remembered as the year where a pandemic took many lives, wore us down, caused us to look to our foundations, made the rich even richer and the poor abjectly destitute. It is also the year natural and man-made disasters multiplied and converged in a vengeful way. Mother Earth and the Universe have been ground down, telling us to go back to our caves and remain under house arrest for the evil deeds we have committed.”

Ideal, this year should be remembered for starting a major shift in social behavior, in human thought, in our relationship to the present and the future, and in the ways in which we prioritize and communicate with each other. And yet, one need only browse through the news to see that none of the signs are being heeded by mankind, and the immediate instinct of all is to quickly get back to normal, not realizing that change is the only way out of this situation.

We have to backtrack and retrace our steps to see how much humanity has harmed Mother Earth, how human avarice has produced irreversible environmental damage and climate change. The lives of the poor have become disposable and injustice has stepped up on vulnerable people, suffocating them with the strength of its grip. Major social issues have become overshadowed by the very greed that caused them in the first place, with a few privileged people generating so much of the misery in the world. It is clear that the time has come for a major change.

Change would be possible if we actually learned something from this Pandemic; something fundamental and much bigger than the new skills acquired during the lockdown. As the global economy is resuming, we must learn what caused them in the first place, with a few privileged people generating so much of the misery in the world. It is clear that the time has come for a major change.

When one reads the news and the way solutions are proposed to social, political and humanitarian problems, one sees immediately that the band-aid approach is still what humanity is operating by. Very few people have learnt something and are really putting their newly acquired knowledge into use. We need to delve deeper into ourselves and reevaluate our spiritual needs. Helping others

By Nora Armani
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

NEW YORK – Two thousand and twenty has not been a good year – not so far. We can only speak about this year in the past tense, as things are highly unlikely to change before we step into 2021.

This year will be remembered for washing hands incessantly and obsessively, wearing masks, or refusing to wear them, staying home, or disobeying the rules, keeping our social distance even from loved ones as they die, or catching the virus and praying we will recover. It will be remembered as the year where a pandemic took many lives, wore us down, caused us to look to our foundations, made the rich even richer and the poor abjectly destitute. It is also the year natural and man-made disasters multiplied and converged in a vengeful way. Mother Earth and the Universe have been ground down, telling us to go back to our caves and remain under house arrest for the evil deeds we have committed.

Arts & Living

The Year of Living Remotely and Un-Certainly

By Nora Armani
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The Year of Living Remotely and Un-Certainly

2020 Arpa Film Fest to Showcase Inspiring Films From Around the World

LOS ANGELES – The 23rd Annual Arpa International Film Festival (Arpa IPP) announces its full lineup of selected films for this year.

The Arpa IPP, which in the past has originally taken place at historic theaters around Hollywood, will take place online this year. The festival will run for an 11-day span in order to accommodate all of its planned screenings as a streaming virtual event November 12 – 22, 2020. This year’s Arpa IPP will again highlight a diverse range of world cinema, 65 films from 19 countries that explore many contemporary issues of our time.

Feature Narrative Films

‘Aklak’ Feature, Drama, Comedy, Coming of Age 2019 directed by Barbara Veker, Croatia

‘Lonely Wolves’ Feature, Thriller, Crime, Drama 2019 directed by Sengj Arman, Spain

‘Unahh!’ Feature, Drama 2019 directed by Amlaset Machu, Ethiopia

‘Omar and Us’ Feature, Drama, Human Rights 2019 directed by Maryna Er-Matuchb and Mahshid Harib, Turkey

‘Once Upon a Judgement Day’ Feature, Drama, Western 2020 directed by Melhem Tanrirever, Turkey

‘Respite’ Feature, Action, Crime, Drama 2019 directed by Saro Varjabedian, USA

‘Scent of My Daughter’ Feature, Drama 2019 directed by Olguin Ondenim, Turkey, USA, France

‘Submission’ Feature, Drama 2020 directed by Leonardo Antono, Portugal

‘Uitimate’ Feature, Drama 2020 directed by Pouya Estehban, Iran

Feature length Documentary Films

‘An Armenian Dog’ Feature Doc, Armenian History, Music 2019 by Dan Yesayan, USA

‘Indulge: The Path to Democracy’ Feature Doc, History, Politics, Human Rights 2020 by Bared Marmanian & Silva Basmaci, USA

‘Born Just Now’ Feature Doc, Performance Art, Women 2018 by Robert Adasch, USA

‘Miracle in the Desert: The Rise and Fall of the Salton Sea’ Feature Doc, Environmental 2019 by Greg Bassianen, USA

‘Quo Vadis 2020’ Feature Doc 2019 by Gabrielle Fabian, USA

‘What Will Become of Us’ Feature Doc, Armenian History, Diaspora 2020 by Stephanie Arayan & Joseph Myers, USA

Short Documentary Films

‘Confessions of a Runner’ Short Doc, Sports, Addiction, Recovery 2020 by Bachar Kattahan, Lebanon

‘Finish Line’ Short Doc, Sport, Human Rights 2019 by Saeed Majzuli, Iraq

‘From Karils with Love’ Short Doc, Adventure, Wildlife 2020 by Taylor Reese, USA

‘In the Same Direction: Jeff Pfeffer & Scott Vreeland’ Short Doc, Music Doc. Jazz 2020 by Alexander Craven, USA

‘Jo & Kessy Artists with Disabilities’ Short Doc, Multi Media 2019 by Nwaez Arizhe, USA

More shorts and music videos will also be shown.

Arpa Foundation for Film, Music & Art (ArFPA) is a charitable, non-profit, tax-deductible organization registered as 501(c)3, thereby making all sponsorships 100% percent tax deductible.

ZoomPerformance Q&A with the cast, Author and Nora Armani

From Around the World

Showcase Inspiring Films

2020 Arpa Film Fest to

15

see FAR, page 17
The Year of Living Remotely and Uncertainly

UNCERTAINLY, from page 15 more, and being less self-centered may be a good starting point, as we have come to realize that the feeling of a whole and cannot exist as isolated units.

As an actor and a performing artist I feel my professional life has the hardest hit by the members of the medical profession, our dedicated leaders and the essential workers who sacrificed and put themselves at risk for the health of all. The world is profoundly influenced by the actions and behaviors with which we address the audience, spoke their thoughts as “aides,” and projected may resemble film acting, but to not live in the luxury of doubt, many takes emphasizes the live component, certainly tilting the balance towards a theatrical experience. The actors memorize their lines instead of reading them off the screen, as done with Zoom play readings. By memorizing and speaking as the characters with minimal movement within the frame, the final delivery creates a much more fulfilling theatrical experience. This medium is still evolving and every day is bringing in new discoveries for us theatre folk.

Needless to say, nothing comes even close to the feeling of standing on stage in front of an audience packed with an eager audience breathing the same air, feeling the collective heartbeat of the audience, listening to their laughter, their whistles, their occasional coughs, their chatter, and sometimes even one annoying cell phone ring. But this is all forgotten when the re sounding applause rewards us in the end. That is the magic of live theatre. On Zoom, there is no interference as audience mics are muted, but by the same token, the audience applause has to be communicated through silent emojis or written comments.

The performing arts, like bars, high end restaurants and sports events where the live group gathering is an essential component of the experience, are the hardest hit. I think a painter can still paint, a sculptor can sculpt, a composer can compose music, and a writer can continue to write. Yes, it will be a while until museums reopen, and galleries exhibit again.

Film production in France, in the UK, and in some states in the US such as New York, are slowly resuming activities with new COVID-19 guidelines, involving strict social distancing, frequent testing and the presence of COVID-19 compliance officers on set.

Nothing is planned yet for the performing arts except virtual online and digital presentations. Both SOCT (Society of London Theatre) and the The Broadway League along with all their member producers, have decided that opening theatres at 50percent capacity would make no sense, because the high cost of operating Broadway theatres and shows cannot be sustained with reduced audience numbers. "The alchemy of 1,000 strangers bonding into a single audience fueling each performer on stage and behind the scenes will be possible again when Broadway theatres can safely host full houses," said Thomas Schumacher, chairman of the Board of The Broadway League, which represents producers.

"The Show Must Go Online" is the title under which the UK-based international publication The Stage covered some of the major productions going online during this closure, echoing the famous show business cry of "The Show Must Go On." For now, this seems to be the only alternative for the live performing artist. Theatre seems to be the luckiest artform transitioning to this medium, since barring rapid argument scenes when two or more performers must speak at the same time or overlap, all else may successfully be presented on Zoom or other such platforms. In other performance genres such as musicals, operas and concerts where coordination and synchronized music and singing are required between performers, the shortcomings of the medium produce a cacophony.

Sachs, 85-year old Dame Judy Dench is right when she says she may not see theatre again in her lifetime—at least not indoor theatre on the biggest West End and Broadway stages as we know it.

One obvious solution would be to stage in open air spaces. But summer is almost running out, and there is frustration at many venues such as the idyllic Minack Theatre in Cornwall and Brighton Open Air Theatres and many others this side of the Atlantic and elsewhere where these locations are not able to come to the rescue. Governments are still reluctant to green light large scale performances in open air spaces. But summer is almost running out, and there is frustration at many venues such as the idyllic Minack Theatre in Cornwall and Brighton Open Air Theatres and many others this side of the Atlantic and elsewhere where these locations are not able to come to the rescue. Governments are still reluctant to green

The great plague of Athens during the 5th century BCE had social effects that were as important as their biological impact. There have certainly been many plagues throughout recorded human history. In Athens the plague arrived at a pivotal moment in the affairs of this centre of western civilization. Sophocles’ specific vocabulary for plague in “Oedipus the King” shows the deep and dangerously volatile relations between the epidemic and tragic drama. Likewise, during Shakespeare’s time in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, a plague ravaged the city of London and its countryside. Out of that was born the healing poetry of Shakespeare that survived the centuries and came to us, with the universal power of portraying all aspects of human nature. The urgency of the situation made people realize the ephemeral nature of life, and re- evaluate their priorities, just like we are doing today, in the age of COVID-19. Poet playwrights could potentially go on, just as much as their patient may be willing to listen. Who knows what the legacy of the age of COVID-19 will be?

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Together for Armenia’ Digital Concert Series Raises Money for Fund for Armenian Relief Projects

FAV, from page 15
Established as a response to the devastating 1988 earthquake in Armenia, FAV has raised more than $350 million for 300 projects in the economic, education, relief, cultural and social spheres during the last three decades. It is currently meeting the pressing needs of the COVID-19 pandemic that tore thru Armenia by contributing to an emergency campaign. They are also helping on the ground and delivering 30,000 items of Personal Protective Equipment in Armenia and Artsakh. To further train healthcare professionals, FAV launched a webinar-training, in partnership with Armenia’s National Institute of Health. The FAV team has also been assisting the province of Tavush following the July war with Azerbaijan.

“FAV is keen on being cost-effective and result-oriented,” said Garmir Nanagoulian, Executive Director. “We are very fulfilled when we see the stages of development of those we service, such as a child in our orphan program who flourishes and becomes the recipient of our educational scholarships.”

Nanagoulian said he hopes the concert series, which sends a “powerful message to the world,” will provide another channel for Armenians to support the homeland.

“The music, the Armenian culture and the spirit of Armenia that comes together to help people in need and I’m very thankful to Sahan for his creativeness in launching this program,” said Nanagoulian.

Maintaining a strong bridge between the Diaspora and the homeland has long been a priority for Arzruni, who first traveled to Armenia in 1975 and continues to feel a deep connection to his roots. He is encouraged by the talent and skills of the next generation.

“Music is a wonderful discipline for the mind, soul and spirit,” said Arzruni. “Although it’s not practical to be a musician in the 21st century, if the flame of these students is strong enough, they will achieve their goals.”

Arzruni has an ambitious vision for the upcoming digital concerts and plans to include the youth of Armenia in the series to showcase their talents.

“Together for Armenia” presented the finest hour of internationally recognized musicians,” said Dr. Vartan Abdo, director of the Armenian Radio Hour of New Jersey. “It was a brave production, presented graciously and successfully, and we impatiently await the next concert.”

“Thank you Sahan and FAV for an outstanding program,” said engineer Vahan Tanal who watched the concert with his wife, Lisa. “What a pleasure to watch and listen to extraordinary Armenian performers from around the world and also be able to help Armenia during these difficult times.”

Looking towards the future, Nanagoulian said FAV is driven to engage in even more aspirational programming in order to change the culture of society in Armenia, from children with disabilities, to health and nutrition, to economic development — thanks to the unity of Armenians in the Diaspora and the homeland.

“The primary and essential reason we are doing the concert series is to fundraise,” said Arzruni. “We hope people will be generous because we are presenting the best of Armenian artistry and the best of the Armenian artists.”

For more information on how to view the upcoming “Together for Armenia” concerts, visit: https://www.farusa.org/together

Recipe Corner
by Christine Vartanian

Lebanese Cheese Fatayer
(From Analida’s Ethnic Spoon)

Fatayer are a staple of Lebanese cuisine. Photos and recipe are courtesy of Analida Braeger at the popular Analida’s Ethnic Spoon food blog launched in 2013. Analida is the talented food writer, recipe developer, and creator of Analida’s Ethnic Spoon food blog. Analida is an adjunct lecturer of architectural history at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Penn., and works to find historical perspectives about each recipe, its culture, and sometimes the backdrop for its ingredients at my food blog.

Fatayers are a Lebanese food found throughout the Middle East in pastry shops and market stalls. Fatayers can be filled with meat (lamb fatayer is traditional) They can be triangular in shape or cigar-shaped. These are similar to the Turkish pogacas or the Latin American empanadas, or the Eastern European burek.

INGREDIENTS:
• 16 oz. pizza dough frozen, then thawed
• 1 cup feta cheese, crumbled
• 5 oz. plain yogurt
• 1/4 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
• 2 1/2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped fine
• 1 dash of nutmeg
• 2-3 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped fine
• 1/4 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
• 1 teaspoon za’atar sprinkled on finished fatayer
• 2 tablespoons feta
• 1 teaspoon za’atar
• 1 teaspoon cumin

PREPARATION:
Defrost the pizza dough. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
In a bowl combine the feta cheese, yogurt, mozzarella cheese, parsley, and nutmeg. Crush with a spoon to break down the chunks of feta. (You want the mixture to look like a very thick lumpy paste.)

On a floured surface knead the dough until it is elastic. Roll into a log and cut into ten pieces. Roll each ball and set aside covered.

Fold over the top left of the dough over the filling and press down. Fold over the opposite side over the folded sided and pinch. Repeat the process at the bottom of the pastry. Brush with egg wash and place on parchment paper on a cookie sheet. Sprinkle with nigella seeds, if desired.

Take a couple of pinches of the reserved mixture and place in the center of the fatayer. Fold it over and pinch.

Preheat oven and bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Fatayer may be served warm or at room temperature.

Serves 8-10.

Also try Analida’s recipe for Lebanese Lamb Fatayer at: https://ethnicspoon.com/lebanese-lamb-fatayer/

Analida Braeger and her husband Tom who is a talented photographer. Tom creates the professional food styling and photography for Analida’s Ethnic Spoon food blog. Analida is a co-founder, The Sioux Chef.com - 2019 Beard Award for Best American Cookbook; Lakota tribe Cookbook author, The Sioux Chef.

Heritage Park to keep us connected, coming together. BREADS! Register via Zoom email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

MASSACHUSETTS

A virtual cooking series, a collaboration of City of Boston Age-Friendly Boston, OLDWAYS and Friends of Armenian Heritage Park to keep us connected, coming together. ARMENIAN CUISINE. Lena Tashjian, Cookbook author, recipe developer, writer. Vegan Armenian Kitchen Cookbook: Recipes and Stories from Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora (2020); founder, Vegan Armenian Kitchen.com. To register via Zoom, please email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.

SEPTEMBER 23 – Wednesday, at 10am. Celebrating What Unites Us! A virtual cooking series, a collaboration of City of Boston Age-Friendly Boston, OLDWAYS and Friends of Armenian Heritage Park to keep us connected, coming together. BREADS! Andrew Janjigian. America’s Test Kitchen Bread Expert. Cooks illustrated... To register via Zoom email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.

Hello! Are you interested in learning more about Armenian culture and cuisine? We have a virtual cooking class with Lena Tashjian, a cookbook author and recipe developer, who will be sharing some delicious Armenian recipes. You can register via Zoom at the following link: https://zoom.us/j/83238898423?pwd=R3A2cFZldnZmY0JGh6aW81ZmZ5bXQ9. July 2 – Tuesday, at 10am. Celebrating What Unites Us! A virtual cooking series, a collaboration of City of Boston Age-Friendly Boston, OLDWAYS and Friends of Armenian Heritage Park to keep us connected, coming together. BREADS! Andrew Janjigian. America’s Test Kitchen Bread Expert. Cooks illustrated... To register via Zoom email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.
The Debate over Hagia Sophia: the New Republic, Hrant Dink and Tahir Elci

By Taner Akcam

During the recent return of the Hagia Sophia/Hagia Sophia Museum to the status of a mosque, three moments at a symbolic level have been of crucial importance in regard to transforming the Hagia Sophia into a mosque. The first was the statement on 5 August by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, which signaled an abiding belief of returning to the Hagia Sophia to its place as a mosque, despite the complex history and potential for division of the Hagia Sophia. The second was the decision by the President of the Republic to open the Hagia Sophia to the public for Friday prayers, which was seen as a bold and controversial step. The third was the presence of the President of the Republic, who participated in the opening ceremony of the Hagia Sophia as a mosque, and delivered a speech expressing his commitment to the principles of religious freedom and national heritage.

This move and the reactions to it have sparked a debate over the Hagia Sophia in the Turkish Republic. The Hagia Sophia has been a symbol of the Republic's history, national identity, and cultural heritage. It has been a place of worship for Christians, a museum for a long period, and now it is being reopened as a mosque. This transformation has raised questions about the future of the Hagia Sophia and its role in Turkish society. It has also sparked a debate about the role of religion in the public sphere, the principles of secularism, and the meaning of national identity. The debate has been characterized by various perspectives, including those of the Erdogan regime, the opposition, and civil society organizations.

The Hagia Sophia is not only a cultural and historical symbol but also a symbol of the Republic's identity. The move to reopen the Hagia Sophia as a mosque has been interpreted as a statement by the Erdogan regime about its vision for the country's future. The Erdogan regime has been accused of using the Hagia Sophia issue to consolidate its power, to increase its popularity, and to distract from the country's economic and social problems. However, many Turks see the Hagia Sophia issue as an opportunity to express their identity and their love for their country.

The debate over the Hagia Sophia has also raised questions about the relationship between religion and the state, and the role of faith in public life. The Erdogan regime has been accused of using the Hagia Sophia issue to promote a populist agenda, to increase its control over the media and the internet, and to suppress opposition voices. The opposition has been criticized for not taking a strong stance on the issue, and for not being able to offer a coherent vision for the country's future.

The Hagia Sophia issue has also sparked a debate about the role of civil society organizations in shaping public opinion and policy. Some organizations have been accused of being too close to the Erdogan regime, and of not being able to offer a coherent vision for the country's future. Others have been accused of being too critical of the Erdogan regime, and of not being able to offer a coherent vision for the country's future.

In conclusion, the debate over the Hagia Sophia is a symbol of the challenges facing the Turkish Republic. It is a symbol of the country's history, identity, and future. It is a symbol of the role of religion in public life, and the relationship between religion and the state. It is a symbol of the role of civil society organizations in shaping public opinion and policy. It is a symbol of the challenges facing the Erdogan regime, and of the need for a coherent vision for the country's future.
How Do You Save a Truly Corrupt Country Like Lebanon?

By Harut Sassounian

Diapora Commissioner Welcomes Non-Armenian Migrants to Armenia

On the top of the other of the disputes among Armenians, a new controversy was added last week by Zareh Sinanyan, the Armenian Republic’s High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs. A few days before Sinanyan’s visit to the weekend, a planeload of humanitarian aid arrived in Armenia. There was a row of Armenian officials and others and made some unexpected statements. Here are excerpts from Sinanyan’s statement:

“…We should create such a reality in Armenia that not in the distant future we can think about not only the repatriation of Armenians, but also making Armenia the homeland of, how do I say this, for nationalists like us. I am talking about Christian Arabs, Assyrians, those nationalities that do not rep

resent a national security danger to Armenia and can be easily integrated in Armenia. Because in such a simple, thoughtful and civilized manner, we can change the demographic situation in Armenia. We should not be embarrassed by that. That is a correct thing. That will be a success. Imagine that we can make Armenia a country that is attractive also to non-Armenians. Sinanyan’s statement above created a major controversy in Armenian circles worldwide. The vast majority of Armenian comments on Facebook pages were highly critical, turning this issue, like many others, into a partisan political dispute.

I also watched another one of Sinanyan’s interviews with the Civilnet website prior to his visit to Lebanon. In that interview, Sinanyan again talked about Christian Arabs, Assyrians, and other nationalities immigrating to Armenia. However, this time, Sinanyan stated that the idea came from Shihan Tareck, the editor of the ASYRISAN magazine in Lebanon. Sinanyan said that the ARF supported this idea, and as a result, he visited the ARF in Beirut. The ARF leaders have publicly announced that they prefer Lebanese Armenians not to abandon the well

protected communities of Beirut. Naturally, no one can constrain any Lebanese Armenian from immigrating to Armenia, which is much more preferable than immigrating to the foreign land, so something was somehow construed by Sinanyan. In the video, Kandaharian was speaking about the immigration of Armenians to Lebanon who had been repatriated in the late 1990s to France. Sinanyan also alleged that those who criticized him on Facebook are ARF ARF members in Beirut, which is a serious national consequence which go far beyond Sinanyan’s authority and responsibilities. The genocide of Christians which destroyed Armenians and made the Armenians extra protective of the remnants of their people and the diminished homeland.

Nevertheless, while only the government is responsible for implementing the Armenian government’s policy of repatriating Diaspora Armenians, the immigration of non-Armenians to their Otropitian homeland has nothing to do with the office of the High Commissioner of Diaspora Affairs. The immigration of non-Armenians is a matter of government policy. Since independence, there has been a small number of non-Armenians who have settled in Armenia as businessmen or family members of Armenian citizens. There have been some refugees who have settled in Armenia in times of war.

Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, is a very sensitive city due to the civil war that the country endured between 1975 and 1990. The civil war was a tragic period in the history of Lebanon, where the Christian militias, Muslim militias, and the Lebanese army fought for control of the country. In addition, the civil war had a significant impact on the diaspora of Armenians from Lebanon, as many of them fled to Armenia for safety.

Well, we can all agree that the seismic shock was 70 percent of the blast! a close Lebanese friend of mine announced to me this week, with intriguing if not frightening information. I had asked him – because I knew the area around Beirut – whether the religious communities had suffered most grievously from the explosion.

Or did not change the nation, as the case may be. Like everything in Lebanon, his calculation may have been right. Because Beruit, like Tripoli – and Haifa, for that matter – is built on many promontories, like “the face of an old fisher

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Like everythin...
LEBANON, from page 19

It’s about time we realised this before we dress...don’t mention the war — but all this is true, and don’t call the blast zone Christian and we don’t being grafted onto last week’s detonation. We the politics, economy, society and (dare I use any change in the corrupt regimes which rule...principle representatives of the Shia are against government. They want to keep them. So the interrupted Lebanon. Hezbollah have seats in the government. “zoama” — the big families — who have cor...suffered...endangered Maronite-Sunni alliance opposed to government. This suggests is that the very sectar...business with Assad (an 88.7 percent vote in...stability under its wretched tyrant who is — here...that which is practised in every other Arab country. Is this because it is more obvious? Or...land which would not dream of any elections...leaked...we go — fighting Islamist “extremism” etc, etc. The resignation of Lebanon’s government...after signing, we must create a group that...rarely hate. No wonder their rage is so incen...him...them with the corruption they so viscerally and...their abilities. There can be no checks on dishon...will produce a series of leaders on revolving...and only if - you accept the system of confes...you ignore the graft and cash handouts and if -...carefully crafted that it really does take the pop...may be representatives of the “masses” of...least better than the surrounding dictatorships. The resignation of Lebanon’s government...over the past hundred years. Think of the UN at...reędzi on the UN on some as yet unthought-through, untest...— the Christians and Muslims of Lebanon will unite to throw them out as bravely...as their grandfathers did the French. But more serious ideas are now floating about how much better the French ruled Lebanon, a nation which has always had a better understanding of Lebanonese history should destroy — take out the works of Kamal Salih, Samir Kassir and the inimitable Brigadier Stephen Longrigg if you have not already done so.

But more serious ideas are now floating about, that there should be some form of intern...to the west arrives in the form of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, or the US 42d Street or some UN on some as yet unthought-through, untested...— the Christians and Muslims of Lebanon will unite to throw them out as bravely...as their grandfathers did the French. But more serious ideas are now floating about how much better the French ruled Lebanon, a nation which has always had a better understanding of Lebanonese history should destroy — take out the works of Kamal Salih, Samir Kassir and the inimitable Brigadier Stephen Longrigg if you have not already done so.

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The resignation of Lebanon’s government...competitive” laws, we must consider what joint projects are interesting...in mutually beneficial terms. The resignation of Lebanon’s government...the west arrives in the form of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, or the US 42d Street or some UN on some as yet unthought-through, untested...— the Christians and Muslims of Lebanon will unite to throw them out as bravely...as their grandfathers did the French. But more serious ideas are now floating about how much better the French ruled Lebanon, a nation which has always had a better understanding of Lebanonese history should destroy — take out the works of Kamal Salih, Samir Kassir and the inimitable Brigadier Stephen Longrigg if you have not already done so.

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