

Israel Urged Not to Sell Weapons to Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia has called on Israel to put an end to large-scale supplies of Israeli-made weapons to Azerbaijan used by the latter in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

“Arms trade with Azerbaijan is fatal because Azerbaijan never hesitates to use those weapons against civilian infrastructure and the civilian population,” Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan told the Jerusalem Post newspaper in an interview published on Wednesday, July 29.

“We will consistently pursue this issue and it will always be an integral part of our agenda both on bilateral and multilateral platforms,” said Mnatsakanyan. “Israel should stop this deadly business with Azerbaijan.”

Over the past decade Israeli defense companies have sold, with the Israeli government’s blessing, billions of dollars worth of advanced military hardware to Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani army used some of those weapons, notably sophisticated anti-tank rockets and attack drones, during April 2016 hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh. It also deployed Israeli-manufactured drones against Armenian military and civilian targets during the recent deadly fighting on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border.

The Armenian military claims to have shot down or intercepted 13 such unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). It demonstrated some of their purported fragments last week.

The Defense Ministry in Yerevan went on to publicize a photograph of two Armenian officers standing next to a SkyStriker “suicide” drone manufactured by the Israeli company Elbit Systems. A ministry spokesman claimed that it was brought down by an electronic warfare system.

“Our military has neutralized Azerbaijani weapons regardless of their perceived origins,” Mnatsakanyan said when asked about the Israeli drones.

Armenia has long expressed concern over Israel’s arms deals with Azerbaijan. The Jewish state appears see WEAPONS, page 2



(@LARALUCYPHOTOGRAPHY)

Houston/German Armenians Protest Against Azerbaijani Aggression

By Garine Abrilian

HOUSTON – On August 1, the Houston Armenian community held a protest against Azeri aggression. The event was held in the Galleria district, a high-traffic area, to spread awareness as effectively as possible. Organizers and supporters from different backgrounds worked together to ensure the Houston community was represented as a whole. The protest was a great success as the Houston Armenian community joined collectively to support the Tavush region, Artsakh and Armenian soldiers on the frontlines.

Even though the day started off rainy and gloomy, more than 40 attendees joined the protest, holding signs, waving flags, passing see DEMONSTRATIONS, page 16

Germany’s Armenians Respond to Aggression

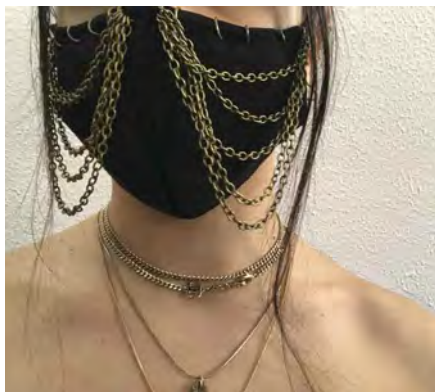
By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN – “Make dolma not war.” That is the message that Haykanush Sechelyan transmitted on a poster during a demonstration in Hamburg, Germany on August 1.

A member of an Armenian youth group, she was one of many in several cities, who had come together to protest acts of violence against Armenians over the past ten days.

see GERMANY, page 3



Mask by Joanna Nanajian

Young Artists Explore Identity To Understand History

By Anaïs DerSimonian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BOSTON – A lot has happened in Armenia over the last couple weeks – Azerbaijan has waged a regional war during the COVID-19 pandemic, firing on border villages, bombing a PPE mask factory and threatening to bomb the Armenian nuclear power plant. Events like this are hard to process for Armenians around the world; how could this happen? Where do we go from here? What’s next?

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Massive Explosion Rips Through Beirut, Tekeyan School

BEIRUT (AP, Zartouk) – Massive explosions rocked downtown Beirut on Tuesday, August 4, flattening much of the port, damaging buildings and blowing out windows and doors as a giant mushroom cloud rose above the capital. At least 60 people have been killed.

The Tekeyan School and Tekeyan Center were damaged as well as Armenian institutions such as the Prelacy in Bourj Hammoud and the AGBU Demirjian Center and other institutions in Antelias..

An Associated Press photographer near the port saw people lying injured on the ground, and hospitals called for blood donations.

Miles from the scene of the blast, balconies were knocked down, ceiling collapsed and windows were shattered.

The cause of the blast was not immediately clear. It came at a time when Lebanon is passing through its worst economic and financial crisis in decades.

It also comes amid rising tensions between Israel and the militant Hezbollah group along Lebanon’s southern border.

Online video showed a column of smoke rising from the port area from what appeared to be an initial explosion, followed by a massive blast that sent up a mushroom cloud and a shock wave racing over the city.

Some local TV stations reported the blast was at Beirut’s port inside an area where fireworks were stored. The *Mirror-Spectator* website has a brief video of the exterior of the Tekeyan School. More information will be posted when available.



Tekeyan School of Beirut building (photo courtesy Zartouk of Beirut)

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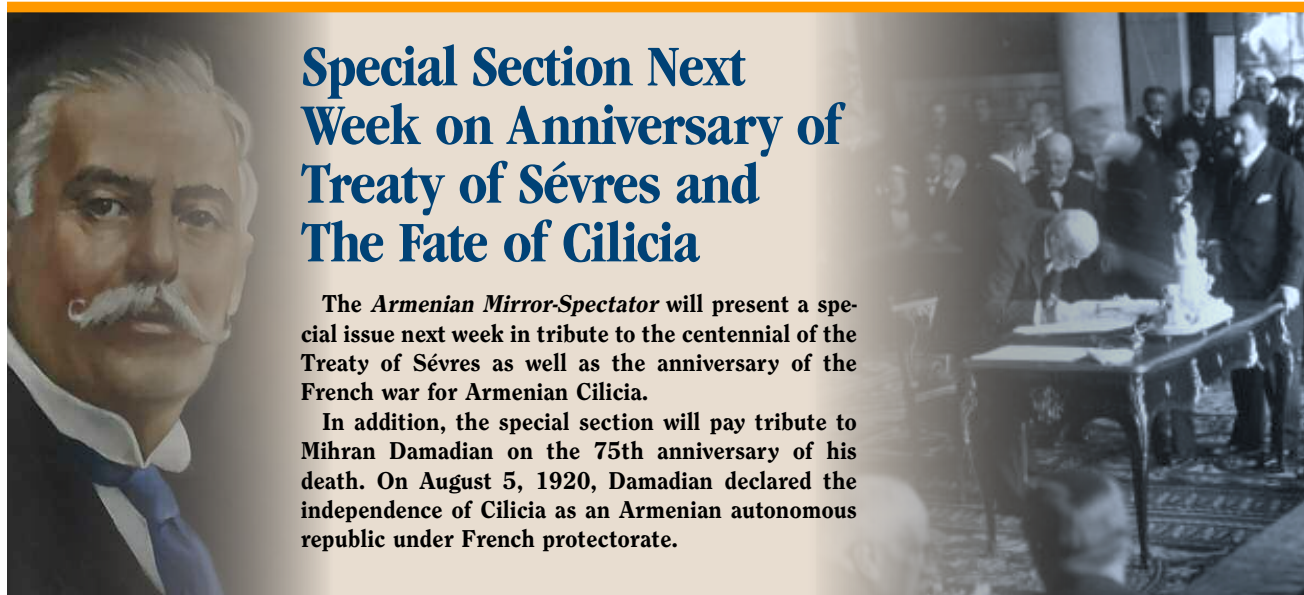
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Special Section Next Week on Anniversary of Treaty of Sévres and The Fate of Cilicia

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* will present a special issue next week in tribute to the centennial of the Treaty of Sévres as well as the anniversary of the French war for Armenian Cilicia.

In addition, the special section will pay tribute to Mihran Damadian on the 75th anniversary of his death. On August 5, 1920, Damadian declared the independence of Cilicia as an Armenian autonomous republic under French protectorate.





ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Several Activists Detained at Amulsar

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – A group of activists opposing the Amulsar gold mine operation were detained on Tuesday, August 4, as clashes erupted between them and police officers.

The defenders of Amulsar blocked the only road leading to the resort town of Jermuk after Lydian Armenia removed their mobile cabins from the land, which the company claims is its own, at night.

The situation remains tense. Police officers urge the activists to open the road, while the latter continue chanting, “Amulsar will remain a mountain.”

Peace-Keepers Sent to Kosovo

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – A peace-keeping unit of the Armed Forces of Armenia comprising 40 servicemen departed for Kosovo on August 1 to carry out peace-keeping mission as part of an American unit, Ministry of Defense Spokesperson Shushan Stepanyan said.

“The members of the unit passed the coronavirus testing before leaving; all the results were negative,” she said.

Chief Architect of Yerevan to Retire

YEREVAN (ARKA) – The chief architect of Yerevan Artur Meschyan will quit his post when his term in office ends, Hayk Marutyan, the mayor of the Armenian capital, told a press conference on Tuesday, August 4.

When appointed to the post in 2018, Meschyan said that he would stay in office for two years.

Meschyan was born in 1949 in Yerevan. He is an architect, musician, composer, poet, singer and painter. He was the founder and the lead singer of Apostles (1968 – 1979) rock band.

He is the author of different architectural projects, including Guest House and the new building of Matenadaran depository of old manuscripts in Yerevan.

In 1989, Meschyan and his family, moved to Boston. In 2005, Meschyan and his wife returned to Armenia.

Armenia, Artsakh Foreign Ministers Meet

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – On July 31, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh Masis Mayilian met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan in Yerevan.

During the meeting, the two officials touched upon the situation, created as a result of the armed aggression launched by Azerbaijan on July 12 in the Tavush region of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, when it directly targeted the civilian population and infrastructure of the border settlements. The foreign ministers emphasized that another attempt by Azerbaijan to deliberately escalate tensions in the conflict zone was a serious blow to the process of peaceful settlement of the Azerbaijan-Karabakh conflict, once again demonstrating the open contempt of the Azerbaijani authorities for their international obligations. In this context, the sides stressed the need to take active steps to deter the aspirations of Azerbaijan for unleashing a new aggression and to bring the authorities of that country to a constructive path. The foreign ministers emphasized the imperative of establishing international mechanisms for the reduction of risks of tension in the conflict zone and for controlling the ceasefire regime.

Masis Mayilian and Zohrab Mnatsakanyan reiterated the urgency of giving a new content to the security cooperation between the two Armenian states. In this context, they noted the need to develop the legal basis for cooperation in this area, taking into account the overall security challenges. In this regard, the sides highlighted the inadmissibility of a destabilizing policy in the region and the necessity of its resolute rejection.

Newly appointed Permanent Representative of the Republic of Artsakh to the Republic of Armenia Sergey Ghazaryan also participated in the meeting.

Armenia Seeks to Offset ‘Turkish Threat’

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia counts on Russia’s support in its ongoing efforts to counter a serious threat to its national security emanating from neighboring Turkey, a senior Armenian official said over the weekend.

Armen Grigoryan, the secretary of the Armenian government’s Security Council, reaffirmed Yerevan’s serious concerns over Turkey’s vehement support for Azerbaijan shown during and after recent deadly clashes on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border.

“Seeing that Azerbaijan is unable to keep the situation under control on its own, Turkey is trying to intervene,” Grigoryan told RFE/RL’s Armenian service. “I think that this poses a serious threat to the region. It is also a challenge to the regional security architecture. The regional security architecture has long been unchanged. Turkey is now trying to change it through its intervention.”

“We are fully prepared and will take steps to minimize this [threat,]” he said. “We also have a lot of work to do in this direction with our strategic ally Russia in order to prevent such changes in the region.”

Asked about Moscow’s reaction to the Armenian concerns, Grigoryan said: “The July incidents [on the border] coincided with the coronavirus pandemic, and we have not yet been able to discuss the issue at a higher level. But these issues are on

the agenda because they are about challenges facing the region and we need a common response to these challenges.”

Ankara has blamed Yerevan for the fighting that broke out at a western section of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border on July 12 and vowed to boost Turkish military support for Baku. In what appears to be a related development, Turkish and Azerbaijani troops began on July 29 joint military exercises in various parts of Azerbaijan.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry expressed concern at the exercises before the Armenian military put some of its forces on high alert. Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan said on July 28 that Armenian army units as well as a Russian-Armenian military contingent are “continuing to constantly monitor and analyze” Turkish-Azerbaijani military activities “with all reconnaissance means” at their disposal.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan discussed the Armenian-Azerbaijani flare-up during a phone conversation on July 27. According to the Kremlin, Putin “stressed the importance of preventing any steps that could cause an escalation in tensions.” Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov similarly urged the Turks to exercise restraint.

Russia is allied to Armenia and has thousands of troops stationed in the South Caucasus state.

Another Fugitive Armenian ‘Given Safe Haven in Russia’

MOSCOW (RFE/RL) – A lawyer for Ruben Hayrapetyan said on July 30, that Russian law-enforcement authorities have effectively refused to extradite the wealthy businessman linked to Armenia’s former leadership and prosecuted on a string of criminal charges.

Hayrapetyan left for Russia in March, more than a month before being first indicted by Armenia’s Investigative Committee.

The law-enforcement body claims he, his son Rafik, and four other persons kidnapped and systematically beat up in 2016 the chief manager of a Hayrapetyan-owned resort who allegedly misused more than 52 million drams (\$108,000) borrowed from a commercial bank controlled by the feared tycoon.

In a separate criminal investigation, Hayrapetyan was also charged with abusing his former status as chairman of the Football Federation of Armenia (FFA) in 2015 to privatize municipal land in Yerevan at a knockdown price.

Hayrapetyan denied the accusations through his lawyers. He told investigators he is unable to return to Armenia because of the coronavirus pandemic. The Investigative Committee dismissed the claim, saying that it believes he simply fled the prosecution.

In late May, a Yerevan court agreed to issue an arrest warrant for Hayrapetyan and four other suspects. The investigators launched an international hunt for Hayrapetyan shortly afterwards.

One of his lawyers, Amram Makinyan, said his client has told him that Russian law-enforcement bodies have formally decided to stop searching for him.

Makinyan said he is not yet aware of the official reason for that decision. He claimed that he also does not know whether the fugitive tycoon holds Russian citizenship and therefore cannot be extradited to Armenia.

A spokesman for Armenia’s Office of the Prosecutor-General said it is now trying to verify the lawyer’s claims. The official, Gor Abrahamyan, said Armenian prosecutors have contacted their Russian colleagues.

Hayrapetyan, 56, has long supported former President Serzh Sargsyan and remains affiliated with the latter’s Republican Party. The once-influential tycoon, notorious for violent conduct, accused the current authorities of harassing him for political reasons after being briefly detained by the Armenian police in February. The police claimed he was taken in for questioning on suspicion of illegal arms possession.



Tsolak Gabrielyan with his family at their new apartment

16th Wounded Veteran Receives a Home in Artsakh

STEPANAKERT, Artsakh – On July 31, the Tufenkian Foundation delivered the keys to a new home to the 16th beneficiary of the “Housing for Wounded Soldiers” program. Tsolak Gabrielyan, a 47-year old veteran who was wounded during the Artsakh Liberation War and again during various military operations on the frontlines, celebrated the delivery of his new home in Shushi, Artsakh, that was originally purchased by the Tufenkian Foundation and renovated with funds from his family.

Subsequent to the war, Tsolak underwent several surgeries as well as a rare type of cancer due to which he had his vocal cords removed. He has two sons, both of whom are currently serving in the Artsakh Defense Army.

“This is one of our most important programs because it not only emotionally motivates our veterans, but expresses our appreciation to their dedication to our nation. We are extremely happy for Tsolak’s family, and we hope that this house will symbolize the start of a new beginning, a new chapter,” stated Husik Sargsyan, the Tufenkian Foundation’s Artsakh Country Director.

Once the Foundation purchased the house, Tsolak’s family sold its tiny apartment and invested the proceeds in renovating their new home.

Since 2016, the foundation has helped 16 families of wounded veterans all across Artsakh. The majority of the beneficiaries had severe housing issues and no proper employment. This program is our way to show our deep gratitude to our veterans and soldiers.

Israel Urged Not to Sell Weapons To Azerbaijan

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to have ignored those concerns so far. This did not stop the current Armenian government from deciding last September to open an embassy in Tel Aviv.

The move was hailed by Israeli leaders but criticized by some officials in Iran, a key foreign partner of Armenia. The Armenian ambassador to Iran, Artashes Tumanyan, assured a senior Iranian Foreign Ministry official in June that Yerevan remains committed to its

“friendly” relationship with the Islamic Republic despite its desire to improve Armenian-Israeli ties.

Incidentally, Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan discussed the Armenian-Azerbaijani border clashes on Wednesday with Iran’s ambassador and military attaché to Armenia. According to Tonoyan’s press office, they specifically spoke about Azerbaijan’s “use of a large number of modern UAVs” and “the effectiveness of the fight against them.”



ARMENIA

Armenia Bars Turkish Weapons Inspectors

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Citing “unprecedented” security threats emanating from neighboring Turkey, Armenia on Wednesday, July 29, banned Turkish officers from inspecting Armenian military bases and verifying Yerevan’s compliance with an international arms control treaty.

It announced the decision as Turkey and Azerbaijan began joint military exercises in the wake of the deadly attack by Azerbaijan on Armenia starting July 12.

Signed in 1990 and revised in 1999, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) places specific limits on the deployment of troops and heavy weapons from the Atlantic coast to Russia’s Ural mountains. Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan signed it after gaining independence.

Signatories to the treaty are allowed to inspect each other’s compliance with the arms ceilings through random visits to practically any military base. Military inspectors from Turkey and other NATO member states have regularly visited Armenia since the mid-1990s. The Armenian Defense Ministry had first sent a group of CFE inspectors to eastern Turkey in March 2010.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry said it informed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on Wednesday that Yerevan has decided to “suspend” Turkish inspections of its armed forces.

In a statement, the ministry attributed the move to Turkey’s “unilateral support to Azerbaijan” and “unprecedented threats against Armenia” voiced following the border clashes that broke out on July 12. It also pointed to the Turkish-Azerbaijani war games, saying that they “further aggravate the situation” in the Karabakh conflict zone.

“Any [further] military inspection conducted on the territory of Armenia by Turkey ... would adversely impact Armenia’s security interests and may jeopardize the security of its population,” read the statement. It indicated that weapons inspectors from other OSCE member states will be allowed to continue to visit Armenia.

Turkey has blamed Armenia for the border clashes and vowed to boost its military and diplomatic support for Azerbaijan. Yerevan has responded by accusing Ankara of trying to destabilize the region.

The Armenian military said on Tuesday that it will be closely monitoring the Turkish-Azerbaijani drills which will be held in various parts of Azerbaijan for nearly two weeks. Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan said Armenian army units as well as Russian troops stationed in Armenia will use “all reconnaissance means” at their disposal for this purpose.

Armenia and Turkey have carried out mutual on-site arms inspections

despite not having diplomatic relations and an open border. Neither country has accused the other of violating the CFE.

By contrast, the Armenian and Azerbaijani militaries have never inspected each other in line with a gentlemen’s agreement dating back to the 1990s. Yerevan and Baku have long traded accusations of exceeding arms quotas set by the Cold War-era treaty.

Dink Foundation to Hold Conference on Hate

ISTANBUL — The Hrant Dink Foundation will hold an online conference titled “International Hate Speech and Discrimination Conference,” on December 11-12, 2020 in collaboration with Friedrich Naumann Foundation.

This conference aims to create a space where the problems caused by hate speech and discriminatory discourse can be revealed and analyzed; moreover, country-specific experiences, strategies, and academic studies for countering these problems could be exchanged, and potential collaborations developed.

In Turkey, as all over the globe, discrimination against women, children, LGBTQI people, ethnic and religious identities is too common. Political tendencies such as globally rising nationalism and populism, polarization, xenophobia, anti-refugee, and anti-migrant sentiments nurture and popularize discrimination. This situation necessitates developing ways to counter hate speech and discriminatory discourse and raise awareness both locally and globally.

The Covid-19 pandemic started in the winter of 2019 and reached a global scale in a couple of months; it did not increase only discrimination against the local Chinese or Asian communities but also increased nationalism, xenophobia, racism, and anti-migrant sentiments and minorities against refugees and migrants. Thus, they who are portrayed as the cause of various unfavorable political developments and as a threat against social structures are associated with disease and stigmatized as

“usual suspects” once again.

After anti-racist protests in the US in the aftermath of the police murder of George Floyd, they were embraced in many countries such as the UK, France, Brazil, and Indonesia, protests, and debates revolving around anti-racism, racial inequality and anti-discrimination began to drive the global agenda. Similarly, nation-states and their citizens’ attitudes toward racism were challenged and discussed all around the world as were questions of race, history, and the importance of national symbols, like statues. These global outbursts and debates have the potential to guide many global anti-discrimination efforts and discussions.

The need for creating a pluralist, inclusive, and rights-based discourse in every field and sector is becoming increasingly urgent. Thus, this conference aims to feature the works that analyze with all kinds of exclusionary discourses and actions under the influence of the current status quo, Turkey, and also other countries, from a comprehensive and critical perspective and to seek methods for countering them.

Civil society representatives, academics, legal experts, occupational organizations, media workers and journalists will be brought together to create a common platform for discussion and inspire new academic studies and other methods to counter racism in the field at this conference.

Those interest in participating can apply through September 7. Only abstracts written in English will be accepted.

International News

US State Department Condemns Azeri Arrest Of Opposition

BAKU (Armenpress) — The US State Department this week urged the government of Azerbaijan to not arrest members of the opposition.

The State Department urged Azerbaijan to refrain from violence and respect fundamental freedoms. It called on Baku to properly investigate the reports on violence and pressure by the police and hold the guilty ones accountable.

Back on July 20, the US State Department commented on the human rights violations in Azerbaijan. In a report the State Department also touched upon this issue, stating that the Azerbaijani authorities are arresting opposition figures. The Department urged Azerbaijan to avoid using the COVID-19 pandemic to silence civil society advocacy, opposition voices, or public discussion.

Femicide Still Rising in Turkey as 36 Women Killed in July

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) — At least 36 women were killed by men in Turkey in July, Ahval said, citing a report released on Saturday by the campaign group We Will Stop Femicide.

There were also 11 deaths of women that were deemed suspicious in July, the group said on Twitter.

According to the group’s figures, the number of femicides in Turkey rose compared to last month and year-on-year. In June, 27 women were confirmed killed by men in Turkey. In July 2019, 31 women were confirmed murdered by men in Turkey.

The report found that 11 of the women murdered in July 2020 were killed by their husbands, five – by male partners, five – by men they knew, four – by ex-husbands, two – by former partners, two – by their fathers, two – by their sons and two – by other relatives.

Five of the women were killed because of financial reasons, while thirteen others were murdered because they wanted to divorce or separate, rejected men or because they wanted to decide about their own lives, ANF said.

Azerbaijanis Plan Rally In front of Armenian Church in Tel Aviv

TEL AVIV, Israel (Public Radio of Israel) — Azerbaijanis are planning a provocation in front of the Armenian Church in Tel Aviv on August 9, blogger Alexander Lapshin warned this week.

The blogger has shared the photo of an invitation for a rally being distributed among the Azerbaijani community in Israel.

“Apparently, there has been an order from Baku to try to spread riots and attacks on Armenian churches, shops and simply ethnic Armenians like it happened in Moscow,” Lapshin wrote in a Facebook post titled “Aliyev, hands off the church.”

“I believe that in a democratic country any community has the right to its opinion, to a peaceful demonstration, to declaring its demands. But the fact that the Armenian church, not the city center or some square, has been chosen as a venue for the demonstration is a direct path to provocation,” he says.

Lapshin stresses that “you cannot touch religion, you cannot make churches, mosques or synagogues a place for sorting things out and provocations.”

“In the place of the Armenian community in Israel, I would appeal to the Israeli police with a request to ban the rally in front of the Armenian church in order to avoid an outbreak of violence motivated by religious intolerance. Christians and Muslims should not come face to face to sort things out, this is no longer democracy, but a direct path to chaos,” he adds.

The blogger believes religious leaders in Israel should denounce the choice of the place for the rally, especially considering that Tel Aviv has always been a symbol of peaceful co-existence of Jews, Muslims and Christians.

Germany’s Armenians Respond to Aggression

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On July 23, an official car of the Armenian embassy was set ablaze in front of the diplomatic mission. In the days following, a taxi agency and an Armenian shisha bar in Cologne were attacked; according to eyewitness accounts, 30 men wearing black facemasks assaulted the site, throwing chairs and tables through the glass windows before fleeing. All signs indicated that Azerbaijanis were behind the acts of violence, which came in parallel to Turkish-Azerbaijani military maneuvers on the Armenian border and escalated aggression by Azerbaijan.





INTERNATIONAL

Sixth Anniversary of Yazidi Genocide Marked

ERBIL, Kurdistan Region (Combined Sources) – Iraq’s Yazidi community remains overlooked by the international community and Erbil and Baghdad authorities six years on from the genocide, Yazidi survivor and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nadia Murad said in a conference with UN officials on Monday, August 3.

“We have repeatedly pleaded to the governments in Erbil and Baghdad, as well as the international community to rebuild our hometown [Shingal],” Murad said. “But after so many years we feel that the international community and governments in Erbil and Baghdad abandoned us.”

In the summer of 2014, Islamic State (ISIS) extremists swept across swathes of Syria and Iraq. In August that year, they attacked the Yazidi homeland of Shingal in Nineveh province, committing genocide against the ethno-religious minority. Hundreds of thousands of Yazidis fled from the militants, but not everyone escaped. More than 1,000 were killed and 6,417 were captured by the militants, with women and children sold into sexual slavery.

Murad criticized the international community for ignoring the Yazidis, reminding them that international community is helping ISIS to reach its “goal” in failing to help survivors.

“We know Iraq is facing economic challenges,” Murad said. “But there are tangible

defeat of ISIS in Iraq in December 2017, remnants of the group have returned to their earlier insurgency tactics, ambushing security forces, kidnapping and executing suspected informants, and extorting money from vulnerable rural populations, particularly in the disputed territories.

Hearings on Yazidi Case

Advocacy organization Yazda kicked off a two-day conference on August 2 to commemorate the anniversary by hearing from a range of senior officials, humanitarian workers, researchers, and survivors of the attack by ISIS militants.

With security tenuous and swathes of the district’s infrastructure and housing still in ruins and riddled with unexploded ordnance, many Yazidis are reluctant to return despite encouragement from Baghdad, Erbil, UN agencies, and local groups.

While most of the keynote presenters spoke in platitudes, other panelists pointed to the harder edge of the situation, expressing frustration about the lack of progress after so many years and sustained international attention.

The theme of the commemoration, which was jointly organized by Yazda and the Zovighian Partnership, was “Bridging the Gap Between Terror and Humanity.”

Committed by Daesh in Iraq (UNITAD), said that no counties “can be spectators” in seeking accountability for those who perpetrated the genocide and that minority communities in Iraq “must have a right to protection and to justice.”



Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nadia Murad

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Joey Hood said that he was shocked to see Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) flags in Sinjar during a visit last year and was similarly saddened to hear about Turkish warplanes targeting alleged Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) units in the district.

He called for locally-recruited police to be in charge of security, “not armed groups from some other location.”

In that vein, Director of the Assyrian Policy Institute Reine Hanna called for a local force to be created along the model of the Nineveh Plain Protection Units (NPU) and criticized the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) for meddling in the district’s affairs.

Nevertheless, Khidir warned that even well-meaning solutions from outside could in fact undermine the very Yazidi governance that most of the panelists argued is necessary for establishing stability in Sinjar.

Armenian Leaders Offer Condolences

Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan addressed the Yazidi community of Armenia on the occasion of the Sinjar Genocide anniversary on Sunday.

He issued the following message:

“Dear sisters and brothers of the Yazidi community of Armenia, today we commemorate the anniversary of the genocide against the Yazidi people in Sinjar perpetrated by some terroristic organizations. Indeed, the tragedy that happened with the Yazidi people is a heinous crime against humanity and the civilized world. We share your grief and sincerely express solidarity with you.

“I wish the Yazidi community of Armenia, all the Yazidi families steadfastness and spiritual strength. As a consolation, always realize that in the homeland, in the Republic of Armenia, you have a safe and protected future and a wide field of progress.”

Speaker of Parliament of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan also issued a statement on the anniversary of the Sinjar massacre.

“As a nation that survived genocide, we cannot stay indifferent upon witnessing the same crime being committed against any other people,” he said.

“Today we join the Yazidi community of Armenia to commemorate the memory of their brothers and sisters who died in Sinjar six years ago, Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly Ararat Mirzoyan said in a



Forced deportation of Yazidis from Sinjar (Ahval photo)

and sustainable actions that can be taken into consideration to help Yazidis.”

“I ask the governments in Erbil and Baghdad to solve the security issues in Sinjar [Shingal], and keep helping the missing Yazidis,” Murad added. “Yazidis deserve support to rebuild, as they cannot wait for another six years to recover.”

As of this month, 3,530 Yazidis have been rescued or escaped ISIS, and 2,887 are still missing, according to the Kurdistan Regional Government’s office documenting the genocide.

Six years later, the vast majority of Yazidis continue to live in a protracted state of displacement. An array of armed forces, including the Iraqi army, Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), or Hashd al-Shaabi and PKK-affiliated groups have vied for control of Shingal, and many deem it too unsafe to return home.

“ISIS was responsible for this devastation but the rest of us are responsible for what we did or did not do since we knew about it” human rights lawyer Amal Clooney added on Monday.

Clooney also explained that “no progress” has been made in seeking international justice for the crimes committed against the community, with no state offering to host international trials.

“Survivors tell me that they cannot understand how six years after the genocide, the vast majority of ISIS fighters can simply go on with their lives,” Clooney added.

“Doing nothing is not only wrong, it dangerous because these fighters are not going anywhere and their toxic ideology continues to spread,” she added.

Although Baghdad announced the territorial

“Daesh perpetrated the most horrendous crimes against the Yazidi people to deprive them of their religious rituals and they will be brought to justice,” Iraqi President Barham Salih said in his opening remarks, using the Arabic acronym for ISIS.

“I call on all political forces to overcome their differences,” he added, referring to the political disputes between the federal government, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and the Nineveh provincial government, which several speakers blamed for the lack of progress.

Falah Mustafa, a senior foreign policy advisor to the President of the Kurdistan Region, called for increased international support for Yazidis in Sinjar and for the KRG, which hosts just under 1 million refugees and IDPs, while US Ambassador to Iraq Matthew Tueller announced the allocation of an additional \$500,000 in reconstruction funding.

Other speakers focused on the experience and continued suffering of the survivors of the genocide.

“As an Yazidi girl, I experienced this genocide in all of its details,” said Yazidi Survivor Network member Farida Abbas Khalaf, before outlining a number of specific steps that should be taken by governments and humanitarian organizations, including prosecuting the perpetrators of the genocide, passing the draft women survivors’ law, increasing funding for psychiatric treatment and infrastructure reconstruction, and ending political disputes to ensure a stable security environment.

Karim Ahmad Khan, who is the Special Adviser and Head of the UN Investigative Team for the Promotion of Accountability for Crimes



Amal Clooney, left, with Nadia Murad (Bloomberg photo)

The bluntest remarks of the day were made by Saib Khidir, a Yazidi member of the Council of Representatives, who called out all sides for shirking their obligations.

“Every stakeholder is throwing responsibility onto another stakeholder. Erbil says the problem is with Baghdad. Baghdad says the problem is with Erbil,” he said.

“This is not serving the Yazidi community. This is not showing love to the Yazidi community. If I love the Yazidi community, I should provide them with services,” he added.

Facebook post.

In January 2018, the Armenian Parliament unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the Yazidi Genocide.

The National Assembly also called on the international community to track down and prosecute those directly responsible for the killings and “take measures to ensure the security of the Yazidi population.”

(Stories from Rudaw, NRT and Armenpress were used to compile this report.)

Community News

Three Grants From Society for Armenian Studies Are Underway

FRESNO – Despite the impact of the ongoing pandemic, the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) has worked hard to expand its efforts to foster Armenian Studies through different initiatives. Three existing and new competitive grants have been announced, with deadlines scheduled for September. The first two are open to students who are current members of the SAS.

The Fall 2020 edition of the SAS Graduate Research and Conference Grants for M.A. and Ph.D. students is underway. The amount of grants will be up to \$1,000 per applicant and the deadline is September 15, 2020. Applications can be made at <https://societyforarmenianstudies.com/resources/>.

Due to the current restrictions on travel, applicants should also specify an alternative plan if they request funding for travel. Funding will also be available for research-related expenses (archival and library materials, et cetera).

These grants have been made possible by the institutional support of twelve Armenian Studies chairs, programs, centers, and libraries in the United States and abroad.

The Nina G. Garsoïan Graduate Research Grant for Ancient and Early Medieval Armenian History for M.A. and Ph.D. students has been recently launched. This grant of up to \$1,000 will be awarded on an annual basis to a graduate student in the field. The deadline for this year grant is also on September 15, 2020.

Garsoïan is a world renowned Byzantinist and Armenologist who was the dean of the Princeton University Graduate School and the first holder of the Gevorg M. Avedissian Chair in Armenian History and Civilization at Columbia University. The grant is funded by Dr. Levon Avdoyan, who recently retired as the Area Specialist for Armenia and Georgia at the African and Middle Eastern Division of the Library of Congress. Avdoyan received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in New York in ancient and Armenian history under the supervision of Garsoïan.

The third grant addresses graduate students and post-graduate scholars, both SAS and non-SAS members. It is designed to support scholarship in the field of Armenian Studies that focuses on racial matters with the intention to encourage filling the gap of research on race. Two grants of up to \$500 per applicant will be awarded. The deadline is September 30, 2020.

The SAS welcomes proposals for any research project that grapples with the role race has played in Armenian history across time and space, and particularly examines the impact of racial policies and racism on Armenian communities in the United States and/or explores the relations and entanglements between Armenians and Black communities in the United States. Researchers are highly encouraged to engage with the work of Black, indigenous, and other scholars of color and with critical race theory.

Applications can be made at: <https://societyforarmenianstudies.com/2020/07/28/societyforarmenianstudies-grant-on-race/>.

For further information about these grants, write to Bedross Der Matossian, at bdermatossian2@unl.edu.



Paros Foundation work crew beginning the reconstruction of the kindergarten in Aygepar.

Rebuilding Begins in Communities Attacked By Azerbaijan

Paros Foundation Increases Funding

SAN FRANCISCO/ CHINARI, Armenia – Azerbaijan launched a vicious attack on Armenia on July 12, in violation of the ceasefire agreement. Over the next two days, Azerbaijan launched artillery of various calibers at the Armenian civilian populations of several communities within Berd Consolidated Communities of Armenia's Tavush Region. The Armenian Armed Forces not only successfully defended these areas, but captured a very important military post and has destroyed tens of millions of dollars worth of Azeri artillery and drones.

These military victories, however, have come with a huge price tag. Five valiant soldiers were killed and others along with a dozen villagers have been wounded. In addition, families in these villages have experienced material losses on their homes and property. Several days ago, The Paros Foundation team joined Tavush Governor Hayk Chobanyan, Berd Consolidated Communities head Harutyun Manucharyan, representatives of the Prime Minister's office, and local village representatives to visit the Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur, Aygepar and Chinari communities to assess the damage and to strategize and coordinate the next steps forward. Due to the extent of the damage and needs of the border villages, Paros is increasing its fund goal to \$200,000; contributions and pledges to date are in excess of \$120,000. The Paros Foundation's Emergency Reconstruction Fund will work to not only make repairs to these damaged homes, but, will make substantial improvements on them. In addition, funds will be used to make other substantial infrastructure improvements within the communities.

Through the support received from donors around the world thus far, the Paros team has already begun planning the reconstruction of damaged areas, while our local construction crews look forward to beginning the job of rebuilding their communities. Work on rebuilding the Aygepar Kindergarten has already begun. Rebuilding of the houses will begin early next week in order to complete work prior to winter. Let's work together to meet our new goal to rebuild the border region.

To contribute, please visit <http://parosfoundation.org/project/emergency-reconstruction-fund/>



Paros Foundation Staff join Tavush Governor Hayk Chobanyan, Berd Consolidated Communities head Harutyun Manucharyan, representatives of the Prime Minister's office, and local village representatives to visit the Nerkin Karmir Aghbyur, Aygepar and Chinari communities to assess the damage.

Zabelle Chapter #12 Daughters of Vartan 2020 Announces Merit Scholarship Recipients

DETROIT – The Daughters of Vartan Zabelle Chapter's Merit Scholarship Program is in its 19th year. The group has awarded 60 Merit Scholarships totaling \$56,700 and has been successful due to the generosity of the Detroit members of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan and friends.

The Merit Scholarship Program is open to the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren of Detroit, Michigan's Knights and Daughters of Vartan Nareg-Shavarshan Lodge #6 and Zabelle Chapter #12 members.

The Daughter of Vartan value the importance of recognizing the academic accomplishments of Armenian college students. This year they awarded the Merit Scholarship for an undergraduate student to Tigran Terterian and a Merit Scholarship for a graduate student to Emily Rose Torossian.

The Daughters of Vartan were unable to honor the recipients at their annual June dinner, as it was cancelled due to Covid-19. They will honor them at a special dinner and introduce them to the membership when they can once again assemble safely.

Tigran Terterian is the son of Commander Kazar and Marina Terterian and the grandson of the late Knight Kevork Terterian. He is a student at the University of Michigan pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree in molecular, cellular and developmental biology. His goal is to further his education with a PhD and work in research.

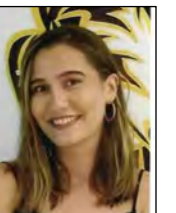
In addition to maintaining high academic standards, Tigran has an extensive work experience to his credit. These include; his Eagle Scout Project (raising money for an orphanage in Gyumri, Armenia), Hye Camp Counselor, research assistant and shift leader at Little Caesar's.

Tigran's parents taught him about being Armenian through language, food, culture and religion. He is proud to be Armenian but still he needed to feel comfortable outside the Armenian community. He solved this issue in a mature manner. Tigran simply educated his friends about Armenian life and they embraced his heritage.

Emily Rose Torossian is the daughter of Elaine Torossian and granddaughter of the late Knight Edward and late Daughter of Vartan Rosalie Torossian. She is pursuing a career in social work and is a graduate student at the University of Michigan. She received her Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Michigan State University.

Putting her passion into action is evident in her work experiences. These include volunteering in assisting building huts in a remote village in Thailand, facilitating English classes in Vietnam, legal and client advocate intern at a domestic abuse shelter EVE (End Violent Encounters), clinical resource specialist (New Oakland Family Centers) and medical social work intern (Michigan Medicine Hospital).

It became apparent to her professor, Debra Mattison, how Emily felt about her Armenian roots. "Emily developed her awareness and rooted commitment to advocacy from the example of her grandmother who was herself a strong supporter of the preservation of the Armenian culture and Armenian charities in America." Torossian had a close relationship with her maternal grandparents who not only cared for her after school, but also showed her what it is to "be an exemplary Armenian." Emily states, "I have heard the stories of trauma, loss and sacrifice that my great grandparents and great-great grandparents and many other Armenians endured. I want to honor their legacy through how I live my life and contribute to and have a positive impact on society."





COMMUNITY NEWS / OBITUARIES

Gregory Areshian

The Legacy of a True Scholar

By Armen Der Kiureghian

YEREVAN – On August 2, 2020, Armenia lost one of its most distinguished scholars. Dr. Gregory Areshian, Professor of History and Archaeology at the American University of Armenia (AUA), succumbed to the COVID-19 virus in spite of all efforts by his doctors to save him. I had the privilege of knowing him and hiring him as a faculty member when I served as the President of AUA. I feel a deep sense of loss and sorrow upon his passing.

He was 71.

My first encounter with Dr. Areshian was in the summer of 1991, when Dr. Mihran Agbabian and I were in Yerevan working to start the AUA. The Government of Armenia had offered us rent-free use of a massive building, which previously served as the Congress Hall of the Communist Party. To formalize the transfer, we had to get the approval of the Deputy Prime Minister, who happened to be Dr. Gregory Areshian. I remember being extremely impressed by his impeccable English and by his enthusiasm for our project. He quickly signed all the necessary documents, but we stayed in his office longer and talked about the importance of bringing Western-style education to Armenia.

I met Dr. Areshian for the second time around 2004, when Prof. David Stronach of the University of California, Berkeley, invited him for a seminar. At the time, Dr. Areshian was a visiting professor and researcher at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at the University of California, Los Angeles. A renowned archeologist of ancient Iran and Iraq, Stronach had extremely high opinion of Areshian’s scholarship. Areshian visited Berkeley again around 2010 for another seminar, this time upon the invitation of Prof. Stephan Astourian and as the guest of the Armenian Studies Program. The presence of archaeology scholars from Berkeley at the seminar again was a testament of the high regard he enjoyed in that field.

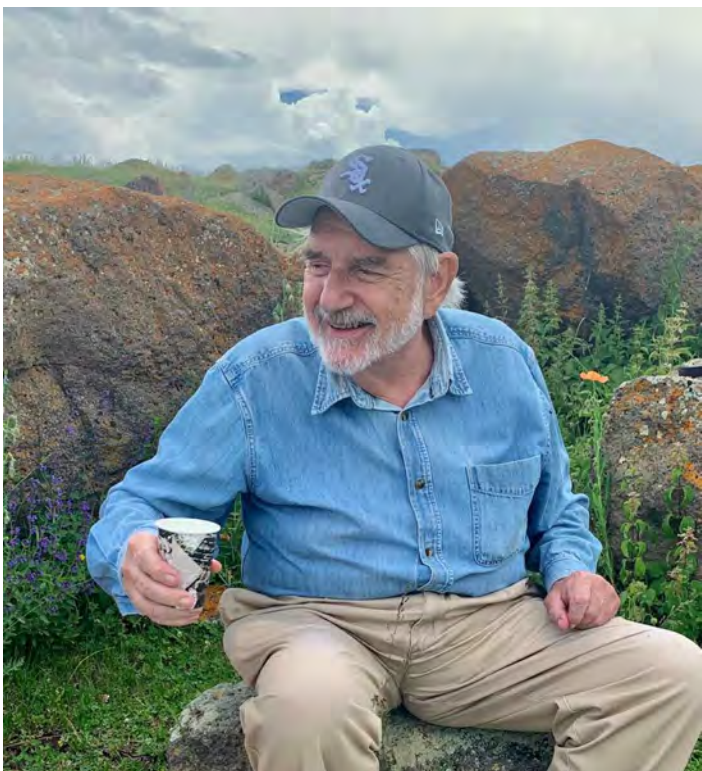
Areshian received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the Yerevan State University and

his doctorate from the Saint Petersburg State University under Boris Piotrovsky, the renowned scholar of Urartian civilization and long-time director of the Hermitage Museum. Professor Areshian was proficient in nine languages, including Urartian cuneiform.

A few years after our visit to his office in 1991, Dr. Areshian had a conflict with Vano Siradeghyan, who served as the minister of internal affairs in Levon Ter-Petrosian’s government and was later charged with criminal conduct. Dr. Areshian was forced to resign and leave the country. He settled in the United States and soon started teaching, first at the University of Chicago and later at the University of California, Los Angeles. In 2015, he decided to return to Armenia. I was elated to hire him as a Professor in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, a major gain for AUA. He completely devoted his attention and time to teaching, research and service to the University. One very important and highly appreciated service he rendered the University was organizing and leading tours to archaeological sites for major donors to AUA.

He taught some of the most popular and largest classes at AUA on topics related to history and archaeology. Students loved his approach to teaching and how he engaged them in discussions. Every year he assigned several of his students as “guides” during the archaeological tours. The excitement of these students – many of whom majored in fields other than humanities or social sciences – and their dedication to Areshian were palpable. I remember several students telling me that it was through Areshian’s courses that they truly learned and appreciated Armenian history.

Areshian was concerned about the way history was taught in schools and universities in Armenia. He believed that Armenian history should be taught as a part of world history and in the broader context of the history of other nations. He criticized the current approach as “teaching Armenian history for Armenians alone.” His students, some of whom had come to AUA from other universities and had experienced history courses elsewhere, attested to his innovative approach to the teaching of



west of Armenia, where we visited several sites, including Dashtadem Fortress in Aragatsotn, Saint Gevorg church in the village of Garnahovit, and the Marmashen monastery complex near Gyumri. His knowledge of these monuments and archaeological sites, and his enthusiasm in explaining their backgrounds to us were so profound that it is difficult to imagine that he will not be leading tours anymore.

He taught in 14 US universities and colleges including the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of

California, Irvine, the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin, Platteville and Amherst College. He is the author of more than 150 scholarly works published in five languages in 12 countries.

Armenia history both in style and content. I had the privilege of many conversations with Dr. Areshian about history, archaeology, and AUA programs, particularly the need for strengthening Armenian studies courses. My colleagues and I also had the good fortune of going on several tours of archaeological and historical sites with him. The first one was to Areni-1 cave in 2016, where the famous 6,000-year-old shoe and winery were discovered by a team led by Professor Areshian and Prof. Boris Gasparian of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. The second one was to Carahunge or Zorats Karer (Armenia’s Stone Hinge) near Sisian, where his students were mapping the tombstones and he intended to conduct excavations to better understand the origins of the multiple graves. The last one was to the north-

California, Irvine, the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin, Platteville and Amherst College. He is the author of more than 150 scholarly works published in five languages in 12 countries.

Armenia has lost one of its most important scholars. His legacy will go on to live in the rich body of scholarly books and articles he leaves behind and in the accomplishments of numerous students and research associates he inspired. May his light shine forever.

(Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian is the Taisei Professor of Civil Engineering [Emeritus] Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering, University of California, and former president of the American University of Armenia.)

Harold Partamian

Pharmacist, Dedicated to Family and Church
ARLINGTON, Mass. – Harold Partamian of Arlington, the son of the late Dickran and Yeranig (Aghayan) Partamian, passed away on July 29, 2020 at the age of 84, surrounded by his family.

Harold is survived by his wife of 61 years, Gladys (Nahigian) Partamian. He was the father of Mark Partamian of Arlington and Donna Partamian Kutzer and her husband Ken of Westwood; grandfather of Matthew, Ashley, and Haley Kutzer; brother of the late Anahid Zerdelian. He is also survived by his nephew Stephen Zerdelian and his cousin, Arthur Alexander.

He was predeceased by his cousin Shakae Shahinian of Wyckoff, NJ.

In addition, he is survived by many cousins and extended family from New Jersey, Buenos Aires, and France.

Harold was a graduate of Boston Latin School and after his graduation from Massachusetts College of Pharmacy in 1957, he served in the Army National Guard before beginning his career as a pharmacist.

He was the former proprietor of Rawson Pharmacy in Arlington where he served his community and created many lasting friendships.

Subsequently, Harold served as the executive secretary of the Board of Pharmacy for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

He was the founding president of the Armenian-American Pharmacists’ Association, an organization very near and dear to his heart.

In addition to his career, Harold was an active member of the St. James Armenian Church in Watertown where he founded and chaired the annual golf tournament for many years and



where he and Gladys made their lifelong friends they consider as family.

He was also a member of the former Amvets Post 41 in Watertown and the Knights of Vartan.

Among all his interests and achievements, he was most happy surrounded by his family and grandchildren, listening and dancing to music, watching sports, vacationing in Aruba, and cooking on the grill for his family.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and current public safety measures, funeral services will be private. A public celebration of life will be held at a later date and will be announced.

Donation

The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada gratefully acknowledges the donation of \$ 100 by Jerry and Annie Balikian in memory of Victor Varujan Ganjian for the renovation of a classroom in the Berdzor Tekeyan School.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Bar Member Lucy Boyadjian Solimon Rises High in New Mexico with Judicial Appointment

By Armen K. Hovannisian, Esq.

LOS ANGELES — It is rare enough for Armenian-Americans to become judges in states with sizable and long-established Armenian communities stretching from California to Illinois to New York. It is another to welcome the judicial appointment of a deserving Armenian-American in places where our tracks are more fresh and our communities less dense. That is one way to describe New Mexico.

On July 2, New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham appointed Lucy Boyadjian Solimon as Judge of the Second Judicial District Court, serving Bernalillo County. Judge Boyadjian Solimon, a recent member of the Armenian Bar Association, was born and spent her early years in Lebanon, was raised and educated through college in California, and graduated from law school and entered the legal profession in New Mexico nearly thirteen years ago. For the past two years, Boyadjian Solimon had been Enforcement Bureau Chief for the New Mexico Workers Compensation Administration. Boasting a broad criminal law experience for both the prosecution and the defense, Boyadjian Solimon has also held the posts of Special Assistant U.S. Attorney for Laguna Pueblo, assistant public defender in the Public



Judge Lucy Boyadjian Solimon

Defender's Office, and a private practitioner in defense law firms, including her own firm. She is married to Justin Solimon who practices Federal Indian Law in Albuquerque.

In June 2020, the Armenian Bar's Judicial Evaluation Committee (JEC), which is comprised of the organization's most experienced lawyers across the profession's broad spectrum, met and conferred with Boyadjian Solimon in a rigorous vetting process. The JEC concluded that she embodied the unique, sought-after qualities that make her highly qualified to serve as a judge with honor and distinction. Following the Armenian Bar's in-depth interview protocol, the JEC Co-Chairs, Lucy Varpetian and Garo Ghazarian, addressed a letter of unqualified support for Boyadjian Solimon's appointment to Grisham.

Varpetian and Ghazarian encapsulated the findings of the evaluation committee, writing, "We believe that Ms. Boyadjian Solimon will maintain an excellent judicial temperament as we have found her to be an active listener, measured in her responses, and even-keeled in her demeanor. We also took note of and appreciate her engagement in community and civic affairs, ranging from her provision of pro bono legal services to participation in New Mexico bar associations to her involvement with Native American and Armenian organizations, as well as her support of various non-profit organizations. These activities reflect Ms. Boyadjian Solimon's deep roots in her community and commitment to its well-being."

Summing up its support for Boyadjian Solimon's appointment, the Armenian Bar

impressed upon the Governor that, "Based on the totality of our evaluation process, we believe Ms. Boyadjian Solimon will continue, as she has demonstrated during her career, to be a devoted public servant to the people of New Mexico. We are confident that if given the honor of serving as a member of the New Mexico judiciary, Ms. Boyadjian Solimon's courtroom will be a bastion where fair play, due process, and the rule of law will prevail over all else. She will exhibit compassion, empathy, and understanding to the litigants that appear before her, qualities which are so critical today for our judiciary."

In explaining her own reasons to Grisham for wanting to become a judge, Boyadjian Solimon explained, "For several generations, my family has constantly been forced to flee and relocate due to threats of war, violence, and instability in the rule of law. My grandfather lost most of his family in the Armenian Genocide of 1915, and was forced to start a new family in Syria and Lebanon. When I was a six-year-old child, my family emigrated from Beirut, Lebanon to Los Angeles, California to escape the war. This direct family history has instilled in me a deep respect for the judicial system, both as a means to prevent and deter crime and to promote fairness and protections offered under the Constitution."

The long and storied tradition of Armenian judges in America has opened a fresh new chapter in a state whose nickname is The Land of Enchantment. Lucy Boyadjian Solimon's appointment as a District Court Judge makes clear that New Mexico is, indeed, worthy of that endearing description.

Living Become, LLC Is Teaching Leadership Skills To Young People

WESTON, Mass. — Living Become, LLC is addressing the lack social emotional based learning and fulfilling the need with its BECOME Summer Leadership Program. BECOME, which stands for bold, energized, compassionate, open-hearted, mindful, empowered education is led by co-creators Kristin Asadourian, is a social worker and a leadership coach, and Lindsay Quezada, a fifth-grade teacher. It helps students gain a greater understanding of what is important to them and what they value. This heightened level of self-awareness results in an increase in self-confidence. BECOME was initially taught as an afterschool workshop at the Field School in Weston. The after-school version focused on helping students identify what they value in order to go out into their communities and create an impact based on what is important to them. In the spring the pro-



Kristin Asadourian and Lindsay Quezada

gram moved to an online format and the self-discovery piece of the curriculum became even more relevant.

"Leading the workshop online and focusing on the students and their ability to know themselves and what they value made sense. We are coaching them on how to make decisions, effectively communicate and self-advocate. Participants learn how to be advocates and change makers," said Quezada.

BECOME provides students with the tools to self-manage and self-regulate within two-week sessions conducted over zoom daily.

"Education is changing, there is a great need for social emotional learning. Teaching students how to manage themselves, time and task manage, and self-regulate is just as important as teaching them math and English. Right now, helping young people find their voices, use them and step out healthy, aware and confident is necessary," said Asadourian said.

The workshop uses journaling, mindfulness practices, exercises and online group activities to help increase self-awareness in the participants. Along with BECOME, Living Become, LLC has year around workshops and offers personal development and leadership coaching to young people and adults. The organization is committed to addressing the social emotional needs of students to optimize overall mental health. It continues to develop curriculum to address the increase in stress, anxiety and depression in young people and believes BECOME is one way to ensure young people are receiving the social emotional support they need.

"Teaching young people to connect with their thoughts, actions and emotions and providing them with the tools to effectively communicate how they feel and what they think will increase their self-confidence and help to alleviate symptoms of stress and anxiety as they pop up," said Asadourian.

More information on the BECOME Summer Leadership Program is on the Living Become, LLC website. Visit www.livingbecome.com for more information.

Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.

Dr. Nubar Berberian Annual 2020 Awards

Dr. Nubar Berberian, intellectual, journalist, activist and editor of many ADL daily newspapers for more than 50 years, passed away at the age of 94 on November 23, 2016. In his will, Dr. Berberian directed his Trust Fund managers to appropriate awards every year to college students of Armenian descent worldwide who major in either International Law or Political Science.

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Eligible recipients are college students of Armenian descent who major in either International Law or Political Science.
- 2) Applicant must be enrolled in a full-time graduate program in a fully accredited college or university in the world.
- 3) Applicant must provide all of the information requested on the application form.
- 4) Applicant must submit a copy of his or her most recent college transcript.
- 5) Applicant is to include a small head and shoulders self-portrait.
- 6) Application could be received by requesting from tcadirector@aol.com.
- 7) Applicants should submit applications electronically (via email) to: tcadirector@aol.com. Paper submissions will be accepted by the deadline at:

Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.

Dr. Nubar Berberian Trust Fund

755 Mt. Auburn Street

Watertown, MA 02472

(Electronic application is preferred.)

- 8) The deadline of receiving the applications is **September 15, 2020**.
- 9) The administrators and managers of the fund will vote the qualified winners in **October 2020** based on the merits of each applicant.
- 10) The winner or winners will receive their awards in **November, 2020**
- 11) Winning applicants are not eligible to apply again.
- 12) This announcement is published in Armenian, English, French and Spanish.

Watertown, MA, July 15, 2020



COMMUNITY NEWS

History of Gregory The Illuminator's Sons and Grandsons

NEW YORK — The calendar of the Armenian Church singles out four members of St. Gregory's family — two sons and two grandsons — and assigns them a special day of commemoration. This year it fell on August 1.

The day of commemoration (according to the present calendar in force since 1774-75) falls on the Saturday before the Third Sunday of Transfiguration. Excluded from this group of saints are the rest of the members of the Gregorid family, namely Sts. Nersés the Great, Sahag the Parthian, Vartan and his daughter Shushanig. The latter are commemorated on different days during the year.

St. Arisdagés

While still a layman in Caesarea (Kayseri), Gregory and his wife Mariam had with two sons, Vrtanés and Arisdagés. When Gregory and Mariam parted, Arisdagés was still very young and in need of motherly care. Mariam took him with her to the convent she joined. Influenced by his early upbringing in the convent, Arisdagés entered the service of God at an early age and became a hermit in the mountains. He became renowned for his austere way of life, attracting young disciples who sought his company for pious instruction. He was particularly versed in Greek letters and philosophy.

Years passed, and when King Drtad (by now a Christian convert) learned that St. Gregory had sired two sons in his younger days, he sent certain nobles to Caesarea to bring the sons to Armenia. (St. Gregory himself had withdrawn to the wilderness to lead a solitary life.) At the time, Arisdagés was living in a hermitage; he initially refused to leave his austere way of life and go to the court of the king. Ultimately, he yielded to the plea of Christians not to refuse the pastoral work that lay before him.

Upon the arrival of Arisdagés and Vrtanés, King Drtad took them with him to look for St. Gregory. Finding the saint in the wilderness, he begged Gregory to ordain his son Arisdagés a bishop and take him as his assistant. After his ordination, Arisdagés diligently pursued his pastoral work, preaching and wiping out the vestiges of pagan customs and traditions.

Arisdagés represented the Armenian Church at the Holy Council of Nicaea, which met in A.D. 325 at the order of the Roman Emperor Constantine. His name appears on the list alongside those of the 318 bishops who participated in that council. He returned to Armenia, bringing with him the canons of the renowned council. These canons are still venerated in the Armenian Church and form the foundation of discipline and order in our tradition.

After St. Gregory's complete withdrawal from pastoral life and his demise, St. Arisdagés succeeded him as the chief bishop of Greater Armenia. As a pastor he surpassed the accomplishments of his father, as attested by the historian of the conversion of Armenia.

Arisdagés himself died as a martyr, and that is one of the reasons why he is considered a saint of the Armenian Church. The circumstances of his assassination are not very clear. All we know is that, at some point in his career as chief bishop of Armenia, he had reprimanded a high dignitary named Archilaus, who had been appointed governor of the province of Dzopk in western Armenia. We are not told what Archilaus had done to deserve Arisdagés' reprimand, but he kept a grudge. When the bishop was on a pastoral visit in those parts, Archilaus met him on the road and slew him. In order to avoid arrest and prosecution for his crime,

he fled to the Taurus Mountains in Cilicia. Arisdagés' disciples took his body to the village of Til near Erzinjan and buried him there. His grave was later shown within the confines of the Chukhdag Hayrabadats Vank ("The Monastery of the Twin Patriarchs"), which was still extant until 1915.

St. Arisdagés is said to have presided as the chief bishop of Armenia for seven years. The date of his martyrdom is calculated to have taken place at about A.D. 328.

St. Vrtanés

The elder son of St. Gregory the Illuminator chose to lead a secular life and got married while still in Caesarea. At a later time he was ordained a priest, either in Caesarea or Armenia. He and his wife's desire to have children, and their prayers to God towards this end, were answered only in an advanced age. They had twins, Krikoris and Husig, who were reared in the Armenian court and given a solid education. He presumably lost his wife during the pontificate of his brother Arisdagés, and after the latter's death Vrtanés himself was raised to the episcopal throne of Greater Armenia. Vrtanés probably received episcopal ordination from his brother's hand, since there is no reference in the historians to any ceremony of ordination, either in Caesarea or elsewhere.

St. Vrtanés' activities as chief bishop of Greater Armenia were closely linked with those of the Christian kings of Armenia: first Drtad, and later his son Khosrov Godag (330-337) and grandson Diran (337-344). Vrtanés stood by the side of the kings during various Persian invasions into Armenia as well as during internal rebellions. As an active pastor he continued the work of his father and brother.

Despite the declaration of Christianity as the national religion of Armenia and the royal support that the church thereby received, certain people of high position were not pleased with the new religion. Their displeasure led to serious repercussions. King Drtad, who had been responsible for the kingdom's conversion, died at a ripe old age — but not of natural causes. Certain Armenian princes in the service of the court hastened his demise by giving him a poisoned cup to drink. From another version of the story about King Drtad's death, we learn that the anti-Christian princes collaborated with the King of Kings of Iran, and were instigated by the latter to put him to death. While on a hunt, they shot Drtad with an arrow, and as the wounded king was recuperating from his wound, they gave him a poisoned cup to drink.

Vrtanés himself almost fell victim to a scheme of a different nature. At the annual commemoration in Ashdshad of St. John the Baptist and Bishop Athenogenes, as instituted by St. Gregory, the chief bishop was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, when two thousand mountaineers from Sasun converged on the place, with the intent of assassinating Vrtanés. The assassins were unconverted idol worshippers, instigated by certain magnates and particularly by the queen of Armenia, whom Vrtanés had formerly rebuked for committing adultery. We are told that the hand of God made the conspirators motionless until Vrtanés released them. Overwhelmed by what had happened, the mountaineers heeded the admonitions of the bishop, and after completing the period of penance set by him they were baptized. Subsequently the bishop withdrew to his paternal estate in Til, near Erzinjan.

St. Vrtanés is said to have ordained a special day of commemoration for the Armenian forces under General Vaché Mamigonian, who perished in a battle against the Persians



St. Gregory the Illuminator

in 338. He consoled the king, his magnates and soldiers for the devastating effect of the war. According to this ordinance, the commemoration was to be repeated annually. He also instituted a special canon for all those who should die for Christian Armenia, that they be commemorated "before God's holy altar at that point in the liturgy when the names of the saints are enumerated, and after them." This commemoration was later replaced with that of St. Vartan Mamigonian and his 1,036 companions, which has been celebrated every year up to the present day.

St. Vrtanés' name is closely connected with a contemporary non-Armenian churchman of renown, namely St. Macarius, bishop of Jerusalem (313-334). Macarius was one of the fathers of the Council of Nicaea (325), responsible (with a few others) for drafting the Nicene Creed, which we recite in church during the Divine Liturgy. It was during his tenure of office that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was built in Jerusalem. St. Vrtanés had the distinction of receiving a letter from Macarius. The letter, originally written in Greek, is preserved only in Armenian and bears the title: "To the Christ-loving and pious Chief Bishop Vrtanés and all the bishops and priests of Armenia." According to this document, Vrtanés had sent certain priests to Jerusalem with specific questions about church traditions. In his answer, Macarius dwells on various traditions and practices that must be observed in the rite of baptism.

St. Vrtanés died in the third year of King Diran —340 AD. He was buried near his father in Tortan, and his grave was shown inside the village church.

St. Krikoris

The missionary work initiated by St. Gregory in the regions of northern Armenia, Georgia and Caucasian Albania was not neglected by his successors. To this end, St. Vrtanés' son Krikoris was raised to the episcopal rank and appointed bishop of Georgia and Albania at a relatively young age. The young bishop extended his missionary activities over a vast expanse of territory reaching the shores of the Caspian Sea. He established churches and evangelized among the peoples and tribes under his care. Among the different northern semi-barbaric nomadic tribes to whom he preached the gospel were the Mazkuts, who were ruled by a line of Arshaguni kings related to the royal dynasty of Armenia. At first, the Mazkuts accepted Krikoris' instructions favorably and were inclined to convert to Christianity.

But when they learned that Christian

teachings forbade some practices of their nomadic way of life — such as looting, pillaging, killing, coveting others possession — they became disgusted and greatly angered. They saw in Krikoris' teachings a plot on the part of the Armenian king to stop their plundering raids into Armenia. Krikoris was tied to the tail of a wild horse and driven over a plain. The bishop died as a result. His body was claimed by his followers and taken to Amaras, which is located in present-day Karabakh. He was buried in the church built by St. Gregory. At the end of the fifth century, a crypt was built to house his grave. That structure is now located under the main altar of the church of the Monastery of Amaras and is a place of pilgrimage.

The martyrdom of Krikoris took place shortly before the Mazkut invasion of Armenia and the seizure of its capital city, Vagharshabad. That event took place in a.d.335. Krikoris' relics were discovered in the latter part of the fifth century and were buried in a newly built crypt, which is still extant, as stated above.

St. Husig

St. Husig, the second son of St. Vrtanés, followed his father's example by embracing secular life. Nourished by King Diran, he was forced into marrying the king's daughter, much against his will. He and his wife had twin sons, Bab and Athenogenes. His inclination towards a celibate life, however, alienated his wife and invited on him the hostility of the royal court. Their pressure was terminated by his wife's death, after which Husig devoted himself to raising his children. In a dream, the Lord appeared to him and told him that from his children there "will be born other children, and they will be illuminators of knowledge and fountains of spiritual wisdom for the realm of Armenia."

After his father's demise, Husig was in line for the succession of the episcopal throne of Greater Armenia. King Diran immediately dispatched a delegation of thirteen high-ranking princes and dignitaries to accompany Husig to Caesarea. There, Husig was elevated to the episcopal rank. On his return to Armenia he was met by the king and taken to the city of Ardashad, where he was officially enthroned. Like his father and grandfather, he became a wonderful pastor of his flock.

Husig's woes began when he, as the upholder of the moral precepts of the church, began to castigate the king and his magnates for their unchristian behavior: they had engaged in immoral acts and had shed innocent blood for political ends. Husig excommunicated them, forbidding their entry into



COMMUNITY NEWS

the church. Predictably, this invited on him the royal court's animosity. On one occasion – a day of annual celebration when Husig, on a pastoral visit to the western province of Great Dzopk, was present at the palatine church in the royal fortress of Pnapagh – King Diran arrived with his retinue and tried to enter the church. Learning about their arrival, Husig stepped out and cried aloud: "You are unworthy! Why have you come? Do not go inside!" Angered by this, the kings attendants dragged him inside the sanctuary and beat him with rods, shattering his bones. The servants of the church of Pnapagh carried the battered bishop, who was still alive, to his ancestral estate in Tortan. Unable to recover from his injuries, Husig died there and was buried near the graves of his father and grandfather. His tomb was shown inside the church of Tortan. The martyrdom of St. Husig is dated to A.D. 344.

St. Daniel the Syrian

The Feast of the Sons and Grandsons of St. Gregory the Illuminator includes the name of St. Daniel the Syrian, though he is not an actual member of the Gregorid house.

Daniel had been one of St. Gregory's pupils and associates. St. Gregory himself had put him in charge of the province of Daron (the modern Mush area), where he held the office of "supreme justice" and looked after the church in Ashdishad, where the relics of St. John the Baptist and Bishop Athenogenes rested. His titles – "overseer, law-giver, supervisor and guardian of all the churches of Greater Armenia" – and his ecclesiastical rank as chorepiscopus (a bishop tending to the flock in the countryside, as opposed to a bishop of a city or a district), indicate that he was a missionary who traveled from place to place. He is said to have preached in Persia

and other foreign parts and to have converted many people to the Christian faith. He was also in charge of the graves and the possessions of the Gregorid family, and was attentive to keeping the memories of the saints of that family as well as that of King Drtad alive among the faithful.

Since St. Husig's two sons led secular lives and had no inclination to follow in the footsteps of their ancestors, King Diran sent his magnates to summon Bishop Daniel, now an elderly ascetic tending to church affairs in the village of Til, to assume the spiritual leadership of the Armenian people. He met the king in southwestern Armenia and rebuked him and his magnates for their crimes. Enraged at Daniel's outspokenness, the king ordered his servants to strangle him, despite the contrary advice of his nobles. His body was taken to the valley of Hatsyats Trakhd and buried in the cell where he had lived as a solitary. St. Daniel was martyred in a.d.344; the Monastery of Gopa Sourp Taniel stood at that site until 1915.

These five saints have been venerated as a group at least since the end of the twelfth century. For it was at that time that Archbishop Nersés of Lampron wrote a hymn dedicated to them ("The Canon of the Sons and Grandsons of St. Gregory the Illuminator"). In the hymn he mentions the saints by name, and devotes five stanzas to briefly describing the merits of each one. This hymn is still chanted on the day of commemoration of these saints.

St. Nersés the Great

St. Nersés, the grandson of St. Husig, is not commemorated with the Sons and Grandsons of St. Gregory. As a major saint of the Armenian Church he has a special day dedicated to his memory, namely the Saturday

before the Third Sunday after Pentecost. That date, however, was arranged by the ordinance of Catholicos Simeon in the revised calendar he published in 1774-75. Originally, that feast fell on the Monday following the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost.

With the martyrdom of St. Husig and St. Daniel, only Husig's two sons, Bab and Athenogenes, remained in line for the succession to the throne of St. Gregory. But they were laymen and had no desire to become priests. With the universal consent of the Armenian bishops, they were forced against their will to be ordained deacons. As professional soldiers, they showed no inclination to spirituality, and their worldly conduct convinced everyone that neither was suitable for the position of chief bishop. Consequently, the episcopal throne of Greater Armenia was delegated to bishops from another family.

St. Nersés, the son of Athenogenes and Pampish (presumably the daughter of King Diran), was a courtier and the chamberlain of King Arshag II. He was married to a princess named Santukhd and the couple had a son, who later became the renowned Catholicos Sahag the Parthian. St. Sahag in turn became the grandfather of St. Vartan Mamigonian. Despite his secular background, St. Nersés was a pious Christian. As a young soldier he had spent some time in Caesarea and had been "taught by spiritual teachers." His connection with St. Gregory the Illuminator invited on him the attention of all the magnates of Armenia, who held council with King Arshag and advised him to persuade Nersés to become the spiritual leader of Armenia. Nersés, who was standing among the magnates in the royal assembly hall, fully adorned in ceremonial robe, refused to accept the proposal, not deeming himself worthy of such a high dignity. The assembly laughed at his feigned arguments and the king literally stripped him of his royal ornaments. He was immediately ordained a deacon and sent to Caesarea to receive episcopal ordination.

After being ordained a bishop by Archbishop Eusebius of Caesarea, Nersés returned to Armenia. His enthronement is said to have taken place in 353. Upon his return, Nersés immediately undertook the pastoral duties of chief bishop, renovating old churches, founding new ones and tending to the spiritual needs of his flock. Christianity was still a new religion in Armenia and many were still feeble in their faith. The newly ordained bishop worked towards making the Armenians practicing Christians. To that end he held a church council of bishops in Ashdishad, introducing a number of reforms. Secular regulations were set for the believers, and attention was paid to make the beliefs of the church uniform. Instructions were formulated so that throughout the land almshouses and shelters would be built for the poor, hospitals for the sick and leprosia for lepers. The faithful were urged to make the necessary provisions for the maintenance of these institutions.

St. Nersés also became known for his other charitable works and his concern for moral purity as well as family life. He forbade excessive mourning over the dead, upheld the sanctity of marriage, and gave relief to widows, orphans, captives and the poor. He sheltered in his own residence the blind and the crippled, and always shared his meals with them. He also tended to the needs of the church as an institution by regulating the liturgical services and the rites, establishing monasteries and schools, and educating young people who were later ordained priests. In short, he may be described as the founder of Christian charity in Armenia and as the churchman who laid down for posterity the role of the Armenian Church as the guardian of the Armenian people, not only in spiritual but also in social and educational respects.

St. Nersés also participated in the political life of his country. From 353 until 359, he was among King Arshag's chief advisors. It has been shown that in A.D. 358 St. Nersés headed a diplomatic delegation to Byzantium that brought Armenia under the Roman sphere of influence and secured a period of peace and prosperity for the country. This act, however, cost St. Nersés his throne. It is now quite certain that the saint's exile was

actually due to King Arshag's adherence to the religious policy current in imperial Rome. We know from the Western historical sources that all the orthodox bishops in the Roman Empire were banished in 359, and Nersés was obviously one of those bishops. King Arshag, as a Roman ally, could not have kept on the throne an orthodox chief bishop, when the Roman emperor himself was an adherent to the Arian heresy and had taken measures to exile the orthodox bishops within his realm. The Armenian historians of the fifth century speak about St. Nersés' withdrawal from office as a result of his objection to King Arshag's moral depravations and about his exile at the order of the Roman Emperor Valens.

St. Nersés' exile lasted for about nine years. He reluctantly returned to the throne of his ancestors during the reign of King Bab, Arshag's son, and remained in office for four years. His return can also be explained by circumstances outside of Armenia. His years in exile seem to concur with the duration of the banishment of the orthodox bishops in the Roman Empire, and his return and reinstatement in office coincided with that of the same bishops.

St. Nersés' relations with King Bab were cordial at first, but gradually deteriorated. The Armenian historians charge Bab with moral depravity and point to St. Nersés' criticism of the king's lifestyle as the cause of his downfall. Yet the alliance between the Armenian king and the Roman Emperor Valens, an adherent to the Arian heresy, suggests a religious basis for the friction between Bab and St. Nersés. The non-compliance of the orthodox Nersés to the Arianizing tendencies of Bab would not have been tolerated for long. And so St. Nersés was poisoned at the king's order. He died in 373 and was buried in Til, near the tomb of his great uncle St. Arisdagés. A cathedral, built over the site of the graves, was destroyed in the seventh century. As the region changed hands over the centuries, the exact site of St. Nersés' grave was forgotten. His relics were discovered at the end of the thirteenth century and distributed between the church in Erzincan and the nearby village of Kee where the Monastery of Dirashén stood. Another monastery in or near Til, Chukhdag Hayra-bedats, also claimed to have relics of St. Nersés. These relics were discovered in the second half of the thirteenth century, prompting a renowned poet of the time, Hovhannés Bluz Vartabed of Erzincan, to write the hymn called "The Canon of the Patriarch St. Nersés the Great."


Bishop St. Khat

St. Nersés is always commemorated with his associate Bishop Khat. Like Nersés, Khat, a native of the village of Marak near Karin (modern Erzurum) was a married man and had two daughters. He had been St. Nersés' pupil and deacon. Ultimately he rose to the rank of bishop and was placed in charge of two districts, Pakrevant and Arsharunik. Through the marriage of his daughters he was associated with the noble Abahuni clan. During St. Nersés' tenure, he was designated as supervisor of the poor and the charitable institutions founded by his mentor. The latter, in his absence, entrusted him with the care of church affairs, naming him his vicar. Khat faithfully carried out his ministry.

Like Nersés, Khat was also an adamant supporter of orthodoxy against the royal court, which adhered to the heretical teachings of Arius. For this reason, he was in conflict with the king, who tried to bribe him – to no avail, since Khat distributed the gifts bestowed on him among the poor. King Arshag had him driven from the royal camp and ordered his men to stone the bishop. The ordeal of a painful death was spared to him thanks to his Abahuni clansmen, related to him through marriage. One of his sons-in-law, Asurk, succeeded to his episcopal rank and office, presumably after his own wife's demise.

Khat is not a martyr, but his sufferings at the hands of King Arshag make him a confessor.

(By the Very Rev. Krikor Maksoudian, adapted from his volume, *The Holy Feasts of St. Gregory the Illuminator*, St. Vartan Press, 2002.)



**A Virtual Lecture Organized by the
Armenian Rights Council of America (ARCA)
Tekeyan Cultural Association Metro Los Angeles chapter
A Public Forum on the**

**100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TREATY OF SÈVRES
AND THE PATH OF THE ARMENIAN DEMANDS**


Keynote Speaker
DIPLOMAT ARA PAPIAN
Founder and President of the Modus Vivendi Center

Welcoming remarks by *Shoushan Baghboudarian*


Moderators:
Sevan Boghos Deirbadrossian and Shoushan Baghboudarian

**Saturday, August 29, 2020
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1920 - 2020
ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԻՐԱՎԱՐԱՐԱՐ ԿԱՅՈՒՆ ԿԵՆՏՐՈՆԻԱՅԱՑՈՒ
CENTENNIAL OF WILSON'S ARBITRAL AWARD




«Ըստ կողմի կայացված և տնօրենարարող կողմից հաստատված հանգանակի վրա իրավունք է կանգնեցվել հայաստանի և հերթապահի չէ բողոքարկվելու»:
Հոկտեմբեր 24, 1920 թ. հունվարի 11-ին միջպետական կանոնի խախտող լուծման մասին, (Փառազույց 11, 29 հունիսի 1999թ.)

ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԻՐԱՎԱՐԱՐԱՐ ԿԱՅՈՒՆ ԿԵՆՏՐՈՆԻԱՅԱՑՈՒ
WOODROW WILSON
(1856-1924)
ԱՄՆ 28-րդ Նախագահ
28-րդ Նախագահ
(1913-1921)

ԳՐԱԴԱՐԱՆԻ ԵՎ ԳՐԱԳԱՆՈՒՄԻ ՄԻՋԵՎ ԿԱՐԳԱՆՈՒՄԸ: ՈՐՈՇՈՒՄՈՒՄ ԿԱՐԳՈՒՄ ԿԱՐԳՈՒՄ ԿԱՐԳՈՒՄ
1920 թ. ՆՈՎԵՄԲԵՐԻ 22-ին
**BOUNDARY BETWEEN TURKEY AND ARMENIA AS DETERMINED BY WOODROW WILSON
ON NOVEMBER 22, 1920**

«The award, duly pronounced and notified to the agents of the parties at variance, puts an end to the dispute definitively and without appeal»:
Article 54, Convention (1) for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, (Hague 11, 29 July 1909)

BOUNDARY BETWEEN TURKEY AND ARMENIA
WOODROW WILSON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
November 22, 1920

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Arts & Living

Overcoming Handicaps

The Story of Aimée Rapin and Stepan Elmas

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to Mirror-Spectator

The name of the Swiss artists Aimée Rapin is unfamiliar to the general public. Yet her name deserves to be known for a number of reasons: first of all, as an artist in general and secondly, and this is the most unusual and stupendous fact about her, as an artist, be they male or female, who drew with her toes as she did not have arms.

Her works included portraits of children and adults in, nude beauties and exquisite features that disclose the inner worlds of those captured on the canvas, as well as landscapes and still-lives, especially flowers, eye-catching colorful images and masterly performed graphic works. It is hard to perceive that those highly artistic pieces and brilliant oil pastels were created not by hand.

Aimée Rapin was born on February 14, 1868 in Payerne, Switzerland, one of 12 children. Only she had a physical handicap. Aimée's father, Jules Rapin was an employment agent, as well as an amateur artist and musician. In 1872 the family moved to Lausanne where 6-year-old Aimée started taking painting classes with local university professor, M. Meyenbourg. The next year the family moved back to Payerne. Aimée was 18 when her father passed away in 1880. Her mother, Adeline Rapin-Quidort, who had happily married at 18 and became a widow at 38, had to bear the entire burden of supporting the large family on her own. She had to keep the house and bring up her children, one of whom needed special attention.

Aimée was far from conventional, however, and she demonstrated a strong will power from early childhood and was a very easy-going youngster. She resigned herself to her physical state with a great deal of good-humor. Gradually, she learnt to do with her toes everything others do with their hands, from picking flowers to eating. She used to say that the only thing bothering her was the necessity to always wear a pelerine.

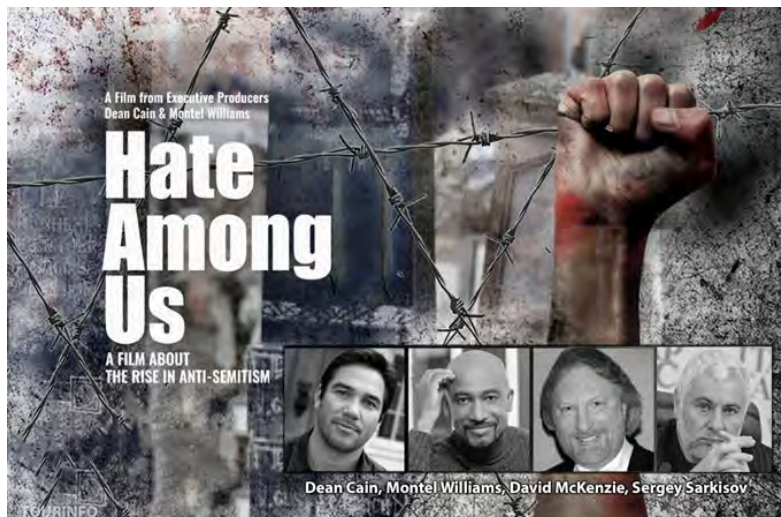
At 14 Aimée was sent to study at a boarding school in Lausanne. She continued with her drawing classes with her teacher, Meyerbourg. In 1884, Aimée Rapin moved to Geneva to live with her godmother Mrs. Kapt and to study at the Art School. Mrs. Kapt was a well-educated woman, a widow without children, so she accompanied her beloved Aimée in all of her tours around the world. The young girl was never to be stopped by any difficulties: she would travel with or without her godmother to Italy, Spain, Holland, even to Morocco and Tunisia.

At the Art School her teachers were Henri Héber (drawing), Hugues Bovy (sculpture), and Elisée Mayor (ceramics). The greatest impression though was made on the young artist by eminent Swiss painter and draughtsman Barthélemy Menn, a friend of Eugene Delacroix, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Georges Sand.

Aimée received from Menn a number of incentive prizes and twice the first prize: one for sculpture and the other for the best portrait. "You are an innate portraitist," Barthélemy Menn once told her.

In 1888, Aimée Rapin had a great success at the exhibition of Paris University. She started receiving orders from Paris and London. Despite the fact that she never organized a solo exhibition, Aimée gradually gained

see HANDICAPS, page 11



Poster for "Hate Among Us"

Armenian Producer Sergey Sarkisov's Film Wins Emmy

LOS ANGELES (Armenpress) – In a virtual ceremony Sunday, July 26, the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) awarded David McKenzie the Emmy for Outstanding Directing Special Class for the critically acclaimed documentary film "Hate Among Us."

"We are very thankful that the Academy has given attention to this important subject that affects all of us," said McKenzie. "I am honored that they recognized this work so that hopefully it will bring more attention to this subject matter and shine a light on the terrible situation that hate generates among people."

Distributed by Associated Television International (ATI) and premiering on Popstar! TV, "Hate Among Us" from executive producers David McKenzie, Dean Cain, Montel Williams and Sergey Sarkisov, tracks the origins of hate crimes against members of the Jewish faith as well as many others and the ultimate murder of an estimated 6 million European Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators that are still being exhibited by hate groups to this very day from Europe to the United States and throughout the world.

The film follows the family members of Mireille Knoll, an 85-year-old Holocaust survivor who was murdered in her Paris apartment in 2018 in an anti-Semitic hate crime. The film also depicts unique perspectives on anti-semitism from all cultures and all faiths, from within historic Jewish neighborhoods in Europe, to the streets of Charlottesville and Pittsburgh's Tree of Life Synagogue massacre. McKenzie's direction told real stories of current survivors of violent anti-semitism to those of the Holocaust. Hate Among Us illustrates how renewed intolerance is taking root in our communities, institutions and universities, with far reaching consequences around the world.



Producer Sergey Sarkisov

"It helps us to achieve our goal," said Dean Cain, "which is to shine a light on hate and help educate people about the history and the current growth of hate and anti-Semitism. We are very excited about this recognition and hope this brings more awareness to this serious humanitarian crisis."

Montel Williams agreed. "When we set out to make Hate Among Us, we knew it was an urgent project. In these divided times, we have to remember that hate and bigotry are never the answer."

"The response of the community from this inhumanity proves that this topic is very important to many people as well as being very relevant," states Sergey Sarkisov. "I do believe that Hate Among Us contributes to the proper understanding and empathy that any kind of national, racial or religious hate continues to be an existing danger and every human, including humanity itself, can be a target."

"Hate Among Us" is the second film from the producing quartet of McKenzie, Cain, Williams and Sarkisov with their first being the also critically lauded documentary Architects of Denial which shed light on the Armenian Genocide that is still not fully recognized as of this day. That film was also produced and directed by McKenzie.

Los Angeles AIWA Affiliate Announces Recipient of Scholarship Awards

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles Affiliate of the Armenian International Association announces the six recipients of the Hasmik Mgrdichian Scholarship Awards. Each year awards of \$5,000 each are presented to full-time California female students of Armenian descent, both under graduates and graduates, enrolled in accredited colleges and universities in the United States and abroad. It is encouraging and heartwarming each year to receive their applications and to learn of their scholastic achievements and goals for the future.

The Hasmik Mgrdichian Scholarship Awards was established in 2011 thanks to the continued generosity of Hasmik Mgrdichian, one of the founders of the Los Angeles Affiliate. The Los Angeles Affiliate of AIWA take great pride in her legacy to recognize and assist in the education of Armenian women.

The 2020 Hasmik Mgrdichian Scholarships were awarded to the following:

- Ani Hakobyan, although born in Russia, she has not lived there ever since and grew up in the United States. She received a BA from UC Berkeley and will be entering her first year at the University of Southern California to pursue a master's degree in education. Her goal is to hold a position in the Ministry of Education in Armenia.

- Helena Nicole Kevorkian is a graduate of the AGBU Manoogian School. She will be attending the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, to pursue a degree in communications/public relations.

- Mariam Khorenyan was born in Yerevan, and received her undergraduate degree from the American University of Armenia. She served as a volunteer in the Peace Corp in Tbilisi, Georgia. She will be attending New York University, pursuing a master's degree in Global Affairs.

- Tamar Nachian is a third-year student at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her career goal is to pursue a degree in statistics and data science with an emphasis in biopsychology.

- Lilit Oganessian will be attending the University of California, Davis. She is a first-year student in a PhD program in veterinary medicine. Her goal is to eventually work at a government agency whose focus is on issues associated with human relationship to animals.

- Zhanna Ter-Zakaryan, born in Yerevan, received a baccalaureate from Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong and a bachelor's degree in art history from the Art Institute of Chicago. She will be continuing her education at the Center of Socio-Legal Studies at the University of Oxford.

Nicole Nishanian, President of AIWA-LA stated, "How inspiring it is to look at the dedication of the Los Angeles Affiliate's Scholarship Committee, specifically our Scholarship Chair, Lily Balian. These past months when so many of us are concerned with the pandemic crisis, she has spent countless hours to communicate with each of the applicants, collected their transcripts, personal statements and applications. Lily, your leadership is an inspiration. My special thanks also to committee members Diane Cabraloff, Diana Hekimian, Hermine Janoyan, Houry Aposhian, Cindy Norian, Jean Kelegian and Lysa Gregorian.

Lysa Gregorian, a member of the Scholarship Committee and the granddaughter of Hasmik Mgrdichian, stated, "Each year it is exciting to read about these exceptional women. Their successes and dreams inspire us. We appreciate their contributions to our Armenian culture and human race. This is just a glimpse of the future and it is going to be exciting."

For further information contact AIWA-LA (at aialosangeles@gmail.com).



ARTS & LIVING

The Story of Aimée Rapin and Stepan Elmas

HANDICAPS, from page 10

recognition and appreciation in Europe. The well-known French art critic Pierre Thee characterized Rapin's style in painting as "Verlaine-type." The celebrated French actresses Réjane and Sarah Bernhardt wanted their portraits to be painted by Aimée.

Incidentally, an American impresario in Paris offered her \$100,000 (at that time it was about half a million francs) to demonstrate her art in the major American theaters and draw paintings in 15-minute sessions. Naturally, an artist's dignity did not allow Rapin to make a display of her physical imperfection and make a show out of her art...

In 1882, Rapin finally settled in Geneva. Her fine-looking studio was on the sixth floor at Necker Street 1. In 1896, Aimée Rapin received an order from the Swiss Confederation to create one of her best portraits, "The Watchmaker," presently in the Museum of Fine Arts Le Locle.

Every day Aimée would sit in front of the easel and work diligently with her right foot to create paintings, one better than the one before.

together in Gustave-Adore littoral area in Geneva. Stepan Elmas greatly contributed to promoting Aimée Rapin's works, and the artist created several portraits of Armenian musician. In 1922, deeply impressed by the tragedy befallen on her beau's people, Aimée Rapin produced her "Armenia the Martyr" canvas, as well as two portraits of Elmas's mother, Yepraxi Elmas.

Stephan Elmas died in Geneva in 1937. On September 13 of the same year, Rapin wrote in her letter to Elmas's biographer and friend, philologist Hagop-Krikor Djerdjarian: "A pair of eyes was closed forever for this world, and the world has been changed for me... Yet, wasn't it the God's blessing for me to have such a wonderful friend by my side for more than 26 years?"

Aimée Rapin was always a surprisingly strong, optimistic, cheerful and generous person with an incredible sense of humor. She was once at a party at the home of her brother, Ernst, who had seven children. She looked around with an adoring and delighted smile and uttered joyfully: "The more arms and hands in this family, the better!" The fact of her unusual state induced many



Aimée Rapin painting

Her attractive face, good nature and great talent made many men fall in love with her, but Aimée preferred not to start a family. There was a man, however, that was present in her life with love and affection.

In the year 1911 she met Armenian composer and pianist Stepan Elmas (Stepan Elmassian), her great love. Aimée was 43 at that time, and Elmas was 49.

A native of Smyrna, Stepan Elmas was born into a wealthy family and had traveled to Europe at 15 to take lessons with Franz Liszt. From 1888 to 1908, Elmas performed solo piano recitals in nearly all the big cities of Europe. He composed concertos, sonatas, romances, ballades, mazurkas and waltzes which were published in Paris and Leipzig. Many Europeans called him "the Armenian Chopin." Unfortunately, Elmas caught typhoid in 1887 and went partially deaf. His health deteriorated substantially in 1915 when he learnt about the Armenian Genocide.

Perhaps it was the similarity in their destiny that bonded them - the fate of armless artist and that of a deaf musician. From 1914 they lived

tragic and in the same time, comical situations in Aimée's lifetime. Thus, for instance, she once traveled in a train bound for Lausanne from Geneva and paying for her ticket, Aimée said the ticket seller that he can leave the ticket with him, as she cannot take it. On another occasion, a fire started in the building where Aimée used to live, and the firefighters started taking people out of the windows with the help of a ladder. "Hold on to my neck," the fireman said. "I cannot," Aimée said. "Don't be silly!" the fireman was got upset. "But I do not have arms," Aimée said. And then the strong fireman put the woman on his shoulders and carried her down on his back.

Rapin's works were exhibited in Paris, London, Berlin, Munich, Montreal and New York City. She continued to work till the end of her life and passed away on May 8, 1956 in Geneva at the age of 88. She was buried in Geneva's Plainpalais cemetery, next to Stepan Elmas's grave.

Aimée Rapin worked diligently throughout her entire life and left for generations more than 3,000 unique pieces of art, kept nowadays at the Payerne Museum. In 1996, the museum published an illustrated book of her works, entitled



Aimée Rapin and Stepan Elmas with their paintings

Aimée Rapin, Painting Without Hands. The text is written by the artist's niece, Simone Rapin, a poet and playwright.

The Yerevan public is gradually getting familiar with Stepan Elmas; Yerevan Conservatory has been hosting pianists' contest in Elmas's memory, and through the efforts of the French-Armenian conductor Alexander Siranossian,

who is also the artistic director of the Stepan Elmas Foundation, the composer's piano was transported to Armenia and donated to the Museum of Literature and Art in Yerevan. Elmas' companion in life, Aimée Rapin deserves to be known among the Armenians too - a brave artist, whose life and art is truly a unique exemplar of strong will and exceptional bravery...



"Armenia the Martyr" by Aimée Rapin



ARTS & LIVING

Young Artists Explore Identity to Understand History

ARTISTS, from page 1

For young diasporan Armenians living in the United States, the mental and emotional weight of this recent conflict is only exacerbated by current public health and social tensions nationwide. Despite recent “re-openings” across the country, the U.S. has exponentially more

Armenian, Arabic and so many more languages. Being reconnected with my home, family and heritage brought back comfort I didn't realize I was missing.”

A graduate of MICA (Maryland Institute College of Art) and resident artist at the Dorchester Art Project (DAP), Nanajian creates



Still image from “Stained” by Talin Avakian

COVID-19 cases and deaths than any other nation and concurrently, the Black Lives Matter movement continues to demand change at a systemic level.

Armenia's diaspora has an expansive history of coping with trauma and tragedy through art. Take Genocide survivor and visual artist Berj Kailian for example — she was exposed to the atrocities of war as a small child, and spent the rest of her life creating breathtaking works of art that not only provided her with a coping mechanism, but also her art became an abstract portal into Armenian history for the younger generations.

With the social and political upheaval both in Armenia and the States, let us take a look at what three young female Armenian artists — who are distinct in their identities as well as their crafts — are doing to explore their identity and to cope with the times.

Joanna Nanajian

Meet Joanna Nanajian, the Armenian artist from Beirut (now based in Boston) who was recently accepted to the Fountainhead Residency in Miami. Nanajian cites her background and her unique struggle with identity in the States as formative in her journey as an artist.

“I immigrated to Boston from Beirut around the age of 12 and didn't go back for about 10 years. I felt so detached from my home and my heritage that I didn't realize how confused I was until I finally went back,” said Nanajian. “Self-understanding and acceptance is a lifelong journey and your identity is just the beginning of it. Once I went back, it was as though everything finally made sense; I was greeted with the smell of soorj in the morning and the voices of my family yelling at each other in a mixture of

massive abstract charcoal pieces that are simultaneously anthropomorphic and abstract. While in the presence of one of her works, the viewer feels small and eerily insignificant.

“Recently, I've noticed a link between my work and heritage, not through an aesthetic influence but through my experiences as an Armenian immigrant from Lebanon and how I have moved through this world. My most recent work undergoes a repetitive draw-and-erase process. These continuous gestures are a mirror for all the moments that I have gained and then lost control of my life.”

In addition to her charcoal pieces, Nanajian also makes masks — the demand for which has naturally increased over the last five months.

“I was selling masks prior to COVID-19 as a hobby. I really enjoyed the aesthetics of masks and was selling them as fashion pieces with chains and designs attached. Once the pandemic hit, the orders began coming in at large quantities and became my main focus within my art practice for the past four months. This really pushed me to come out with more designs; I began to incorporate more pearls, lace, and jewels. My masks are very influenced by traditional Armenian head pieces. We're in this for a while — might as well look cute and feel good when we wear our masks!”

As a resident of the community-based DAP, Nanajian takes social justice seriously. The recent social unrest due to the murders of unarmed Black individuals — such as Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Tony McDade, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many more — has Nanajian using her platform as an Armenian artist to draw attention to the systemic racism in the States for her diaspora community.

“Your words have value to the people around

you, so use them. Demand justice for these victims and actively dismantle any racist behaviors starting with your loved ones. Armenians have had the Genocide and should understand what it's like to have your own innocent people murdered and then be neglected.”

Talin Avakian

Talin Avakian, a Worcester-born filmmaker, now based in New York, explores her multifaceted identity through mainly fictional renditions for the screen. Each character she conceives is in itself a work of art; her films provide a space to deconstruct minor social interactions and complex relationships with a magnifying glass, amplifying character affects that are typically overlooked. Her work is nuanced, meditative and understated.

“I came to realize my deep desire to intimately follow characters through their journeys and challenges of life. Following them (or creating them) would bring me comfort as they were people I could identify with and be inspired by,” said Avakian. “My work has always been very personal, so naturally my identity seeps into my work. While not every character may be of Armenian heritage, the characters I write may experience similar struggles to that of an Armenian diaspora, because that is the story I know.”

Avakian is Armenian on her father's side and is well-known in the Armenian filmmaking and arts communities. Besides hosting the Worcester Armenian Film Festival since 2013, Avakian also filmed and produced a series of short documentary films about historic Armenia.

“I consider myself mostly a fictional narrative filmmaker, but in 2014 I was asked to travel to historic Armenia with a group of researchers to document the journey, our ancient churches and the individuals we met (some of them, hidden Armenians) along the way. I created a few

after my birth, Artsvashen was occupied by the Azerbaijan military, forcing my family to flee... My father always told me that I was the last child of Artsvashen — of his hometown that he still dreams to see someday. Growing up, I often demanded the details that surrounded the day I was born. I wondered, what my mother felt, giving birth to her first child in the basement of the local hospital, while hearing the shootings from afar. I also wanted to imagine Artsvashen, because I have actually never seen it in photos. My father's and my grandmother's stories fed my imagination.”

Danielyan is entirely self-taught; she learned how to capture images and narratives through a desire to uphold her family, their villages, and the world around her.

“My first camera was a Zenit, made in the Soviet Union. It took me a while to learn how to use it properly, but as soon as I saw the first well-exposed images, I couldn't stop...I traveled to Armenia to take interviews and to photograph my grandmother's house.”

When Danielyan's grandmother passed, she realized how truly priceless her photographs were.

“I was left with a few video-interviews and photographs I took of her, and of the surrounding villages. Eventually, I put the videos together and created a short photo essay about my grandmother. When I showed the work to my family, I witnessed the power that storytelling could have on people. I will never forget the silence after the video was over. I decided to continue my photographic journey.”

At just 19, Danielyan immigrated alone from Kazakhstan to the East Coast. Inspired by her previous work documenting Armenian villages, she hoped to pursue her dreams of becoming a documentary photographer. While Danielyan holds a degree in international relations from Karaganda State University (Karaganda City,



Local kids carrying spring water home. Chambarak, Armenia, 2015. From Lilit Danielyan's “Villagers” Series

short films as a result, some of which continue to have a screening life as they are screened in classrooms and festivals, used to start conversations surrounding themes of genocide and dispossession, erasure and urban development.”

On her mother's side, Avakian is Black and Indigenous. When asked how the recent events surrounding The Movement for Black Lives has impacted her identity-heavy work, Avakian stated: “Honestly, I've felt hindered, as the recent events of the world have left me feeling quite exhausted. While I'm grateful for my health, safety, and job security, I've felt a sense of pressure to respond and be present for everything... It's been a challenge to balance my emotions, prioritize my mental health and dedicate the diligence and attention needed for my work — and when I feel I have a handle on one thing, the other thing pulls me. So all in all I've found that it's been very challenging to prioritize my film work, as much as I wish to pause everything to work on it.”

Lilit Danielyan

The black-and-white photography of Lilit Danielyan — an Armenian expat from Kazakhstan who now resides in Portland, Maine — is telling a story that demands to be heard.

“I was born during the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in a town called Artsvashen. Two days

Kazakhstan), she wanted to bolster her artistic credentials. Her first few years in the U.S. were devoted to saving money so that she could study photography at Smith College and develop her unique style, which she attributes in part to her inspirations: Agnes Varda, Parajanov, Fellini, Bergman and David Lynch, to name a few.

Danielyan's transcendent black-and-white images harken back to another era. For Danielyan, her work is personal and nostalgic but as the viewer, we feel that too, as if the carefully constructed lens through which we view her work is as much a part of the art as the art itself. It feels as if we are transported back to the collective Armenian unconscious; we feel affection for her family members that are not ours but could be. We cherish her memories in the Motherland that we never had but as American diaspora, we always wish we did.

Now in Portland, Danielyan is involved in a number of documentary projects, including documenting the faces and stories of Portland's refugee population, which is largely from Somalia.

“Recently, I began interviewing and photographing the immigrant and refugee community in Maine, and creating photo-essays. I was

continued on next page



Joanna Nanajian painting with charcoal



ARTS & LIVING

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian

Mouhamara

Walnut and Red Pepper Paste Spread (Mouhamara)*

This Walnut and Red Pepper Paste Spread (Mouhamara) is featured in Dikranouhi Kirazian's essential Armenian Vegan cookbook published in 2013. This definitive cookbook offers a world of new and rich vegan flavors, recipes and meals that will satisfy discriminating tastes and motivate readers to add their own culinary touches. Discover over 200 vegan recipes for breakfast, soups, salads, main entrees, breads, desserts,

and more—offered from the great tradition of meatless Armenian meals. Included are favorites like Stuffed Grape Leaves, Rice and Bulgur Pilaf, Vegetable Medleys, Paklava, and Hearty Breads that come with carefully chosen ingredients and easy-to-follow instructions.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Kirazian arrived in the United States in 1959, where she taught at Holy Cross Armenian Church in Union City, New Jersey. Married in 1962, she and her husband George settled in San Diego, where they raised their three daughters. "My cookbook is a labor of love for my children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and for future generations, so they will always remember their heritage. Armenian food is one of the most unique and traditional cuisines in the world. It is rich in flavor and uses cooking skills and techniques dating back thousands of years. Armenian food is basically healthy, and many recipes are already vegan - these are simple, delicious recipes everyone can make and enjoy."

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Dikranouhi Kirazian and her husband, George, at the San Diego Festival of Books in 2018.

Armenian food is one of the most unique and traditional cuisines in the world. It is rich in flavor and uses cooking skills and techniques dating back thousands of years. Armenian food is basically healthy, and many recipes are already vegan - these are simple, delicious recipes everyone can make and enjoy."

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups walnuts, chopped
1/2 cup red pepper paste (found in Middle Eastern markets)
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/2 cup olive oil
4 tablespoons fresh minced onions
2-3 tablespoons pomegranate molasses
2-3 tablespoons cumin
1/2 teaspoon dried basil
1-2 tablespoons pine nuts (for garnish)
1/4 cup water
Salt and pepper to taste

PREPARATION:

Chop walnuts in a blender or food processor. Add the bread crumbs, olive oil, minced onions, pomegranate molasses, red pepper paste, all spices, and the water, and blend to combine all ingredients. Season with salt and pepper. Place in a serving dish and garnish with pine nuts.

Serve as an appetizer with fresh vegetables, toasted pita bread, flat bread, or lavosh. Use as a spread in a sandwich or on lavosh with grilled vegetables, roasted peppers, and cheese. Or as a condiment (or topping) for kebabs, grilled meats, and fish. Keep refrigerated in an airtight container.

Makes about 2 to 2 1/2 cups.

For this recipe, go to:

<https://armenianvegan.com/recipes>

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/ArmenianVeganCookbook/posts/>

Armenian Vegan: A Pure Vegan Cookbook With 200+ Recipes Using No Animal Products by Dikranouhi Kirazian. To order, go to: https://www.amazon.com/dp/1494365189/ref=cm_sw_su_dp

*Mouhamara ("reddened"), mouhamara or mhammara is a hot pepper dip originally from Aleppo, Syria, found in Levantine and Turkish cuisines. In western Turkey, mouhamara is referred to as acuka. The principal ingredients are usually fresh or dried peppers, usually Aleppo pepper, ground walnuts, breadcrumbs, and olive oil. It may contain garlic, salt, lemon juice, pomegranate molasses, and spices, and garnished with mint leaves.

References:

<https://armenianvegan.com/>

<https://twitter.com/armenianvegan?lang=en>

<https://www.facebook.com/ArmenianVeganCookbook/>

<https://georgekirazian.com/cook-book/> (under construction)

from previous page

surprised how much this project helped me to understand my own feelings as someone who immigrated to the United States alone...In Portland, when [Black Lives Matter] protests began, I was amongst the protesters. To me, there is nothing more beautiful than the feeling of connection with one another. It's crucial to stand up for each other and embrace things that unite us."

Danielyan's community work in Portland has proven cathartic for her, especially in recent

weeks. The village in which Danielyan was born is located in the Gegharkunik region, which borders Tavush - the region that has been under attack by Azeri forces since the 1994 ceasefire was broken on July 12, 2020.

"When I learned about the recent political events between Armenia and Azerbaijan, I was devastated. I also realized how much I would have wanted to be in Armenia right now, doing documentary photography work. We don't need more useless wars that always result in enormous suffering. Instead, we need to concentrate

on peace-building relationships. I will be focusing on this in my next art projects."

Danielyan takes comfort in looking forward to a time when her documentary footage will be a mechanism for telling the story of this moment. She hopes the images she has produced - and continues to produce - will illuminate this time in American and Armenian history for generations to come. For Danielyan, who knows first-hand the powerful role that capturing images plays in preserving history, it is only natural.

Calendar

MASSACHUSETTS

AUGUST 12 — Wednesday, 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. Mexican Cuisine. Executive Chef Colton Coburn-Wood & Friends Cós mica Mexican Eatery in the Revolution Hotel, South End. To register via Zoom, email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

AUGUST 22 — Saturday, 9 am. Labyrinth Walking: Connection between Movement and Wisdom. Facilitator:

Kristin Asadourian, founder, KA Coaching. The Labyrinth Walking Wellness Series is a virtual program of Armenian Heritage Park in partnership with The Greenway Conservancy Fitness Program. For the link to register via ZOOM, email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

AUGUST 12 — Wednesday, 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. NEW ENGLAND CUISINE. Chef Annie Copps Cookbook author, The Little Local Maine Cookbook and A Little Taste of Cape Cod. To register via Zoom, please email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 9 — 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. ARMENIAN CUISINE. Lena Tashjian, Cookbook author, recipe developer, writer, The 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. Editor, Cooks Illustrated. , To register via Zoom email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

OCTOBER 7 — 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. NATIVE AMERICAN CUISINE Chef Sean Sherman member of the Oglala Lakota tribe Cookbook author, The Sioux Chef Indigenous Kitchen - 2018 James Beard Award for Best American Cookbook; co-founder, The Sioux Chef.com - 2019 James Beard Leadership Award. To register via Zoom, email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

RHODE ISLAND

AUGUST 7 — Friday, Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church Cultural Committee Presents Armenian Cultural Hour Online Concert, at 7:30 pm. Armenian Popular Singer Papin Poghosyan "My Songs for You"

Whether or not you have a Facebook account, you can find the Livestream of the event through the parish's Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/armenianchurchprovidence/posts/3360139950674206>



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Russian Base Casts Long Shadow On Armenia, Turkey

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The threat of war continues to loom on Armenia's border. The battle in the Tavush region of Armenia was only one episode which may very well be followed by others. The Armenian side is cognizant of the fact that it should not yet rest on its laurels.

Armenia proved the battle-readiness of its armed forces. But to what extent? President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has characterized Armenia's victory against Azerbaijan as a "punch well beyond its capacity," which in strategic terms may be interpreted as the victory by Armenia being the result of tactical assistance from its strategic ally, Russia.

In today's wars, drones have expanded the surveillance scope of armies. In this particular battle, the Azerbaijani army, which had boasted of its state-of-the-art military hardware, failed to deploy them properly and thus the Armenian side downed 13 of their drones, in addition to inflicting other critical losses.

Wars now rely more and more on advanced technology both for weapons and surveillance systems, including satellite imaging, which is beyond Armenia's reach. This is where an ally's assistance can make the ultimate difference, and most probably this is what Erdogan was talking about.

From July 29 to August 10, the joint forces of Azerbaijan and

its relations with Moscow.

In his turn, President Erdogan has taken the initiative to call President Vladimir Putin. During their conversation Putin "has stressed the importance of preventing any steps that could cause an escalation in tensions."

Once again, the issue of the Russian military base in Gyumri has become a topic of public discussion. Many anti-Russian politicians underestimate the significance of that base. Analysts like Levon Shirinyan and Armenian Parliament members like Arman Babajanyan and pundits like Varoujan Avetissyan (Sasna Tserer) and Tigran Zmalyan (European Party) are adamantly against the base. They try to suggest that Russia has set that base on Armenian territory "to enslave us."

However, they do not offer any alternative in case Armenia faces an existential threat.

Granted, the base may be self-serving for Russia to maintain its influence in the Caucasus region. In the meantime, it is a deterrent against any Turkish threat. To defend its military base Moscow has to defend Armenia's territory.

In politics, there has to be a confluence of interest so that a major power is motivated to defend the weaker power. There is no free lunch.

In a recent interview, the director of a political and military analytical center in Russia, Alexander Khramchikhin, confirmed the fact that the Russian base in Armenia is intended to contain

Turkey: "If a war breaks out between Armenia and Azerbaijan, I am not sure what position Russia may take," the analyst stated. "But if the war takes place in Karabakh, I know for sure that Russia will not intervene. I repeat, the base is there to contain Turkey. The base is part of Russia's geostrategic posture. Therefore, it is meant to stop Turkey, the foreign intruder in the region."

Mr. Khramchikhin also believes that Turkey has introduced its forces into Azerbaijan to pressure Armenia psychologically. But he believes that Turkey at this time "cannot invade Armenia, because it will be stretching its resources too far, as it is mired in many other conflicts."

We wished that it were true. Turkey's involvement in many conflicts defines its behavior pattern.

Either it foments a crisis to intervene, like Iraq and Libya to expand its empire.

Following that logic, we cannot rule out the possibility that Ankara precipitated the recent crisis between Armenia and Azerbaijan to begin implementing one of its long held dreams.

Strategically, Armenia is at the mercy of enemy forces; Turkish armed forces are in mainland Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan, which does not have a common border with the mainland, but has a narrow border with Turkey, acquired after a land swap with Iran in 1932.

Armenian forces are no match for Turkey. Armenia must avoid any direct confrontation with the Turkish army. But Yerevan has other sources that it can use in diplomatic forums.

Recently, Armenia's representative Armen Babikyan raised the issue in Energy Intelligence, a publication of the International Atomic Agency, of Azerbaijan's threat to bomb its nuclear power plant, Metsamor. On July 27, the issue was discussed at a Vienna conference, which characterized the threat as an act of state terrorism against Armenia.

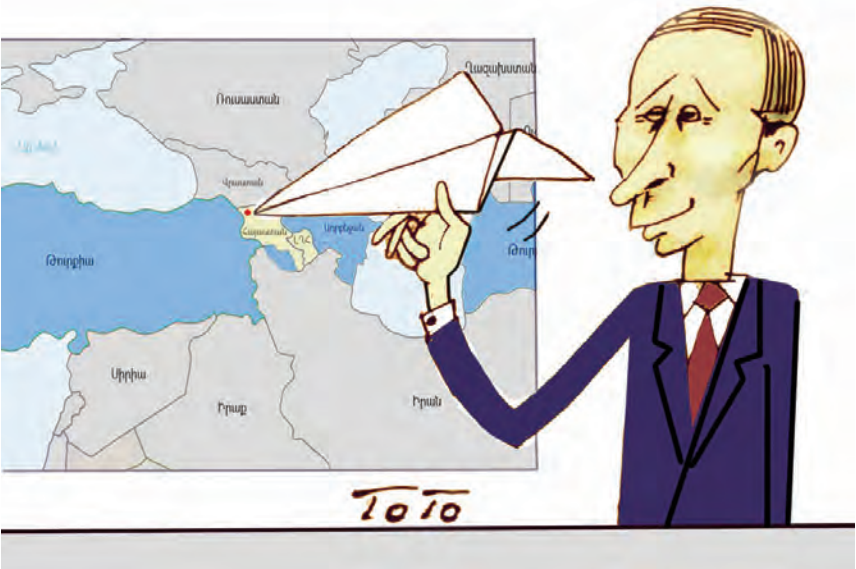
Armenia has not weaponized its strongest argument, the fact of genocide. Only after some timid references by Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan did Armenia's Ambassador to Latvia Tigran Mkrtchyan issue a strongly-worded statement that Armenians will not tolerate a second genocide.

Jews and Israel shout from the rooftops about the holocaust they have suffered. We can emulate them and try to score some political points.

What makes everything even worse is that during this current situation, there is polarization in Armenia. Any responsible and rational leadership would seek internal stability, to withstand the threats.

The opposition and the government are equally responsible for the ongoing divide in Armenia: the first for its irresponsible and destabilizing rhetoric, and the latter for its witch hunt in rounding up perceived enemies.

Armenia needs calm, de-escalation and unity. That will not be offered by Russia nor any other outside force. It is in the hands of the leadership to steer the county toward calmer waters.



Turkey are participating in war games on Armenia's borders, as well as in Baku, Ganja, Erlakh and Nakhichevan, in a very demonstrative way, using live ammunition.

People in Armenia claim to have spotted Turkish warplanes within striking distance of Yerevan. Although the news was refuted by government sources, the intent of the Turkish side to scare Armenia is plain to see.

Political analyst Hagop Badalyan very stoically advises people in Armenia to learn to live with the Turkish threat of war but not to be intimidated.

President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan is back to his bellicose mood, after his defeat in Tavush. He has refused out of hand the seven points proposed by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and has called on Yerevan to withdraw its armed forces from Karabakh immediately, "before it's too late."

Answering that threat, Armenia's Defense Minister David Tonoyan has asked the rhetorical question as to "when would it be too late as our armed forces are ready and waiting for the order."

While this heated rhetoric is being spouted by all parties, tanks are pulling up on Armenia's borders and warplanes are flying over them, raising the question as to whether Turkey will attack Armenia.

Russia has taken Turkey's moves very seriously and it has advanced the date of its own war games, which were planned for September. It has been exercising currently on Azerbaijan's borders, with the participation of 150,000 soldiers and nuclear warheads as a direct warning to Turkey's moves.

On July 28, Defense Minister Tonoyan announced that Armenia's armed forces have been put on high alert and that the Russian-Armenian military contingent is "continuing consistently to monitor and analyze" Turkish-Azerbaijani military activities "with all reconnaissance means" at its disposal.

On the sidelines, however, a diplomatic charade is taking place. Despite its aggressive moves and stern threats, Ankara is trying to camouflage its intentions through diplomatic moves. First, Ibrahim Kalin, President Erdogan's spokesman, indicated that Turkey is in Nakhichevan to support its ally Azerbaijan and assured the public that Ankara's moves do not intend to harm



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Political Victory over Azerbaijan Is As Important as the Military Victory

While Armenians around the world have been justifiably focusing on the successes of the Armenian military over Azerbaijan during the three-day attack last month, the political victory is just as important.

If you win the war, but lose the peace, then you have not accomplished much. The best solution is to win the war and then draw a long-term benefit from that military success.

Fortunately, President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan has provided the best opportunity for Armenians to benefit from the recent skirmish on the border between the two countries.

Aliyev recently fired his long-term Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov for engaging in “meaningless” negotiations with Armenia. This is the best thing that Aliyev could have said from the Armenian point of view. If Aliyev is unhappy with the negotiations, Armenians welcome his statement.

We should remember that the on-going negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, under the guidance of the Minsk Group of mediators, are solely for the benefit of Azerbaijan which expects to extract concessions from Armenia on the Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) conflict. Armenians should not expect to gain anything from these negotiations. They have already accomplished what they want from the conflict with Azerbaijan by successfully liberating the occupied territories of Artsakh. It is unrealistic to expect that Azerbaijan would someday acknowledge that Artsakh is an independent territory or a part of the Republic of

Armenia. Therefore, these negotiations are useless for the Armenian side. They are only carried out for the sake of giving the appearance to the international public opinion that Armenians are not opposed to finding a peaceful, negotiated solution to the conflict. These negotiations are carried out more for propaganda purposes than for achieving concrete results.

However, Armenia continues to carry out these negotiations while Azerbaijan persists on using sharpshooters or periodic attacks on Artsakh and Armenia proper to kill and injure Armenian soldiers and civilians or damage Armenian properties.

I have tried to bring this problem to the attention of Armenia’s leaders in the past. I discussed this issue several years ago with Armenia’s Defense Minister, Seyran Ohanyan. I explained to him that Armenia should temporarily suspend the negotiations with Azerbaijan while the Azeri side was shooting on Armenian soldiers. Armenia should announce to the world that it believes in peaceful negotiations, but Azerbaijan continues to fire across the border. One cannot sit at the negotiating table while the other side is shooting at you. You either negotiate or fight. You cannot do both at the same time. The Defense Minister told me that this is a political decision which should be taken up with President Serzh Sargsyan. Ohanyan said that he was only involved in military matters.

I then met with President Sargsyan and gave him the same explanation that I had given to his Defense Minister. I emphasized that I was not calling for the cancellation of the negotiations with Azerbaijan which would have left the wrong impression on the international community. I urged the President to announce that even though Armenia believes in peaceful negotiations, Azerbaijan continues its warmongering actions. The world would understand that negotiations cannot be carried out under such circumstances. One can either negotiate or fight, but not do both. Therefore, the President of Armenia should announce that if Azerbaijan, henceforth, shoots on the Armenian side, Armenia would suspend the negotiations for three months. If the Azeri shootings persist, Armenia would prolong the suspension of negotiations. Without any negotiations taking place, Azerbaijan

would be the loser, as negotiations are Azerbaijan’s only chance of getting some concessions from Armenia. Eventually, as the negotiations become frozen for a lengthy period, the Minsk Group of negotiators would pressure Azerbaijan to agree to observe a total ceasefire if it wanted to continue the negotiations.

Regrettably, I could not convince President Sargsyan to agree to this peaceful approach. As a result the Azeri shootings continued during the negotiations while dozens of young Armenian and Azeri soldiers were killed.

Nevertheless, I was happy to read sometime after my meeting with President Sargsyan that he had announced on October 24, 2017, during his lecture at the Armenian National Defense Research University, according to Mediamax Armenian news agency, that “You either negotiate or shoot, and we are ready for both cases.” He was also quoted as saying that the negotiations should be held only in case of mutual trust, built by adhering to ceasefire regime, while any provocations may block the process.

Unfortunately, President Sargsyan had announced only partially what I had suggested. He had left out the warning to Azerbaijan that negotiations would be suspended the next time they shoot across the border.

Nevertheless, I believe that this is the right time for Armenia’s new leaders to consider my suggestion, especially since President Aliyev had stated that he does not believe in “meaningless” negotiations. I was dismayed that Armenia’s Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan just announced that Armenia was ready to resume the negotiations with Azerbaijan, as if the attacks in early July had not taken place. The only time Azerbaijan would be deterred from carrying out new attacks on Armenia and Artsakh, if it pays a heavy price both militarily and diplomatically. Just to carry on as usual, ignoring the attacks, would be counterproductive. It would simply encourage Azerbaijan to continue shooting and shelling.

In the meantime, Armenians both in and out of Armenia have to set aside their internal differences and make all efforts to strengthen the Armenian military. This is no time to engage in internal dissensions at a time when our enemies, Azerbaijan and Turkey, are testing our resolve.

The US Must Rein In Erdogan’s War-Mongering

By David Phillips

PROCLAIMING “zero problems with neighbors,” former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu heralded a new era of Turkish foreign policy in 2013. However, Davutoglu and other stalwarts of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) were eventually side-lined as Recep Tayyip Erdogan consolidated his dictatorship.

With Turkey’s economy collapsing, Erdogan is fuelling regional conflicts in order to distract Turks from his economic mismanagement. Instead of helping Turkey, the administration of US President Donald Trump has turned a blind eye to Turkey’s economic strife, democratic deficit, and nefarious role in the region.

Today, Turkey is engaged in multiple armed conflicts.

Turkey invaded northern and eastern Syria, killing hundreds in the Syrian Defense Forces, America’s ally against Islamic State (ISIS). Kurds, Armenians and Syriac Christians were targeted. Hundreds of thousands were driven from their homes in Afrin and communities east of the Euphrates River.

In Iraqi Kurdistan, Yezidis in Sinjar and Christians in Zakho were victimized by Turkey’s bombing and occupation. Yezidis, who barely survived a genocide by ISIS, now face persecution from Turkey’s jihadist proxies. Forced conversion to Islam, rape of women and girls, arbitrary arrest, torture, and ethnic cleansing are routine.

Turkish warships are plying the eastern Mediterranean to disrupt an agreement between Egypt and Greece on an exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which will produce natural gas with Israel as a major beneficiary.

Mock dogfights regularly occur between Greek and Turkish war planes, as Erdogan questions the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne that established Turkey’s current borders. Seizing islets in Greek territorial waters would be a major provocation and causus belli between NATO allies.

Turkey recently encouraged Azerbaijan to launch cross-border attacks against Armenia. With drones and missiles from Turkey, Azerbaijan is threatening to renew the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Turkey has also intervened in Libya, where tribal and regional factions are in desperate

need of reconciliation. There is real risk of conflict escalation between Turkey and Egypt, who support different sides in Libya’s civil war.

While all these front-line states are at-risk from Turkey’s aggression, Libya is a laboratory for Turkey’s malign foreign policy. During the first months of 2020, Turkey deployed up to 3,800 Syrian mercenaries to Libya. These mercenaries from the National Syrian Army, some allegedly drawn from al-Qaeda and ISIS remnants, are notorious for war crimes. They have beheaded opponents, raped women and girls, tortured and killed opponents. They are the dregs – the worst of the worst.

Their deployment to Libya swung the tide in favour of the Government of National Accord (GNA), led by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj. Turkey’s actions are fuelled by geo-strategic and economic interests. Libya is an oil-rich country with energy assets coveted by foreign powers. Backing Farraj gives Erdogan influence over Libya’s energy sector.

Since 2011, when Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi was ousted, Libya has been at war with itself. Libya has been divided for years between Farraj’s GNA and the Libyan National Army (LNA) led by Khalifa Haftar. Backed by Russia and the Gulf States, the LNA’s forces were on the verge of seizing Tripoli when Turkey and its mercenaries intervened. Having turned the tide, the GNA now vows to capture Sirte, the gateway to Libya’s oil fields, and the al-Jufra air base.

Egypt, which backs the LNA, has pledged to defend Sirte. To this end, the Egyptian parliament authorized the deployment of troops “to defend Egyptian national security against criminal armed militias and foreign terrorist elements”. Recent developments pit Turkey against Russia and the United Arab Emirates. Tensions could boil over into a full-blown war without a ceasefire and international mediation.

These are times when countries look to the United States for leadership. However, the Trump administration does not have a Libya policy. Its ambivalence and lack of leadership has opened the space for ill-intended and self-serving powers to intervene. It is understandable that the United States wants to avoid another entanglement in the Middle East. But America’s neglect of Libya is another example of a situation gone awry when the United States abrogates its leadership role

In each of the violent conflicts where Turkey is involved, the Trump administration has failed to lead.

Trump gave Erdogan a green light to invade and occupy north-east Syria, betraying the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which lost 11,000 fighters killed and 24, 000 wounded fighting ISIS.

US officials barely said a word when Turkey invaded Iraqi Kurdistan, threatening American troops and oil companies.

And as Turkey provokes Greece and Cyprus, there is serious concern whether the Trump administration would enforce Article 5 of the North Atlantic Charter in the event of a clash between treaty

allies.

None of these problems are intractable if the United States uses diplomatic leverage to address them. Regarding Libya, the US should call for a ceasefire and humanitarian access while endorsing a United Nations-led mediation.

US national interests are served by upholding sovereignty and international humanitarian law. Trump’s fawning over Erdogan is inexplicable. Erdogan is a serial war-monger who will continue his aggression until a punitive reprisal from the US

Much damage has been done. However, it is not too late to stabilize these conflicts. If Trump is unable or unwilling to do, his successor must.

(This commentary originally appeared on Ahval.com on July 29.)

US OFFICIALS BARELY SAID A WORD WHEN TURKEY INVADED IRAQI KURDISTAN, THREATENING AMERICAN TROOPS AND OIL COMPANIES.

Houston Armenian Protest Against Azerbaijani Aggression



DEMONSTRATIONS, from page 1

out fliers, and dancing. Numerous cars joined the simultaneous car-rally, honking, waving flags, and encouraging the protestors. Many of the car rally attendees were eventually inspired to attend the demonstration. The event was peaceful and powerful, as Armenian music reverberated in the busy intersection of Post Oak Blvd and Westheimer, in the Galleria.

The Houston Police Department was present to ensure our safety, though no counter-protestors attended as in previous protests. No social media outlets were used, to minimize the possibility of additional aggression from Azerbaijani and Turkish groups. Masks were enforced throughout the entire duration of the protest as well for further safety precautions from COVID-19.

Several of the organizers were interviewed by journalists, who will now be covering the conflict between Armenia, Artsakh and



Azerbaijan, as well as the role that we have, both individually and as a community, for this cause. Though we may not see the immediate results from protesting for peace with a small community like ours, when we as Armenians join small movements like on August 1, we add a link to the chain that has grown throughout the years which has become stronger, more resilient, and unbreakable.

See the *Mirror-Spectator's* website for clips of the Houston demonstration.

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