Development on the Frontier

Tavush Province, Part I

As part of a three-article series, the Mirror-Spectator has investigated the economic and development challenges faced by residents and leaders of the Tavush region.

By Mateos Hayes
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

TAVUSH, Armenia — The province of Tavush is the green jewel of the Armenian landscape. Located in the landlocked nation’s northeastern corner, Tavush is a crossroads of sorts, sharing an international border with Georgia and Azerbaijan.

With its idyllic rolling green hills, its majestic mountains, and its picturesque valleys and rivers, Tavush Province is unquestionably one of the most beautiful corners of Armenia. It is replete with friendly and hardworking locals eager to extend their hospitality to the few outsiders that pass through the province.

However, the largely agrarian province is also one of the more underdeveloped parts of Armenia, accounting for just 1.2 percent of Armenian economic and development challenges faced by residents and leaders of the Tavush region.

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Armenia Backs Egypt In Row With Turkey

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenia voiced support for Egypt’s position in bitter disputes with Turkey over maritime boundaries in the eastern Mediterranean and the conflict in Libya.

Making an official visit to Cairo, Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan also accused Ankara of destabilizing these and neighboring regions, including the South Caucasus.

see EGYPT, page 5
Opposition to Boycott Election Of New High Court Judges

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Opposition members of the Armenian parliament said on September 14 that they will boycott the election of three new members of the Constitutional Court who will replace justices controversially ousted in June.

The deputes representing the opposition Prosperous Armenia (PAH) and Bright Armenia (LIK) parties again challenged the legality of constitutional changes enacted by the parliament’s pro-government majority.

The changes call for the gradual resignation of seven of the Constitutional Court’s nine judges who have been locked in a standoff with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s political team. Three of them were to resign with immediate effect. Also, Hrachia Tomosyan had to quit as court chairman but remain a judge.

Tomosyan and the ousted judges refused to step down, saying that their removal is illegal and politically motivated. They appealed to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to have them reinstated.

Despite the legal action, Pashinyan, President Sarkissian and a national convention of Armenian judges have each nominated a candidate to replace the ousted judges. Under the Armenian constitution, all new members of the Constitutional Court must be appointed by the parliament in secret ballot.

The National Assembly discussed the three candidates ahead of the vote scheduled for Tuesday. The candidates held separate meetings with deputes from Pashinyan’s My Step bloc prior to the parliament session. None of them met with the HHK and the LIK’s parliamentary groups, a fact deployed by the latter.

“I have been a member of the parliament since 2007 and I can’t recall any other case of parliamentary opposition factions being ignored in this fashion,” said the HHK’s Naira Zohrabyan.

Ruben Rubenyan, a senior My Step lawmaker, criticized the opposition boycott. He also dismissed other criticism’s claims that all three candidates for the vacant Constitutional Court seats were linked to Armenia’s former leadership in one way or another.

The candidates were asked tough questions by other pro-government lawmakers. One of the candidates, Vardvand Khundkaryan, has headed the Court of Cassation, the country’s highest body of criminal and administrative justice, for the last two years. He was nominated by fellow deputies in early August.

According to media reports, the state Commission on the Prevention of Corruption has advised the parliament against appointing Khundkaryan, citing his judicial track record.

Also, My Step’s Taguhi Tovmasyan, who heads Armenia’s Supreme Court and is Armenia’s former chief justice, strongly opposed the nomination.

Another candidate, Artur Vagharyan, was picked by President Armen Sarkissian. Vagharyan is a member of Armenia State University. Sarkissian already nominat ed him for a vacant seat in the Constitutional Court as recently as in May 2019. The parliament majority rejected his candidacy at the time.

Pro-government lawmakers were clearly unhappy with the president’s decision to again try to have Vagharyan appointed to the high court.
Development on the Frontier: Tavush Province, Part I

In short, the border towns of Tavush suffer from a dearth in investment. Inga Harutyunyan, director of the Pahapan Foundation, which works to bring sustainable economic and social development to the province, explained the profound harm done by war and risk and trust. “We need to build trust with our donors for projects, which is a difficult thing to do.” Harutyunyan also emphasized the importance of government incentives in encouraging sponsors to invest in an otherwise high-risk region.

The Pahapan organization has worked to address this problem, attracting investment from other parts of Armenia and from the Armenian diaspora. Using these sources, it has raised funds for the construction of communal shelters, schools, and homes in areas of the region that border villages can protect themselves from shelling attacks.

Harutyunyan said the state must make it easier for the border villages to receive donations, take out loans and thus create businesses and jobs in the area. While she noted the VAT tax exemption given to border villages, Harutyunyan nonetheless emphasized that more must be done to coordinate legislation for border villages.

The director cited other specific examples of what donors have done to help these areas: one was to take out loans and thus create businesses and jobs in the area. While she noted the VAT tax exemption given to border villages, Harutyunyan nonetheless emphasized that more must be done to coordinate legislation for border villages.

Bishop Hagrat Galstyan, Primate of Tavush, agreed the government could do better to attract investors. He said that although the Armenian government had taken several steps to improve life in the border areas, a more systematic approach was needed for these efforts to be more effective. He argued that any government legislation addressing the concerns of border towns must be focused and targeted on the most pressing needs of the province, stating that “there must be more strategic coordination of [government] policy. For instance, border towns are given an exemption on VAT tax, but this policy must be more widely publicized in order to attract investors.”

Additionally, Galstyan believed that financial aid itself needs to be more strategically coordinated. “Increased support for border villages,” he said, “is needed for these efforts to be more effective. He argued that any government legislation addressing the concerns of border towns must be focused and targeted on the most pressing needs of the province, stating that “there must be more strategic coordination of [government] policy. For instance, border towns are given an exemption on VAT tax, but this policy must be more widely publicized in order to attract investors.”

Moreover, the idea behind the Foundation’s Scholarship Program is to enable Armenian youth about the professions required for the development of the country, leading professionals – doctors, construction workers, farmers, data scientists, veterinarians, etc.

Inga Harutyunyan, deputy minister of education, science, culture and sports of Armenia, delivered greeting speech of Minister Arayik Harutyunyan, mentioning “Encouraging sustainable professional growth, sectoral development and progress in Armenia, from 2018 on My Step Foundation awards scholarships to young people admitted to the world’s leading educational institutions who wish to acquire professional skills to the progress of our Homeland. As Bishop Galstyan explained, “Everyone used to look at the people [of Tavush] as always in need, unable to help themselves.”

“My Step Foundation awarded scholarships to Armenian students to study in World Top Universities

The scholarship recipients with Hovhannes Hgahzayan, executive director of My Step Foundation.
**More Fires Break out in Beirut**

BEIRUT (Armenpress) – As Beirut was still struggling to recover from the trauma inflicted by the August 4 explosion at the city’s port in which at least 192 people were killed, more than 6,000 injured, and homes and other property were devastated for many miles around, the Lebanese capital was hit by two fires again – one near the same place in the port, and the other on September 15 at a residential district.

Now, after the most recent fire, two Lebanese-Armenian figures are suspecting that the incidents involve foul play.

Arag’dal’s Editor-in-Chief Shahin Khandarian said in an interview that authorities haven’t yet determined the cause of a September 15 fire in the commercial building.

“Fortunately there was no explosion here, however, these similar successive incidents are creating a very bad mood. After what happened a month ago, these fires give reason for suspicion, and also create some panic – a difficult psychological situation,” Khandarian said.

Serak Hakobyan, the editor-in-chief of the Beirut-based publication Voice of Armenia, said in an interview that authorities haven’t yet announced the cause of the fire, but that he thinks that all this is happening in an atmosphere of general pressure,” Hakobyan said.

Neither Khandarian nor Hakobyan elaborated.

**Court Case Begins on Threats Made to Hrant Dink Foundation**

ISTANBUL (Sor Marmara) – On September 11, the first court session of the case in regard to the threats directed at the Hrant Dink Foundation began at the Caglayan courthouse in Istanbul.

Police have arrested Huseyin Ates and Ersin Baskın on charges of making death threats.

On May 27 and 28 the foundation received threats by e-mail.

In the threatening letter the following expression was used: “We may come one night by surprise.”

This phrase was often repeated also until 2007, and January 19 of that year when Hrant Dink was murdered. Writers of the letter also blamed the Hrant Dink Foundation for telling “fairy tales of brotherhood,” and they demanded that leaders of the Foundation leave the country. Death threats were also made against Rakel Dink and to the foundation’s board of trustees.

**OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs Hold Intensive Consultations in Paris**


As they said in a statement, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office (PRCO) Andrej Kasprzyk also participated in the meeting.

The Co-Chairs reviewed the situation in the region with particular focus on new developments following the mid-July violent escalation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border. The co-chairs considered and assessed the private and public messages and conciliatory statements.

The Co-Chairs met separately by phone with Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov and Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and invited the ministers to meet individually with the Co-Chairs in person in the coming weeks to further clarify their respective positions, with the aim of resuming serious substantive negotiations without preconditions.

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Young Aurora 2020

**The Three Finalists**

Project Teams from UWC East Africa in Tanzania, UWC Mahindra College in India and UWC South East Asia in Singapore have been selected as the three finalist teams to proceed to the final of Young Aurora 2020. The three teams will present their projects to the final jury on November 3.

Twelve projects from across UWC Schools and Colleges and the African Leadership Academy entered Young Aurora with detailed plans to tackle a far-reaching breadth of issues in each of their schools’ local communities. From providing preventative medical care plans in rural Mulshi-Taluka, India to helping patients in New Mexico, USA avoid harmful drug-food interactions through an App; From establishing a peaceful cohesion between villagers and elephants in Sanya Hoyee Village, Tanzania to establishing ways of building peaceful cohesion between refugees and the local communities in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Each of the projects were both a reminder and proof of the importance of empathy and insight, considering the difficult issues they are tackling. Empathy is most effective when others really are the future of the world --- I wish each of the teams of young humanitarians the very best.”

The three finalist teams from UWC East Africa in Tanzania, UWC Mahindra College in India and UWC South East Asia in Singapore are now busy preparing to present their projects to the final jury for a chance to win a grant of $4,000 to help them further develop their project. In previous years this event was held in Armenia, however due to ongoing Covid-19 restrictions it will be held online this year.

**The Finalist Teams:**

UWC East Africa with Beehive Divide

Beehive Divide is a project that aims to establish peaceful co-existence between the elephants and villagers in Sanya Hoyee village in Silita District, Tanzania. Due to its location, Sanya Hoyee encounters a human-elephant conflict where lives are lost and crops are destroyed. The team intends to build two protective, elephant-repelling barriers between the fields and elephant corridors - a beehive fence and a chill fence.

The beehives will be built by UWC East Africa students in their design rooms out of both wood and recycled plastic. This project will ensure the protection of the endangered elephant species while enabling the Chagga community to thrive in both crop farming and bee-keeping to increase food security and reduce poverty. Reflecting on their involvement in the project so far, team member Mariam Jusabani from Tanzania says: “We started off with a very small plan and had never imagined getting to this stage. I have learned that with determination, even a small initiative can prove to positively impact countless lives.”

UWC Mahindra College with MedRangers

The MedRangers project started when a woman from Sadhana village told the team about her challenges in receiving medical assistance in rural areas. Further inquiry, through surveys and local mentors, revealed that medical malpractice in Mulshi-Taluka, caused by a lack of health education and medical assistance was worsened by socio-economic, cultural, and infrastructural factors. Despite housing 68.6% of India’s citizens, rural areas receive only 29% of India’s health infrastructure. MedRangers aims to improve health outcomes in rural Mulshi-Taluka through preventive and diagnostic approaches. Primarily, this is achieved by conducting educational workshops on the science, symptoms, and treatments of prevalent diseases, basic first aid skill training, and health-insurance schemes for school staff and villagers, and by facilitating further medical training for Accredited Social Health Workers (ASHA). For diagnosis, the team will organize health camps in Mulshi-Taluka to further increase access to medical assistance. Their aim is clear: ‘We aspire to empower the local populace to make independent and informed decisions.‘

see AURORA, page 5
Armenia Backs Egypt in Row With Turkey

Armenia has backed Egypt in a dispute with Turkey over the latter’s alleged support for Islamist militants in Syria and sending them to Azerbaijan. "These are exactly the moves which undermine the efforts toward peace and stability in the region," he said.

In that context, the Armenian minister spoke of the "same sources of destabilization" in the South Caucasus, the east Mediterranean and North Africa. "Any attempt to export instability and escalation to different regions as part of power projection is deplorable, whether it is in North Caucasus or in the South Caucasus," he said in a recent address.

The top Armenian diplomat also said his country supports Egypt’s efforts to sign a free-trade deal with the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union.

At the same time, Mnatsakanyan seemed satisfied with his "very good discussion" with the Egyptian foreign minister, saying that it focused not only on international security but also ways of expanding Armenian-Egyptian relations. "We are keen to take practical steps in this direction," he said.

The top Armenian diplomat also said his country supports Egypt’s efforts to sign a free-trade deal with the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union.

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Pastor Welcomes New Richmond Parish

In his letter addressing the local parishioners, he read a message from Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. In his letter, addressing the local parishioners, Bishop Daniel called the St. James Church “one of the historic parishes of our Diocese, with a proud and impressive history undergirding it.”

“I know how excited the parishioners are to have Der Samuel take up this new role in the community,” wrote the Primate. “You have good reason to be enthusiastic, for Der Samuel is a seasoned priest of our Diocese: a learned man of God, whose vibrant, inner faith is echoed by a quiet, humble manner.”

Rith-Najarian offered a thoughtful inaugural sermon, focusing on the miraculous command uttered by Jesus to heal a deaf and mute man. “‘Be opened,’ says our Lord in the gospel reading today. He has a message and purpose for all of us here. We need to be able and willing to listen for that message. By being open, hearing the Word of God, and putting our faith into tangible fruitful action, we will build up the Body of Christ here at St. James Church.”

After the services, he said: “It was a joyous day for me to begin my ministry and service to the Lord among the St. James faithful. The kindness and welcome from the parish council and community made Yn. Danielle and me feel at home. The Lord has opened many new possibilities before us, and I have great hope for what lies ahead.”

The service was broadcast on the Internet for those unable to attend.

Eastern Diocese’s Richmond Parish Welcomes New Pastor

RICHMOND, Va. — Sunday, September 6, marked a new chapter in the life of the St. James Church of Richmond, as parishioners welcomed a new pastor, Rev. Samuel Rith-Najarian.

The occasion was the first time the badarak had been celebrated in the church sanctuary since March, and the first indoor service to be shared by the parishioners, who carefully observed the local distancing guidelines for public gatherings.

Introducing Rith-Najarian to his new flock was the Very Rev. Oshagan Gulgulian, a former pastor in Richmond who now leads the St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church of Wynnewood, Penn. In the course of his enthusiastic remarks, he read a message from Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America. In his letter, addressing the local parishioners, Bishop Daniel called the St. James Church “one of the historic parishes of our Diocese, with a proud and impressive history undergirding it.”

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Mental Health in COVID-19 Classrooms

Seeking Healthy Ways for Remote Schooling

By Ani Duz dabany-Ma no ukian

GLENDALE/PASADENA – Talar A. is in second grade. She was one of the 26,000 students in the Glendale Unified School District (GUSD) who never went back to school last March after the spring break. COVID-19 forced the students all around the world (about 1.3 billion according to UNESCO) to replace their school desks with tables in their living room, kitchen or dining room. In May, the school year ended remotely with no possibility of in-person learning in the new academic year.

In Talar’s case it was more challenging: Talar has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit disorder. Learning through a 21-inch computer screen forced Rita, Talar’s mother, to supernova all the creativity she could. “She was confused and kept asking me why she doesn’t see her friends and saying she wanted to go back to school. Asking a child, who is already overwhelmed in a classroom setting, to follow a Zoom class is very difficult, especially early on in the process, when everyone lacked the necessary skills and it was hard to control constant interruptions and simultaneous speaking,” remembers Rita. She decided to hire someone to supervise Talar the entire time, which caused a huge financial burden. In addition, her three-year-old twins required a lot of attention.

On July 17 California governor Gavin Newsom announced that schools statewide will start the new school year remotely. Some exceptions were made for essential worker, homeless and foster care families, as well as all those in need of child care. School campuses were set up as learning pods, giving these families the opportunity to participate in the curriculum in a socially distanced setting. For Talar this is the perfect setting. She has a one-on-one aide who see EDUCATION, page 10

Artist Ara Topouzian

Re-appointed to Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs by Governor Whitmer


The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a 15-member council, serves to encourage, develop and facilitate an enriched environment of creative and cultural activity in Michigan. The Council envisions a Michigan where every citizen celebrates the state’s cultural treasures and arts and cultural experiences are accessible to all its citizens.

“I am thrilled to hear that Ara has been reappointed to the Michigan Council of Arts and Cultural Affairs by Governor Whitmer,” said state Rep. Mari Manoogian (D-Birmingham). “His advocacy for the arts in Michigan is second to none; his reappoint-
FAR Children’s Center Offers Healing and Care

By Florence Avakian

YEVELAN/NEW YORK — Two eighteen year olds, Michael and Khan, each spent several weeks, traveling by foot, taxi, truck through borders to get to Armenia, often without food, to arrive in Armenia. These two boys, from Muslim families came separately from war-torn Afghanistan where terrorist acts had reached their homes and families. They would be forced to join the armed forces and become mercenaries. Both were warmly welcomed to the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) Children’s Center in Yerevan two years ago, now speak fluent Armenian in addition to four other languages, and have helped the staff of this Center. For twenty years, this center, the only one of its kind has taken in and healed children who have been abused, sexually trafficked, beaten, abandoned and abducted.

Michael’s story took a difficult turn when he arrived in Armenia. Abused himself, he had lost his mother in childhood, and had crossed the border to Iran and there had been arrested by IRD. He appeared in a village, and the residents called police. Arrested and taken to jail, he remained there for two years. All of the time, often did not eat, and never saw the sun,” he said in a telephone conversation from Yerevan with this writer.

NGO lawyers in Armenia who work with refugees, finally were able to free Michael who asked for asylum. He has been at the Children’s Center for the past two years. “I don’t feel that I have the feeling that I was in another closed facility. I tried to do everything as correctly as possible. I also wanted to re-establish ties with my relatives who have been scattered all over the world since the 1980s.”

Michael continues by saying that the Children’s Centers special staff gave him a new feeling of pleasure and confidence. He could call my father and tell him that everything is fine with me. I gradually mastered Armenian and my social worker let me register for sports classes which have completely redefined my life. Now I have Armenian friends, speak Armenian well enough and am very well received in the children. “I love the center’s staff very much. They are always ready to help me. I would like to emphasize that I don’t feel like a stranger in Armenia and in the Center. I always have a chance to share my cultural experience with Armenians, and want to say they are great. I love them, but also my family very much, and want to reunite with them.”

Khan started to learn Armenian with the help of the children at the Center. “Now I understand and speak Armenian well enough. I also started to attend sports clubs and make friends outside the Center.”

Khan comments that the center always awakens two feelings in him: “One, that nothing will happen in anybody while they are here and the specialists are with them. Secondly that it is a unique school for everyone to increase their knowledge and skills every single day.”

He continues, that the center helped him “to overcome my traumas, and also to prepare for an independent life. Here, I started taking photo-video recordings with specialists, learning computer programs related to editing. I have been at the Children’s Center in Yerevan for two years, teaching graphic design, and football to the children. “I love the center’s staff very much. They are always ready to help me. I would like to emphasize that I don’t feel like a stranger in Armenia and in the Center. I always have a chance to reunite with them.”

For a full copy of the letter, see this article on the Mirror-Spectator website.

Pan-Armenian Forum on Education Draws Unprecedented Record Participation

NEW YORK — The first online version of the biennial Pan-Armenian Educational Forum, technologies placed on display for the first time, co-organized by Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU)’s flagship online learning initiative, AGBU’s Education and Sports Culture (ESCS) and Armenia’s Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (ESCS), attracted unprecedented participation.

In its welcoming remarks, ESCS Minister Nazarian said that as the sole Armenian-American institution, AGBU’s mandate is to continue and establish its mission as the virtual and digital educational hub for the Diaspora.

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Growing Up Armenian in the Midwest

By Harry A. Kezelian III

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

DETROIT — In those days, we lived from Armenian event to Armenian event, my friend reminded. A group of us had gathered in a small restaurant in Chicago. It was a reunion of sorts — most of us were the same age and had been close friends throughout our late teens and twenties. The time period my friend was speaking of was now 10-15 years behind us. But her comment was spot on. A few months later, her comment sparked, for me, memories and reflections on how we had grown up in the Armenian community of the Midwest.

Growing up Armenians didn’t seem unique or interesting to us at the time, but it seems so now, that time has passed, people have moved on, and I have gotten a closer glimpse of the Armenian community around the world.

If you live on the coast and have never been here, the Midwest might not be what you think it is — at least not the areas most Armenians live in. We don’t live on farms, and I don’t know a single Armenian who made their living that way. In fact, yes, in the Midwest, no. Most Armenians live in the Rust Belt, surrounding the cities of Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee — and good old Racine, Wisconsin. Most of these are rural areas, and with the exception of Racine, they aren’t even small towns. They’re cities, urban areas. Most Armenians live in the suburbs of those cities, though there is a large community of Armenian young professionals in downtown Chicago, and increasingly, downtown Detroit, which is on the upswing. While the fall might bring trips to a cider mill or apple orchard, and summer usually brings trips “Up North” to the fabled land of touristic beach towns on the Great Lakes, most of our lives were “in the city.” Unlike in New York, California, or Texas, where we’re referred to as “New Yorkers,” “Californians,” “Texans,” or “Armenians of Racine,” “Armenians of Milwaukee,” or “Armenians of “Manhattan,” in Metro Detroit “the city,” while sometimes referencing the City of Detroit in contrast to the suburbs, in this context means Chicago for a while. But Detroit is and remains the Armenian capital of the Midwest. True, the demographics are changing: 20-40 years from now we might not be able to say that anymore. But Detroit’s dominant position, which it has held for the past 100 years, is still intact. To my knowledge, the last time there were more Armenians in Chicago than in Detroit was around 1917.

Big Distances for Close Friendships

In the Midwest, things are far apart. It’s about 3 hours to drive from Cleveland to Detroit. Then it’s about 5 hours to drive from Detroit to Chicago. It’s another hour and a half north from Chicago to Racine. And, then 45 minutes more to Milwaukee. To drive from one end to the other — Cleveland to Milwaukee — is about 7 hours on a good day. My group of friends rarely went to St. Louis, let alone Minneapolis — though the Armenians from these places would try to come into the Chicago area for times like the American-Armenian Dance Festival. The geographic distribution of Armenians gave us the social life that my friend had referred to. We did feel like we lived from event to event — the daily minutiae of life was made bearable by the fact that we were looking forward to the next dance, the next retreat, kef weekend, or whatever it was. But attending those things always meant travelling. And the low number of Armenians in each community compared to the East Coast or California communities meant that a lot of our best friends were in other cities — a not uncommon experience for Armenians in the Midwest.

There is one Armenian camp in the Midwest — Hye Camp, which has moved around a bit but always stayed in Southern Wisconsin/Northern Illinois, and which is run by the Eastern Diocese. Many Armenians affiliated with the Pr Eylady/ARP circles also sent their kids to Hye Camp, because it was nearby. Most of us met our out-of-town friends at camp, and I was no different. When we got to be older and became involved in ACYOA and when we were able to drive and had the freedom to travel, the Armenian road trips began. I can count the amount of times I have driven to Chicago and back, and I’m sure my Chicago friends would say the same. Those times were and are times when I’m sure Wisconsin always had to travel an extra hour or two, but sometimes we went up there as well. The Wisconsinites are probably the most laid-back Armenians you could ever meet (which might sound to some like an oxymoron), and which we were always familiar with, and which we were a great familiarity with, and which we were always in the process of learning more about — all the family reunions to our hearts.

And so, with the burning desire to see our people more and to make the 5-hour trek to Chicago. As far as me, I would go as far as I had an excuse to do so. Any friends from Chicago and Racine would come to Detroit when there was an event in our town. Certainly, there was something happening in Detroit, all the time — a dance, a retreat, or a fundraiser, whether it was through ACYOA, AGBU, an Armenian university group, or one of the churches.

We’ve seen legends of Armenian music perform countless times — Richard Hagopian, Orenck Dinkjian, John Berberian, and Detroit’s own Hachig Kazarian, master of the clarinet. Our local bands, the Johnates and Nigogossians of Detroit, the “East Beard Band” of Chicago brought the kef to our local dances and picnics. And because we were hungry for the company of other Armenians, we absolutely came to every ACYOA Sports Weekend, and most years to AYF (Olympics) (though none of my group of friends were even a part of AYF). We were frequent, excited attendees to the St. Nersess Summer Conferences. When we would arrive at St. Nersess for any ACYOA or General Assembly, we would always notice the comparative lack of people from New England, or rather, their low representation in proportion to the Armenian population of the Boston area. Our theory, and I think it was correct, was that Armenians in the Midwest didn’t seem unique or interesting to us at the time, but it seems so now that this time has passed, people have moved on, and I have gotten a closer glimpse of the Armenian community around the world. How we grew up in the Armenian community of the Midwest. We were always traveling to see each other, whether it was just in other Midwest cities or on the East Coast. We didn’t have the luxury that people in Los Angeles and New York had to fly to our bag in every couple months if we wanted to stay connected. But we had to stay connected. We wanted to know what our friends were doing. We wanted to see our best friends. We wanted to drive to Chicago and Racine and Cleveland and Minneapolis-St. Paul and the biggest mill town of them all. Detroit. Just as everyone in Racine would be at the local ACYOA, the likelihood of everyone in the Detroit area was tied to the American auto industry – Ford, GM, and Chrysler. It was the story of where we were from the hood of everyone in the Detroit area was tied to the American auto industry — Ford, GM, and Chrysler. It was the story of where we were from and where we were going. We were always going to see our best friends. We wanted to see our best friends. We wanted to drive to Chicago and Racine and Cleveland and Minneapolis-St. Paul and the biggest mill town of them all. Detroit. Just as everyone in Racine would be at the local ACYOA, the likelihood of everyone in the Detroit area was tied to the American auto industry – Ford, GM, and Chrysler. It was the story of where we were from and where we were going. We were always going to see our best friends. We wanted to see our best friends.
Growing Up Armenian in The Midwest

from previous page

Khurpersap, Evergetias, and Khiptetias, not to mention the Tumartanis of Racine, along with the second wave of immigration: Bolsetas, Halkitas, and Hambartsumis. We had several families in Chicago whose parents were from theAntholian interior: Malatya, Aragop Separtas—places that Detroiters like me had only heard about in relation to our great-grandparents’ generation. We had a few Barskylays. And we had a lot of Balakita refugees, whose struggle for their Armenian identity was real—their identity and their church squashed to 70 years of silence, and then turned into refugees by the pogroms of the early 1990s, they were the only people from overseas who would look to a 3rd-generation Armenian-American like myself for their Armenian cultural cues. We heard their stories with awe and true respect, and the same went for those who had suffered persecution in post-Genocide Turkey or who had spent generations struggling to uphold the remaining proud Armenian cultural institutions of Istanbul. (References to “the Island” or neighborhoods like Beysug, Talekin, and B擂heylere were commonly heard when I was growing up, having many Bolseta friends.)

Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, Racine, Milwaukee, St. Louis, and St. Paul all had their own characteristics, but it was too long to get into them extensively here. Detroiters seemed to be the leaders, and we certainly threw the best dances, and produced the best Armenian delicacies (in our minds), but if we didn’t have Chicago and Racine to market our crazy ideas to, it wouldn’t have been the same. Chicago people were special, friendly. They didn’t have the whiff of East Coast attitude that Detroiters like my friends and I, in comparison, seemed to have. The independent, yet militantly, spirit of Tumartan live on in the unique character of the Racine Armenians. And I would be remiss not to mention that the ever-present, yet under-valued Armenian trait of a goofy sense of humor is very strong with this unusually laid-back community. In the end, every community contributed in one way or another, but most of all, the real contributions of each community were the good-hearted people that they produced.

Mostly our Armenian-ness consisted in keeping the knowledge of who we were, and passing it on to the next generation. As we all got older, many of my friends have gotten married and had children of their own. I myself have not had that good fortune, but I am sure that when I do, I will impart to my children the lessons I learned not only from my family or even from my community in Detroit, but also from the broader Armenian-American community of the Midwest. But passing on our heritage doesn’t just mean to your children. Sometimes it means passing it on to the next group of kids, ten years younger than you. I think of how many times at Armenian dances that we, the older generation, started the line, and younger people joined in and learned from us. How I taught the younger ones how games to dance the Hales. The last dance that was held in Michigan before COVID-19 broke out was the U-M Armenian Club’s annual January Hye Hop. I arrived at this dance, that I broke out was the U-M Armenian Club’s annual January Hye Hop. I arrived at this dance, that I had attended since high school, that I had been on the committee for and attended as a U-M student, that I had played at with my own band for more than once, and I realized for the first time that they didn’t even need to me to start the line. The kids knew what they were doing. The dance had started, the leader sat down, and the dance had kept on going…

Middlesex Sheriff’s Office Formally Introduces Therapy K-9 Millie

LOWELL, Mass. – Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian is proud to formally introduce Millie—the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office first therapy dog (YouTube, Twitter). Millie joins fellow MBS working dogs who are tasked with searching for contraband, explosives and missing people. Unlike her K-9 colleagues, Millie—a one year old English Lab—is trained to help provide comfort. Throughout her initial training period Millie was already making a difference in the lives of those she came in contact with, including officers, incarcerated individuals and loved ones—especially children—visiting them at the Middlesex Jail & House of Correction.

“From day one, Millie has made a huge impact during her visits with officers, civilian staff, incarcerated individuals and community members,” said Koutoujian. “Whether it’s visiting with staff, individuals inside the jail or people in recovery coming through our counseling center, Millie has an incredible ability to put people at ease, break down barriers and provide comfort.”

Named in honor of the Mill City of Lowell where she will be based, Millie was acquired by the MBS last year. She recently completed her therapy dog training with Absolute K-9 Solutions in Lunenburg and is partnered with Lowell Community Counseling Director Jillian Ketchum.

“In her brief time with us, we’ve already seen Millie’s ability to be a calming influence and help reduce anxiety amongst those she’s met,” said Koutoujian. “We’re glad to have her as a member of our MBS team and look forward to expanding her role to assist crime victims, witnesses and others in the community who may benefit from her presence and support.”

To learn more about the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office and our programs, visit www.middlesexsheriff.org.
Mental Health In COVID-19 Classrooms

EDUCATION, from page 6

assists her the entire time. She has the assis-
tance she needs while she is surrounded by
other students. Schools have also found better
ways of providing services such as occupation-
al therapy and speech therapy. “Although these
services are not ideal and quite as effective as
they used to be, the learning pod setting is lot
better than what I would get out of her at home,” mentions Rita.

In the Glendale Unified School District, about 10 percent of the students (around 2,600) have a learning disability or are enrolled in the Individualized Education Program (IEP). According to Dr. Armen Gharpetian, president of the GlUSD Board of Education, “Glendale Unified has been very successful in providing vast resources for all of their stu-
dents. We have a very diverse community with
a very diverse background: special aid students, foster and homeless youth, English learners, and students in a FLPing [Foreign Language Academies of Glendale] program. This is the variety of things that we offer to our students and at the same time we try to do everything remotely by offering all the available resources. Obviously, it is a very challenging task for us.”

During the summer, the district conducted
different surveys with the parents, teachers and students which helped develop the program for the new school year. According to the survey, the students wanted more time with teachers. They needed more textbooks, and some of them needed a private space to learn, a better environment at home. All this information guid-
ed the teachers to adopt new approaches when teaching on Zoom.

“We call it a gradual release. We don’t want to put our kids in a situation where they are uncomfortable, but we can certainly help them. For those who have a particular reason not to turn on the camera because their background is not the one that they want to share, or they feel uncomfortable about the way they look (one kid told me that the camera is too big on the camera. I don’t want to show it), we try to work
with the family and the student. We cer-
tainly don’t want to embarrass them; we have to build up their confidence over time and bring it to a level where they can become a more active participant. Turning the camera on also gives them the opportunity to build relationships with their teacher and peers. Part of this is also building a friendship even though it’s virtual,” shares GlUSD superintendent Dr. Vivian Ekchian.

Glendale Unified School District Student Wellness Services is keeping close contact with the families who didn’t log in or have been absent in the remote classrooms. In order to facilitate communication during the summer, the district recruited many interns who can
assist the teachers to adopt new approaches when teaching on Zoom.

“Children can do many, many things. We just need to give them the tools and trust them that they will succeed,” says Aghazarian.

St. Gregory Alfred and Marguerite Hovsepian School in Pasadena has a handful of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP). School principal Shahe Mankanian was sur-
prised to find out that they didn’t experience any specific difficulties with the remote learn-
ing. In fact, one of the third-grade students even 
gained some benefits from it by being able to focus more on his lessons at home setting com-
pared to classroom. Some other students without IEPs started to “fall apart” without the social aspect.

After monitoring the student’s behavior, the school psych-
ologists started to work closely with the teachers, stu-
dents and the parents to find better strategies. In

the new school year armed with more experience and training, the school will conduct more social emotional assessments. In the first two weeks the psychologists will have separate sessions with the stu-
dents in groups and individually if needed.

St. Gregory Hovsepian school lost students during the remote learning. Mankanian thinks

that the parents didn’t believe that the school’s constantly implemented “love and logic” strate-
gy will be enough to guide their children through the pandemic. “Nothing has been changed: we still need to be the teachers. I don’t think the roles have changed. Yes, we need to be in the classroom with the kids, but we also need to understand that our kids are capa-
ble of learning remotely. Sometimes they know even more than we do; they will never panic when the com-
puter crashes,” Mankanian says, smiling during our remote interview.

Glendale Unified School District is one of the only school districts in the Los Angeles area that decided to reconsider in-person learning some time during the school year. The Board of Education and the superintendent agreed to revisit the school reopening after a couple of months of full distance learning. “Of course, we need to get the green light from the Public Health Department. At this moment, all our schools are ready to bring students back to the classrooms in person, hybrid [style], or in any other way. It breaks my heart that we are ask-
ing our kids, especially those who have a learn-
ing disability, to interact with their teachers and classmates remotely,” Gharpetian hopefully exclaimed.

When schools reopen, GlUSD will follow all the safety guidelines it is doing now with learn-
ing pods in all 20 elementary school campuses. I couldn’t help asking how these kids were doing with the face mask on all day long. Ekchian has her observations ready: “They are physically distanced, playing, having lunch together, building a friendship. Wearing a mask wasn’t an issue at all. It seems like a new nor-
mal for them and I am so proud of our kids.” “And knock on wood, so far we didn’t have any outbreaks. That’s definitely something to celebrate,” states Gharpetian. 

Students at the Tufenkian School prior to the COVID-19 era

St. Gregory Hovsepian School's campus in Pasadena
Trudeau Center Has New Wheelchair Van Thanks To Match, Donation from Garabedian

WARWICK, R.I. – The J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center has taken delivery of a new wheelchair-accessible van, the result of a successful fundraising campaign. The effort included donations from over 150 individuals and companies, an $8,000 donation match from Aram Garabedian and his co-partners at the Warwick Mall, and a generous personal donation from Aram Garabedian.

The new vehicle, which expands Trudeau’s transportation services for adults with disabilities, can transport up to six wheelchair users and is equipped with state-of-the-art safety technology for securing all wheelchair models and scooters.

“I am so happy to have this beautiful van to safely transport the men and women we support,” said Vice President of Adult Services Charlotte Higham. “I’m also grateful to Aram Garabedian and his Warwick Mall partners for their match contribution. The van will increase Trudeau’s access to community opportunities and give the people we support a smooth ride. Everyone at Trudeau appreciates the generosity of all of those who made this possible.”

Aram Garabedian, president of Bliss Properties, presented the match challenge to the Trudeau Center as fundraising efforts for the van were ending and the Center was close to meeting its goal. Garabedian said in a statement, “The arrival of this van could not come at a better time. We all need uplifting news and the community support behind this van is heartwarming. Helping the Trudeau Center is something extremely important to me. Much of what I do is in tribute to my late mother, an Armenian Holocaust survivor, and I know that she would be proud of this latest accomplishment.”

The newly acquired van at the Trudeau Center can transport up to six wheelchair users at a time.

Armenian Studies Program to Hold Int. Conference on The State of the Art of The Early Turkish Republic Period

FRESNO – The Armenian Studies Program will hold an international conference on “The State of the Art of the Early Turkish Republic Period: Historiography, Sources, and Future Directions” on Friday, October 2, and Saturday, October 3. The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) is a co-sponsor of the conference. The conference will be held virtually as a Zoom webinar.


Organized by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian (Armenian Studies Program, California State University, Fresno) and Dr. Ümit Kurt (Penelope Fellow, Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem) and Lecture in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem), the conference will explore the early Turkish Republic period. The modern state of Turkey – formally established on October 29, 1923, under the leadership of Kemal Ataturk – came into existence in the period 1908-1945, in which traumatic and revolutionary developments followed each other in quick succession: the constitutional revolution, eleven years of war, mass migration and mass murder, the end of a 600-year-old empire and the almost partition of the remains among the victors in World War I and the foundation of Turkish Republic.

Armenians remained in the new Turkish Republic and experienced these developments. At the same time, it is the period of political experiments, the building of a national economy, and the birth of Turkish nationalism. The republic is both heir to all of these developments and a daring experiment in nation building and modernization.

This conference aims to use the historical context of the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the emergence of a new nation state, the Republic of Turkey, to discuss and analyze major issues that played a dominant role in the history of this period: the emergence of the modern state, the impact of war, nationalism and nation building, and the role of religion and secularism.

The Thomas A. Roumyjian Family Foundation, the Leon & Pete Peters Foundation, and the M. Victoria Kazan Fund for Armenian Studies are supporters of the Conference.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian will open the conference at 7 p.m. on Friday, October 2. A keynote address will be given by Dr. Christine Phillou (University of California, Berkeley).

The first session will then open with two panels: Christopher Sheldon (the Kirkor and Clara Zohrab Information Center, New York) “Armenians and the Problem-Space of Secularism in the Early Turkish Republic” and Erdem Ilter (UCLA) “The Ottoman Imperial Legacy on Turkish National Building: An Analysis of the General Inspectors of Religion and Secularism (1850 – 1945).

The conference will reconvene at 10 a.m. on Saturday, October 3, with one session, which will feature presentations by Talm Sargsian (Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich) “The Amorphous/Abstracted Peasant of Ottoman and Turkish Historiography”, Ümit Kurt (Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem) “History of A Local Republican Entrepreneur in New Turkey: Cevil Alekhe”, and Ari Sekeryan (Masonic Post-Doctoral Program, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor) “The ‘loyal citizens’ of the Republic: The Armenian Community During the First Years of the Republic of Turkey (1923-1928).


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The Teacher Program of the Tekeyan Cultural Association was launched in 2001. It has raised $734,590 and reached out to 6,829 teachers and school staff in Armenia and Artsakh. The teacher program continues to raise funds and support teachers in the field of Armenian studies and educational programs. It is a way for individuals to contribute to the preservation and promotion of Armenian culture and heritage. The Teacher Program celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, marking two decades of dedication to supporting Armenian educators and their students.
Aris Movsesyan

The Smile Connects All
The Things I Have Ever Done

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YELENAN BELGRADE – Aris Movsesyan (Movsesijan in Serbian spelling) was born in 1966, in Belgrade, where he received his secondary education. He graduated from the Faculty of Dentistry of the University of Belgrade. In postgraduate courses, he has published a number of scientific papers on periodontal medicine and oral medicine.

Aris Movsesyan is quite active in the cultural and political life of Serbia. He was an active participant in the musical "New Wave." He is engaged in literary work. His short stories have been awarded many times. In 1995 he published a collection of short stories "Characters and Writers."

He is the screenwriter and assistant director of the film "The World’s Greatest Monster" by Goran Rusinovic (2003). As a screenwriter and director he shot his first feature film "Apora" in 2006. As an actor he acted in two films

Armenian Radio Hour of Boston Celebrates 40th Anniversary

BOSTON – On Sunday, October 11, the Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston will be marking its 40th anniversary.

The event, originally scheduled to take place in Watertown, has been converted to a virtual one, which will air live on October 11, at 2 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, via Facebook Live.

Many renowned artists from around the world will be joining this celebration, with special appearances and performances, including Arthur Ispiryan, Yeva Yeghiazaryan, Erebeni Dance School, Margar Yeghiazaryan, Papin Poghosyan, Herand Markarian, Anush Kirakosyan and many more!

Throughout the past 40 years, Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston, founded by the late Jarar Ghairibian in October 1980, has aired every Saturday, reaching more than 50,000 Armenian listeners in the Greater Boston area. The program, broadcasted both in Armenian and English, covers national, political, and cultural news and events both in the Diaspora and in Armenia. After the untimely death of Jarar Ghairibian, his wife, Yevigine Ghairibian, kept the legacy of the founder alive, which continues to this day, uninterrupted.

Since its inception, the radio hour has been diligently and faithfully serving and uniting Armenians in the diaspora. Its unwavering commitment to strengthen and spread Armenian culture has been challenging at times. However, through Mrs. Ghairibian’s relentless efforts, the exemplary dedication of many volunteers and the generous support of its listeners, the historic radio hour has endured.

Please join us as we all come together to celebrate this remarkable milestone, in an unprecedented and unique cultural program, that will include performances by many well-known singers, musicians, dancers and reciters.

For more details regarding the event, visit http://armenia

Wonderfully Unsettling Paintings of Charles Garabedian

By Caroline Liou

LOS ANGELES (Hyperallergic) – Charles Garabedian’s paintings are not beautiful because they depict scenes from classical mythology, but because they render the world of classical mythology real. I’ve never imagined Prometheus surrounded by his own shit, for example, terrified and in unbearable agony from having his liver torn out on a daily basis. But Garabedian did, and did so with such inimitable detail and visceral humor that he transports the classical to the present day, here. After hundreds of years of art history fetishizing classical aesthetics, Garabedian’s paintings remind the viewer that the world of Olympic gods and titans is one that is not perfect – instead, it is idyllic and savage and surreal all at once.

Charles Garabedian: Outside the Gates, an online exhibition jointly organized by L.A. Louver and Betty Cunningham Gallery, brings together a selection of paintings – classical and otherwise – from the last three decades of the artist’s life (he died in 2016), and they are all wonderfully unsettling. A decapitated head served on a golden platter immediately recalls the story of Holofernes in “You Should Have Looked at Me” (2012), but the boy wearing a striped tie and peeping up from a ladder adds a voyeuristic, and anachronistic, element to the enigmatic image. “The Eunuch” (2003–04) is equally bizarre, depicting a man contorted in an unrecognizable posture of its listeners, the historic radio hour has endured.

Prometheus surrounded by his own shit, for

Arms

Aris Movsesyan

“Comrade Black in the National Liberation War” TV series (2013) and “Great Ears” (2017).

Aris Movsesijan is also active in Serbia for adoption a state resolution for recognizing the Armenian genocide. He has written “1915-1922 Armenian genocide. He has written “1915-1922 Armenian genocide. He has written “1915-1922 Armenia.”

Movsesyan is a great privilege, that I, who am incapable

Once the cause of the torture is gone from your

Throughout the past 40 years, Armenian Independent Broadcasting of Boston, founded by the late Jarar Ghairibian in October 1980, has aired every Saturday, reaching more than 50,000 Armenian listeners in the Greater Boston area. The program, broadcasted both in Armenian and English, covers national, political, and cultural news and events both in the Diaspora and in Armenia. After the untimely death of Jarar Ghairibian, his wife, Yevigine Ghairibian, kept the legacy of the founder alive, which continues to this day, uninterrupted.

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Please join us as we all come together to celebrate this remarkable milestone, in an unprecedented and unique cultural program, that will include performances by many well-known singers, musicians, dancers and reciters.

For more details regarding the event, visit http://armeniaradiohour.com/40th-anniversary/
Aris Movsesyan: ‘The Smile Connects All the Things I Have Ever Done’

The Unsettling Paintings of Charles Garabedian

UNSETTLING, from page 12
Garabedian’s somewhat Manierist style. Any narratives for garabedian’s case, yielding to visual pleasures, like how the figure’s backside echoes the curve of the hill in the background: that is how Garabedian’s work throughout, allowing the artist to eschew conventions and revel in the richness and the oddities of the world he has created. The unembarrassed quality of his paintings is due to the fact Garabedian came to his art career relatively late in life.
Born in Detroit to a family of Armenian refugees fleeing the genocide, he first served in United States Air Force, then went on to work for Goodrich Tire and the Union Pacific Railroad, before ever picking up a paintbrush. In 1961, he graduated with an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), saying, “Here I was, almost 40 years old at the time, and I was like a little kid.” As a late-blooming artist, Garabedian was never interested in making things that look like art; instead, he gave himself over to his instincts, pretensions, and mistakes, unafraid to explore and even embrace what others considered to be “bad.” He states in one interview, “The bad – I’m responsible for that and there must be something there. You know, you can’t just dismiss it by saying ‘Oh, well he said that’s bad, this is good.” His willingness to constantly question and prod at preconceived notions of good and bad is what earned him a spot in Marc Tucker’s notorious “Bad” Painting exhibition at the New Museum in 1976, what later cemented his reputation as an artist’s artist, and what makes his work so compelling, even today. “Charles Garabedian: Outside the Gates” continues online at L.A. Louver through September 19.

Charles Garabedian, "The Eunuch" (2003–04), acrylic on paper, 48 x 61 inches

Charles Garabedian, "You Should Have Looked at Me" (2012), acrylic on paper, 101 x 38 1/2 inches

Aris Movsesyan

Aris Movsesyan, page 12
of drawing anything, can bring words and thoughts to life through moving images on screen. And as for politics, I have joined the political scene in my fifties. Living in Serbia, politics was always a great part of my life, so finally I decided to become a part of it. Being an intellectual, I felt a need actively help.

I assume dentistry is the most profitable of your professions. Do you practice dentistry now?

Yes. I live through it and for it. It is a medicine branch which has gone through the quickest transition in Serbia. Right now is the time to reflect on the state of dentistry in Serbia, in which direction it should further develop and how to put prettier smiles on the faces of as many people as possible. You know, a smile is exactly what connects all the things I have ever done. A dentist will give you teeth to smile; a writer and a filmmaker will make you smile. Politicians can make your worries go away and therefore produce an environment where you can smile. Humour is something only people possess, so I made it my life’s purpose to put that human characteristic as a priority.

In 2006 you came to Armenia to the Yerevan Golden Apricot International Film Festival with your film “Aporia.” For some people with Armenian roots visiting Armenia is like returning home, while for the others it was just another country they have visited. How was for you?

That was something very special to me. I would wake up early in the morning and just walk through the town. Yerevan seems to me to be the most beautiful in the morning. On one of my early morning walks, I came across an old lady, sweeping the doorstep of her house. She turned round and spoke to me. I returned to her back and for a moment I thought I was looking at my grandmother, who was, even then, already long gone. Everything was so surreal. It might sound corny, but through whole of my stay, I had a feeling I would already been there. Everything was so familiar and close to heart. Of course, I realised that my father and I were not the only ones who kids to understand what they were talking about. So naturally it was an amazing feeling to understand each and every one I have met on my walks through Yerevan, even without speaking the same language. I have always said it is no wonder we had Paravani.

Is there something Armenian in your writings or films?

I tried writing a script, which I could best describe as paraphrasing Bertolucci’s “Nove Cento.” Twentieth century through three generations of Armenians. The first part of the movie was supposed to be about the genocide, while the second and third part would be about some of the life changing events, inspired by the lives of my grandfather, my father and myself. As a synopsis everything seemed to work. I believed it would be the best thing I will ever do in my entire life, but after writing the first part, after so many strong emotions, it was impossible to write anything else. It just did not make sense. That was the first time I realized how the genocide, along with being pure horror and evil, is a dark shadow following each Armenian to this day. Genocide is not over the day it is physically finished. It is a crime which will finally be adopted. We Armenians are patient people, are we not? Stubborn as well. The lack of official recognition does not mean that the people of Serbia do not understand what happened in Armenia at the beginning of 20th century. It is upon me to make sure that the state acknowledges it official.

What are your current projects? How else can you surprise us?

The political situation in Serbia is very difficult. I have already gone through such periods when art must be put aside until much more pressing matters are handled. Let then the read-

ers in Armenia be the first ones to find out. I have written a novel. I am waiting for things to calm down, so I can put finishing touches on the novel and then finally let it see the light of day. My wish is for it to be translated in Armenian so we can meet again and discuss if there is something Armenian in my way of writ-
ing. Of course, with a smile. How else?
Aurora to Support Reprint of Ravished Armenia by Namesake

By Michael Bobelian

Rebels hit rock bottom in 1964. Lyndon Johnson crushed Barry Goldwater by a record vote margin, and after coding 36 House seats the GOP was outnumbered 2 to 1 in both chambers of Congress. Already humiliated by the electorate’s rebuke of Goldwater’s far right ide- ology, his acolytes watched in horror as Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen and other GOP standards-bearers allied with liberals to enact civil rights legislation and Johnson’s Great Society.

In the same volume, noted historian Rick Perlstein portrayed this epoch as the zenith of a liberal consensus and the origin of the conserva- tive movement that came to dominate American politics. Starting in 1968, Republicans won eight of 13 presidential elections, controlled Congress for protracted intervals after spending most of the preceding four decades in the minor- ity and appointed 15 of 19 Supreme Court jus- tices. Published in 2001, Before the Storm recounted the rise of the firebrand Goldwater as the progenitor of this movement. Perlstein’s next two books, Nixonland and The Invisible Bridge, encompassed Richard Nixon’s presidency, fol- lowed by Ronald Reagan’s emergence as Goldwater’s heir. Reaganland: America’s Right Turn 1976-1980 concludes Perlstein’s authorita- tive and engaging series with Reagan capturing the White House.

Initially considered too conservative to win a national election, even his horseback riding, the electorate’s shift to the right, the development of unalloyed gras-roots and fundraising networks, and the exploits of cut-and-dried political operations.

Perhaps no group personified these develop- ments better than the New Right. Described by one of its pioneers as “radicals working to over- turn the present power structure,” these public relations experts and campaign strategists com- monly operated without the GOP’s imprimatur. Brazenly exploiting legal loopholes and shut- ting terrors to the chagrin of the party’s patri- cians, Rick Perlstein chronicles this transformation through the exploits of culture war trailblazers and polit- ical advisers such as Phyllis Schlafly, Richard Vaijarcé and Anita Bryant who led the GOP’s about-face on the ERA, voting rights and the Panama Canal treaty. Perlstein’s knack for bringing this time period to life is so skillfully eye for telling details — along with cameos appear- ances by Roger Stone, Paul Manafort and Ted Kennedy — that you can’t get out of the book’s pages. Reagan’s New York real estate — conjure many eye-open- ing moments. Although Perlstein rarely draws explicit comparisons to modern-day politics, the unerring parallels between the time periods — and the origins of the many divisions currently shaping the political landscape — are clear. Reading Reaganland, it’s easy to identify Trump’s imitation of the New Right’s plays and its fixation on toxic, socially contentious issues to woo voters through emotional appeals.

This era continues to resonate in other ways as well. The New Right’s purging of Republican moderates andousting of Democrats from states with small, conservative populations accelerated a trend started a decade earlier. This expulsion of centrists from the political landscape and the reduction of ideological diversity within the parties fueled hyper-parti- sanism for decades to come. Lacking the boun- tiful incite political diversity of Perlstein’s earlier work, however, and bogged down by the irremitting rotation between multiple story lines, Reaganland’s narrative doesn’t reach full circle until the 1980 campaign. Conservatives were fortunate to have Reagan serve as the prophet delivering their radical message. Though he, too, strove to steer the party away from the “country club big business” image epitomized by Nelson Rockefeller, Reagan never projected a cutthroat persona. Reagan’s biggest handicap was his tendency to blurt mis- takes and falsehoods — one commentator said he had a “very loose hold on the real world around him” — when giving offscript. Critics pounced on his gaffes questioning evaluation and asserting that vegetation caused pollution, but, as with Trump, Reagan’s backers cared lit- tle about these blunders or his nescience over public affairs. His telegenic charisma, unapolo- getic patriotism (“Make America great again” became a campaign slogan and sanguine vision of a hundred years have passed, and the New Right mastered these newfangled strategies, religious institutions and large busi- nesses, which had intermittently dabbled in par- ty building, now fully seized on the Electoral College as our Initiative was inspired by the resilience and generosity of the human spirit,” said Tom Catena, Chair of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.

This effort is part of the Memories of Survivors of the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute’s new publishing project that will feature the memoirs of the Genocide survivors that have never been published before. The reprint of “Ravished Armenia” in English and Armenian, featuring 20 additional pages of references and expan- sory notes, will be the first two volumes of the Memoirs Series. The English edition will be published in 2,000 copies and the Armenian in 1,000 copies.

omore than a hundred years have passed since the Armenian Genocide, and today’s read- ers are not familiar with many terms and geo- graphical denominations, so these references and expan- sory notes are a necessity. In this regard, the collaboration with the Aurora is very symbolic. Both the Genocide Museum- Institute and the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative aim to raise awareness of the American Genocide, to fight and prevent mod- ern-day genocides, and to help people going through similar tragedies. This is where our goals and vision align,” emphasized Harutyun Marutyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute.

Aurora supports the Armenian Genocide Museum-institute, contributing to the preservation of Armenian culture and history. 

Perlstein also gives the public more about the Reagan years, at around him.” — when going off-script. Critics pounced on his gaffes questioning evaluation and asserting that vegetation caused pollution, but, as with Trump, Reagan’s backers cared lit- tle about these blunders or his nescience over public affairs. His telegenic charisma, unapolo- getic patriotism (“Make America great again” became a campaign slogan and sanguine vision
“Bedros Keljik’s Armenian-American Sketches: Stories of Armenians in the Early 20th C.”

FRESNO — “Bedros Keljik’s Armenian-American Sketches: Stories of Armenians in the Early 20th C.” will be presented as a webinar at 4 p.m. (Pacific time)/7 p.m. (Eastern time) on Sunday, September 27. The presentation is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota (ACOM), and the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS).

A panel featuring coeditors Christopher Atamian, Lou Ann Matossian, Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and co-translator Vartan Matiossian will discuss various aspects of the new publication. Marc A. Mamigonian will moderate the discussion.

Keljik’s Armenian-American Sketches, originally published in Armenian in 1944 as Amerigahay Badgerner, is the work of a member of the pioneer generation of Armenian immigrants, and is of both literary and historical significance. Now fully translated into English for the first time and recently published as volume 8 in the Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno, these stories retain their vitality, humor, pathos, and relevance.

Twenty of the short stories were translated by the late Aris Sevag, one by Lou Ann Matossian, and eight pieces originally published in Aiakor, were translated by Vartan Matiossian. Volume editors Christopher Atamian, Lou Ann Matossian, and Barlow Der Mugrdechian have also included an enlightening biography of Keljik. A Armenia Odyssey: From the Ergenites to the Mississippi, written by his grandchildren, Mark and Thomas Keljik, as well as Bedros Keljik’s own translations of his fellow-writer/poet’s author Roopan Tartarian’s How Death Came to the Earth.

With keen observation Keljik provides the reader with an often-humorous insight into that life, with all of its sadness and joy, with the sense of community, and with the hard work and challenges faced by the immigrants. This is a book which appeals to any reader who wishes to understand the immigrant experience in the United States.

The lecture will be a Zoom Webinar, and registration is required. Use this link to register: bit.ly/armenianstudieskeljik. The lecture will also be streamed on the Armenian Studies Program YouTube channel at bit.ly/armenianstudiesyoutube. For more information about the lecture visit www.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies.
New Album By Michael Sarian Combines Jazz And Armenian Core

NEW YORK — Trumpeter/composer Michael Sarian is an artist who paints images of humanity through sound. On “New Aurora,” his fourth album as a leader, we find him on trumpet and flugelhorn as the sole melodic voice in this acoustic quartet, a clear departure from his previous releases which feature extensive four-horn arrangements, electronics and hard-bopping grooves (Sarian has released three albums as a bandleader with his septet, Michael Sarian & The Chabones, and also leads Michael Sarian & The Big Chabones, a 16-piece big band).

The album, released on September 4 on EarSays/Eyes Records, features Sarian (trumpet, flugelhorn, compositions), Santiago Leibson (piano); Matt Pavolka (bass) and Daseon Seok (drums).

Listening closely through flesh, metal, breath and spit we can hear his family’s heritage, his musical heroes and his declaration as a jazz artist who has something compelling and beautiful to add to the conversation.

Born in Toronto and raised in Buenos Aires from the age of 1, Sarian has been calling New York City home for the past eight years. “New Aurora” has been in gestation since Sarian’s first release in 2014, and the album comes to us as a result of engineer/producer Luis Bacqua’s downright insistence that the trumpeter venture into a fiercer, more astringent setting that would feature his own playing, particularly on the flugelhorn, as the forefront of the ensemble’s sound (Sarian plays flugelhorn on all tracks except for one).

Inspired by the music of trumpeter great Kenny Wheeler, Tomasz Stanko, Enrico Rava, and legendary Armenian/American trumpeter Paul Motian, Sarian ventured into Bacqua’s studio to test the waters of this new musical direction. After an afternoon spent at the New Jersey recording studio with Santiago Leibson (piano), Matt Pavolka (bass) and Daseon Seok (drums), the session yielded the first two tracks of what would become “New Aurora.”

Sarian began writing the first of the compositions. This is Only The Beginning, in a hotel room in Florida during the first days of 2019, while reading Japanese writer Haruki Murakami’s Killing Commendatore. The novel tells the story of a 30-something artist facing an early onset midlife crisis, who, after a devastating separation, decides to quit his lucrative career as a portrait painter, retreat into the mountains and pursue a more fulfilling path of abstract self-expression, proclaiming “this is only the beginning.”

ScotteCD, in honor of the great 1990s Chicago Bulls player Scottie Pippen, followed soon after. The opening theme is in 9/8 (the result of multiplying both 3s of his jersey number) and presents a subdued atmosphere. Originally meant to be a more upbeat composition, Sarian discovered that the only nickname Pippen had during his playing days was No tip-pin’ Pippen. Because he was a notoriously poor tipper, probably as a result of the terrible contracts Pippen had with the Bulls organization and having to support his family, so Sarian decided to convey that sense of sorrow and disempowerment in the music. The choppy, hip-hop groove in 7, then 15, gives the track a big finish because, after all, Scottie did win six championships.

The album derives its name from the track Aurora, which Sarian began writing on February 15, 2019. Although the word literally means dawn, which is the meaning Sarian hopes to convey behind the project, the composition came after hearing of a tragic event in December session, titled The Morning After. It starts out with a Belarusian piano motif, and conveys the frantic despair one might have after a big night out, which as fun as it might be, many times comes with self-doubt the next morning, giving in to the briefest of existential crisis. The shortest track in the album, the tune breaks down into a completely free improvisation between the four musicians, only to be brought back into the melody before an abrupt finish.

Colorado Yenta is the only recycled tune of the album which Sarian recorded with his septet and released on his previous recording. Literally translated into Spanish (or Argentine slang), it means Bad Luck Grager, and expresses the sorrows of growing up as a realead in Argentina.

The last track on the album is Monk’s Ask Me Now, pre-sented here as a lovely duet with Sarian and pianist Leibson, serving as a sort of palate cleanser after an almost hour of orig-i nal compositions and arrangements.

Michael Sarian is a trumpeter and composer whose work has been described as “a steady stew in dictation. With a word-less elegance, the New York City-based musician is flexibly firm, loosely tight, and brightly dark. The innovations within his compositions are deceptively dramatic with varying degrees of a melodic sensibility.” – Frank De Blasi, The Rochester City Newspaper.

He relocated to New York City in 2012 to pursue a master’s degree in Jazz Studies at New York University, where he studied with great musicians such as Laurie Mintik, Alan Ferber, Brad Sheppik, Ralph Alessi and Mike Rodriguez. He has since performed at the Montreux Jazz Festival, Artiz JazzFest, Getxo Blues Festival, Curary Island International Jazz Festival, Blue Note Jazz Club, Jazz at Lincoln Center, The Beacon Theater, Central Park SummerStage, Teatro Colón, Thelonious Club. has appeared on WNYC’s Soundcheck with John Scharaer, NPR’s World Cafe, and many more.

Michael has released three albums as a bandleader with his septet, Michael Sarian & The Chabones, most recently LEON in 2018 with Zoho Music, and has appeared on countless more as a sideman. He also leads Michael Sarian & The Big Chabones, a 16-piece big band alternative, in addition to his most recent quartet New Aurora, with a debut album set for September 4, 2020. Since the fall of 2015, Michael has been making yearly pilgrimages back home to Buenos Aires to perform his music with local musicians, including some of his old mentors, Sarian is a faculty member at TrumpetLand.com and a Remic Microphones endorser.

Besides performing regularly with his own projects and as a sideman throughout New York City, Sarian teaches trumpet, theory and composition.

To listen to Sarian’s music or purchase the CD, visit www.MichaelSarian.com or www.EarSaysEyesRecords.com
Armenian Cultural Hour from Providence, RI

Armenia, as well as monthly online meetings around the world, documentaries about concerts by famous Armenian performers from national programs are presented, including concerts over the past four months, and over 20,000 people followed.

Every Friday of week, cultural and educational programs are presented, including concerts by famous Armenian performers from around the world, documentaries about concerts, and over 20,000 people followed.

A couple of minutes before the start of the next “Armenia Cultural Hour” program, you just need to click on the link, which is placed on the poster for each event. Which is published on the sites of MENK, Easter Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, or Facebook of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence, RI. As we were told by the Director of cultural and musical programs of the church, Koustantian Petrosyan. For the near future, the following programs are provided:

OCTOBER
October 2 – “Meet with Armenian Doctors” – Dr. Michael Aivazian, Urologist
October 9 – “Leaves Zvart” Gghard Vocal Ensemble, Armenia
October 10 – “A Century of Light, Hope and Faith” Concert dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Apostolic Church
October 23 – Sam Danielian, Virtuoso (Eskial and flutes)
October 30 – Garo Nichanian, Bass-Baritone, Canada “A bouquet of Armenian songs”

NOVEMBER
November 6 – “Musical greetings from Lebanon” Levon Maradian, Celli (Portugal)
November 13 – Emma Tovmasian & Vahagn Avetian (CA) in concert “Nere chi tsarxanaz”

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Recipe Corner

Eggplant Pomegranate Salad from ANI Catering & Cafe

ANI Catering & Cafe’ in Belmont, MA, has been serving authentic Armenian and Middle Eastern cuisine to the Greater Boston area for over 20 years. In April, in honor of the 105th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, five Armenian-owned restaurants in the Boston area collectively donated more than 150 meals to fuel the night shift crew working at the Emergency Department at Massachusetts General Hospital during the global pandemic. ANI Catering & Cafe’ with the other restaurants each added their own creativity to individually packaged meals filled with flavorful kababs and falafel, shawarma wraps and stuffed grape leaves complemented with hummus, warm rice and zesty salad. “We love this community and cherish any opportunity to show how much the community means to us,” says Hovanesian (John) Hovanesian, co-owner of ANI Catering & Cafe.

The cafe’ was established in 1993 as a part-time catering company by John and his wife, Ani. Customers come from as far as Concord, Lexington and Wellesley, while the catering business ranges over eastern Massachusetts, even into neighboring Rhode Island. Events for up to 600 people have been catered by the company, including corporate and family or social occasions. In 2006, they turned the catering business into a fulltime one, and moved to its present Belmont location. When customers asked for takeout service, they expanded, and in 2014, John turned part of the store into a sit-down restaurant. “We owe the success of the takeout business to our son Ari’s hard work, talent, and outgoing personality,” said John. “Our menu is filled with flavorful kebabs and falafel, shawarma wraps and zesty salad. “We love this community and cherish any opportunity to show how much the community means to us,” says Hovanesian (John) Hovanesian, co-owner of ANI Catering & Cafe. In a small jar with a lid, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, Aleppo pepper, cumin, and pomegranate molasses. Cover and shake until you have nice grill marks and eggplant is pliable, about 3-4 minutes on each side.

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The Confluence of Armenian-Chinese Interests

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The strategic balance in the Caucasus is undergoing a rapid transformation. While Russia is viewed by the West as a shrinking power and that is why NATO and the US have enured Georgia, moving closer to Iran from Russia’s grip, Turkey seems to be a proxy for the West to fill in the perceived power vacuum in the Caucasus. On the other hand, Russia and China have been intensifying their cooperation. Iran is about to sign a $400 billion megapact with China, frustrated by the sanctions imposed on it by the West.

There are issues in Iran willing to improve relations with the West, among them President Hassan Rouhani. As odd as it may seem, President Trump’s intolerant attitude towards Iran is playing into the hands of domestic conservatives to escalate tensions and push Iran into the Russo-Chinese embrace. There is little hope that the US elections would shift the balance, even if Joe Biden were elected president.

Armenia has been caught in these transformational shifts of policies, when particularly, Turkey has become the antagonist, the latter to the West.

Armenia and China assurances the first is beholden to Turkey for any support he received, his main agenda and the latter to the West.

Armenia would be more accommodating if its leaders realize the mutual benefit to both countries.

China has taken a 75 percent interest in the Free Industrial Zone at Poti on Georgia’s Black Sea coastline. When Pushkin visited China last May, they were very cordial exchanges at the time.

“We are united by the common goals of cooperation and civilization,” said the Chinese President Xi Jinping. He continued, “We are well aware of momentous events in the history of Armenia. We believe that the tragic events that befell the Armenian people must be prevented in the future.”

That was a direct allusion to the Armenian Genocide, yet on the other hand, in relations with Azerbaijan, China assures the latter to the West.

Armenia is the recent opening with Egypt. Egypt is at odds with Turkey regarding Libya, but beyond that, Turkey has posed a larger challenge to Egypt, with its ambitions to lead the Sunni Muslim world.

Strategically, there is a confluence of interests between Armenia and China, in view of Turkey’s growing role in the region and the West, all the while pursuing designs of containment, which looks beyond Armenia, towards Central Asia.

China is already involving in some highway upgrades. But it is very much aware where its interests lie.

China built its second largest embassy in Yerevan, after Moscow. Although China is not locked in an ideological bind in formulating its foreign policy, as the former Soviet Union used to be, it is very much aware where its interests lie. China has trade and economic relations also with Azerbaijan and Georgia, but it realizes that the first is beholden to Turkey and the latter to the West.

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Despite all its rhetoric, China has been building Huawei’s Smart Cities around the world, from Germany to Singapore. There is talk that a similar Smart City is also being planned for Armenia, at a cost of $5 billion. That will give a tremendous technological boost to Armenia.

There are more prospects in the making: the Horasis China 2020 meeting which was planned to take place in Yerevan, was postponed because of the pandemic. Now it has been rescheduled for October 25-27.

More than 300 Horasis Vision Community members from businesses and governments will join an intense program. It is said that Horasis China-Chinese interests will be very obvious.

Yerevan will enhance Armenia’s visibility on the diplomatic map of the Middle East.

As important as these developments are for Armenia, they cannot replace the support of a superpower, which Yerevan will find in China. It is believed that China has been helping Armenia militarily. But that cooperation will become more formal when the two countries join the Caucasus 2020 military drills scheduled to take place in Astara, after Moscow’s initiative. Armenia, Belarus, Iran, Venezuela, Pakistan and China will be sending military delegations to the exercises to take place on September 21-22.

Russia and China base established a “comprehensive strategic partnership” to cooperate on military matters and in diplomacy to counter largely the US influence in their respective neighborhods. They also cooperate at the United Nations, particularly on strategic issues on the Security Council agenda.

Although Armenia is small, for China it has significant strategic importance. Turkey views Armenia as a roadblock for its drive to unite the Turkic peoples of Central Asia. From the Chinese perspective, Armenia represents a safeguard against such Turkish penetration in Central Asia. Turkey has been trying to agitate against the independent-mindedness of its Xinjiang province to rise up against the central government. The Chinese authorities are fighting back, trying to put a lid on this import extremism, though their methods are harsh.

Armenian activism and advocacy can play a small role in the US to yield some political dividends. But while Turkey is on the cusp of oct 2020 balance, Armenia’s existential concerns cannot be met when push comes to shove. The West does not seem to offer a safe haven for Armenia, despite all its rhetoric.

Strategically, there is a confluence of interests between Armenia and China, in view of Turkey’s growing role in the Caucasus.

By Edmond Y. Azadian
By Harut Sassounian

Pro-Turk Black American Group's Controversial Link to Turkey

(Part I)

The website Salon.com published on September 4 and 5, 2020, a lengthy two-part expose of a Black American group that worked on the legal margins of lobbying, campaign and foreign influence campaign on behalf of powerful people in Turkey. "URC officials Darrell Scott and Kareem Lanier, both allies by Turkish companies in Opportunity Zones."

As stated above, the state terror caused by leftist-rightist struggles was replaced with state terror more violent. I would like to offer a few glimpses of how Armenians were affected by this turn of events. Along with thousands of other leftist and rightist youth, Hrant Dink was also arrested and subjected to regular beatings and torture in prison. He explained that due to severe overcrowding in regular prisons, he was taken to a military school converted to prison. Turkish washrooms have only a hole on the floor and by covering the hole with plywood, the tiny washroom cubicles were made into prison cells. As related by a Facebook friend, Artun Suyukas, who was a young man interested in photography. He would take newsworthy pictures and pass them on to a journalist working at the exiled Armenian newspaper, "Armenian Free Press." The journalist had ordered her to teach another imprisoned Kurdish girl to recite the Turkish national anthem. The Kurdish language and music were banned. More than 5,000 Kurdish villages in the east were forcibly vacated and burnt to the ground, resulting in almost a million Kurds displaced. At the request of the U.S. government, the Kurdish human rights lawyer Eren Keskin succeeded in having Levon’s remains exhumed and reburied. As a postscript, Ekmekjian was buried in an unmarked grave near Ankara until 2016, when photos of his body turned out to be dog bones, not human bones.

Forty years have passed since the September 12, 1980 coup and the dictatorial regime that followed. There is strong evidence that they are Armenians or Kurds who migrated to Turkey in the 19th century, followed by more waves of Armenians settling in the region in later times. The region was conquered by the Ottomans in the 16th century, and the Armenians were eventually forced to convert to Islam. Most of them did convert, but interestingly enough, they kept their own language and some continued to maintain their Armenian identity. As a postscript, Ekmekjian was supposedly discussing a comprehensive, multi-billion-dollar investment plan that would open factories in Turkey. When I asked: "Are you sure, what about your husband?" her response was: "My father suffered, my husband, my children also." The organization's efforts were intended to shape US policy expecting a large investment in the United States by Turkish companies. "The organization to do what they had frequently told Rabia Kazan that they were prevented from doing within Michael Cohen's office and even the National Diversity Coalition, which was effectively an arm of the Trump campaign. That is, to take money. There's documentary evidence that the URC's language is a branch of "how much money the group took in or how that money was spent," Salon.com reported.

Multiple people familiar with the workings of the URC told Salon that it was clear that Scott and Lanier established the organization to do what they had frequently told Rabia Kazan that they were prevented from doing within Michael Cohen's office and even the National Diversity Coalition, which was effectively an arm of the Trump campaign. That is, to take money. There's documentary evidence that the URC's language is a branch of the added trauma of being Armenian on top of being Kurdish. And the Kurdish teacher faced an agonizing decision while our bus travelled from Sardarabad to Echmiadzin. At the beginning of the principal had ordered her to teach another imprisoned Kurdish girl to recite the Turkish national anthem. The Kurdish language and music were banned. More than 5,000 Kurdish villages in the east were forcibly vacated and burnt to the ground, resulting in almost a million Kurds displaced. In 1980, the "Turkey hustle: How a pro-Trump Black money laundering group sought to influence US policy" was published with the super PAC America First Action. The URC received the grant in 2018, a few months after directing Kazan to seek financial contributions. Because the URC never filed a tax return, however, it is impossible to know how much money the group took in or how that money was spent, " Salon.com reported.

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HDP Leads Tributes to Greeks, Armenians, Jews on Istanbul Pogrom Anniversary

ISTANBUL (Public Radio of Armenia) – Turkey’s opposition Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) led tributes on September 7 to those killed in the state-coordinated massacre of Greek, Armenian, Christian and Jewish people in the Istanbul pogrom 65 years ago, Bianet reports.

It described the events of September 6 and 7 1955 as “one of the most painful and shameful pages in Turkey’s history.”

The HDP said that 73 churches, eight holy springs, two monasteries and 5,500 houses and workplaces – 3,500 of which belonged to Greeks – were destroyed and plundered during the massacre. The damage was estimated at about $100 million.

“The attacks were planned and implemented by the National Security Service (NSS),” a party statement said.

“The state has not faced up to the September 6-7 pogrom, apologies have not been offered to Christian and Jewish citizens, primarily Rums and Armenians, and the damages have not been compensated in any way at all,” HDP said.

“It is our major demand and a must of living together that this shame targeting the old peoples of Turkey be faced, the perpetrators be identified and the material and immaterial losses of suffered by the aggrieved people or their families be compensated,” the party added.

The Istanbul pogrom, also known as the Istanbul riots or September events were organized mob attacks directed primarily at Istanbul’s Greek minority on 6-7 September 1955. The riots were orchestrated by the Tactical Mobilisation Group, the seat of Operation Gladio’s Turkish branch; the Counter-Guerrilla, and National Security Service, the precursor of today’s National Intelligence Organisation.

The events were triggered by the false news that the Turkish consulate in Thessaloniki, in northern Greece—the house where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had been born in 1881—had been bombed the day before. A bomb planted by a Turkish usher at the consulate, who was later arrested and confessed, ignited the events. The Turkish press, conveying the news in Turkey, was silent about the arrest and instead insinuated that Greeks had set off the bomb.

Edoardo Eurnekian, father of Eduardo Eurnekian who previously visited the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin in Armenia, said he is planning to visit the landmark again.

Eduardo Eurnekian, who is of Armenian descent, visits the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin in Armenia. In turn Eurnekian said he will continue investing in programs in the homeland in various areas and highlighted the close cooperation with the Armenian government.

The two discussed the programs being implemented by the Armenia International Airports CJSC in Armenia. In particular, they touched upon issues relating to the development of Yerevan’s Zvartnots, Gyumri’s Shirak airports, improvement of infrastructures, their renovation and further operation.

In the press statement, Eurnekian said he will continue investing in programs in the homeland in various areas and highlighted the close cooperation with the Armenian government.

Pashinyan and Eurnekian praised the process of the bilateral partnership and reaffirmed the mutual readiness to further develop it.

Later, Eurnekian visited Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholics of All Armenians. During the conversation, the catholics brought his blessing and appreciation to Eurnekian for his continuous commitment to the national and patriotic life and large-scale programs implemented by him, as well as for his support to the Armenian Church and the mission of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin.

At the end of the meeting, the Catholics of All Armenians, Eurnekian, visited the Mother Cathedral to follow the renovation works, and visited the Holy Archangels Church.

They also visited the Eurnekian School under the auspices of the Mother See to talk to students and wish them a successful academic year ahead.

HELP Us Rebuild

The Tekeyan School of Beirut

The Vahan Tekeyan School, founded in 1951, was damaged by the August 4 explosion in Beirut. It primarily serves a low-income segment of the Armenian community and already was struggling due to Lebanon’s economic crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic. Now it is trying to reopen for the fall semester.

The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada is sending aid and asks your assistance too. Make your donations by credit card at https://givebutter.com/XsXBlm or as checks mailed to the Tekeyan Cultural Association (mem: Beirut Tekeyan School), at its headquarters (735 Mount Auburn Street, Watertown MA 02472). All administrative costs for this campaign will be borne by the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada.

For more information, email tcadirector@aol.com or call 617 924-4455.