

Meeting to Take Place Between Aliyev, Pashinyan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — New details of an announced meeting between the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders in Brussels next month have been revealed to RFE/RL.

A senior European Union official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia and President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan had agreed to meet on December 15.

“The goal is to bring Pashinyan and Aliyev to the same table for confidence-building measures,” said the EU official.

On November 19, the EU announced that Charles Michel, the president of the EU, had telephone conversations with the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia about the situation in the region. As a result, it said, the two leaders agreed to meet on the sidelines of the EU’s Eastern Partnership summit.

“It is not clear yet how their Brussels meetings will look like, who of the EU leaders will sit, whether the defense ministers or foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan will be present,” the EU official said.

Michel’s office said Pashinyan and Aliyev would meet “to discuss the regional situation and ways of overcoming tensions for a prosperous and stable South Caucasus, which the EU supports.” It said they also agreed to establish a direct communication line, at the level of defense ministers, “to serve as an incident prevention mechanism.”

see MEETING, page 3



Lilit’s child in Kornidzor (photo Brandon Balayan)

Kooyrigs Send Aid to Refugees from Artsakh Facing Precarious Conditions in Syunik

By Brandon Balayan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — On November 17, fighting that started on the previous day along the eastern border of the Syunik region in Armenia became relatively stable, according to a statement by the Armenian Ministry of Defense (MOD). The Armenian side had six soldiers killed, 13 captured and 24 missing, according to the Armenian MOD. The Azerbaijani side had 7 soldiers killed and 10 wounded yesterday, according to the Azerbaijani MOD. One aspect of yesterday’s attacks that goes unnoticed is the situation of displaced Armenians from Artsakh who live in Sisian, Ishkhanasar and Goris.

Marguerita Doudaklian, the social worker and community manager for Kooyrigs NGO, led aid deliveries to the Syunik region for their Project Mayreeg initiative. She has been going on deliveries throughout Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh since last November. On November 16, she and her driver Hagop loaded boxes onto a large truck and delivered them to mothers in Syunik.

see REFUGEES, page 4



A displaced family in Ishkhanasar (photo Brandon Balayan)

Atmosphere Remains Tense in Armenia

By Gevorg Gyulumyan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — The aggressive steps taken by Azerbaijan on November 15 and 16 have had a great effect on Armenia. It is as if everything has been turned upside down. People finally understand that a hostile Azerbaijan, even after all the concessions made by Armenia, speaks the language of coercion with the latter. This in turn leads to new understandings of imperatives for action.

For example, the mayor of Bardzravan Village, part of the enlarged municipality of Goris, declared that despite official denials, the situation is very bad. “It is the 21st century, but we do not have grocery stores or medical centers. We need to rent cars for everything in order to go to the district center. As if this is all not enough, now the enemy has become active and has begun to disturb our peace. I don’t know what our end will be,” said Mayor Onik Avagyan.

see TENSION, page 2

Armenian Soldier Killed Along Border With Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — An Armenian soldier has been killed along the border with Azerbaijan in what military authorities in Yerevan said was shooting from the Azerbaijani side on Monday, November 22.

Armenia’s Defense Ministry said that at about 6:10 pm Azerbaijan’s armed forces opened fire from firearms of different calibers at the Armenian positions near the village of Norabak in the eastern Gegharkunik province.

It said that a 19-year-old Armenian soldier was fatally wounded by the fire.

According to the report, the shooting continued until 7:30.

Azerbaijan has denied reports from Yerevan. “Our units did not open fire in that direction, the situation is stable,” the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry said in a statement.

see BORDER, page 3



An example of a cluster bomb in Artsakh

HALO Trust Saving Lives in Artsakh

By Harry Kezelian
Mirror-Spectator Staff

WASHINGTON — One year after the 2020 Karabakh (Artsakh) War, there is only one international NGO with a presence in what is left of the historic territory of Artsakh: the landmine clearance organization HALO (Hazardous Area Life-support Organization) Trust, which is at work removing cluster munitions in the region.

HALO Trust is a registered British charity with an American affiliate non-profit. Founded in 1988, originally to remove land mines in Afghanistan, the organization was propelled to international prominence in the 1990s by Princess Diana’s visit to a minefield in Angola and her espousal of the humanitarian issue. In fact, for its work, the group won the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

On November 4, HALO held a webinar to discuss their latest efforts in the Karabakh region, update their supporters, and issue a call to action. HALO’s US Executive Director, Chris Whatley, moderated the call from Washington DC. Dr. Christina Maranci of Tufts University gave a brief presentation on Artsakh history, and Miles Hawthorn, HALO’s

see HALO, page 10



Dr. Christina Maranci

INDIA
Levon Aronian Wins Tata Steel Blitz in India



GERMANY
Composer Hayg Boyadjian Meets with Bach, Beethoven



CALIFORNIA
San Francisco Bay Area Artsakh Task Force Raises \$100,000 for IFS





ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

Remains of Two More Armenian Soldiers Found In Jrakan

STEPANAKERT (Panorama.am) — Artsakh rescuers found the remains of two more Armenian soldiers as a result of their search operations for the 2020 Artsakh war casualties on November 23. The remains were retrieved from the Jrakan (Jabrayil) region occupied by Azerbaijan, the State Service of Emergency Situations of Artsakh's Interior Ministry reported. Their identities will be established after a forensic medical examination, it said. Since the end of hostilities, the bodies of 1,700 servicemen and civilians have been found during the search operations or handed over to the Armenian side.

40 Armenian POWs, Civilian Captives Are Convicted of Baseless Charges in Azerbaijan

STEPANAKERT (Panorama.am) — The Artsakh Human Rights Ombudsman's staff on November 23 published an interim report on "Malicious Prosecution by Azerbaijan of Captured Armenian Servicemen and Civilians." The report provides information on fabricated and illegal prosecutions against the Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian captives which is a gross violation of the Geneva Conventions Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, the Ombudsman's Office reported.

As a result of 45 organized sham trials, 3 persons (one a civilian) were sentenced to 20 years, 2 persons (civilians) to 15 years, 23 persons to 6 years, 2 persons to 4 years, 13 persons to 6 years imprisonment. Materials of fake criminal cases of 2 Armenian prisoners of war are in the Ganja court of grave crimes. Five of the Armenian POWs subjected to illegal trials were repatriated on October 19. At the moment, 40 Armenian POWs and civilian captives are convicted on baseless charges in Azerbaijan.

Infant and Child Mortality Rates in Armenia Decreasing

YEREVAN (ARKA) — The infant and child mortality rates in Armenia are decreasing due to the selfless work of medical workers, the rector of the Yerevan State Medical University Armen Muradyan, who served earlier as health minister, said in a Facebook post on November 23. According to statistics he cited, there were 183 deaths of babies under the age of one year in January-September 2021, which is 10 percent less than in the first nine months of 2020 and the average figure for 2017-2020. "The same pattern is true for under-4-year old deaths. So, in the same period in 2021, there were 211 cases, which is 8 percent less than in the first nine months of 2020 and 14 percent less than the average of the last 4 years," he said.

Atmosphere Remains Tense in Armenia

TENSION, from page 1

Avagyan was upset, pointing out that Azerbaijan had placed checkpoints on their road, and that when they went to Goris they had to pay Azerbaijani customs officials. He exclaimed: "This is a disgrace! Who has seen such a thing? I must pay in order to move about in my own country? I am not even speaking about how the Azerbaijanis subject Armenian passersby to mockery. In



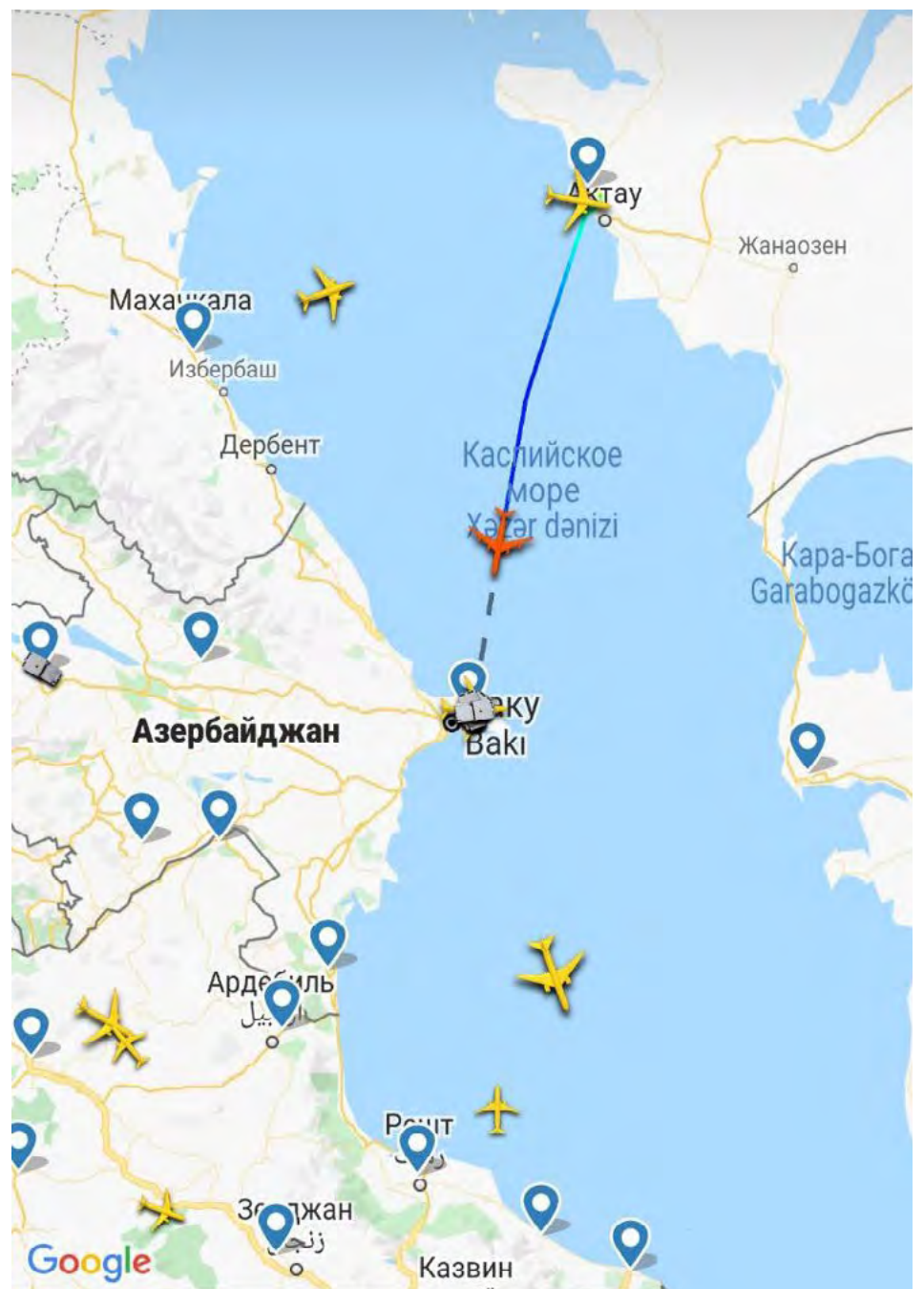
Mayor Onik Avagyan

addition, teachers used to go from village to village. Now they are unable to go as the Azerbaijani invaders have blockaded everything. Blessed was our former situation, blessed...now it remains a dream."

Military strategists also have serious concerns. For example, one of them, Karen Vrtanesyan, thinks that by occupying the most important heights of Syunik, Azerbaijan has created a platform from which to occupy Syunik in its entirety and empty it of its Armenian population.

"The final goal of Azerbaijan and Turkey is to eliminate Armenia completely, and if anyone thinks that it is possible to live peacefully with these aggressors, then he is sorely mistaken because they desire our deaths. They today are creating a platform in order to surround us and get rid of us," he stressed.

In truth, the situation in Armenia is very troubling because aside from domestic political developments, it is already clear that hostile Azerbaijan has concentrated forces not only at the border of Syunik, but also at Gegharkunik and Tavush. In addition, by monitoring Azerbaijani social networks, it has become known that several columns of Turkish military vehicles entered Nakhichevan yesterday. At the same time, it has



Flight path of military aid from Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan

become clear that Kazakhstan, which is a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization together with Armenia, has sent military aid to Azerbaijan by plane. In other words, we are being betrayed on all sides, but most of all, we are injured by not learning lessons from history.

The situation became more tense among the public when the US embassy in Armenia called on its citizens to avoid travel on the Goris-Kapan autoroute. This created great unease because the US similarly issued a warning to its citizens prior to the 44-day war last year, to avoid visiting Artsakh, and earlier, in July 2020, to avoid visiting Tavush province. Military activity ensued after the two prior warnings.

Finally, it is worth mentioning an important effort at self-defense which has emerged from the new wave of Azerbai-

jani aggression. A group of intellectuals in Goris, near the border, have declared the formation of a security council for Goris. They say that the main task of this council will be to contribute to the strengthening of a patrol service for residences and strengthen the surveillance and assure the security of water reservoirs and other important points. In the future, work will be carried out to arm the local population too.

Artur Khojabaghyan, one of the founders of this council, said it will "aid in the creation of self-defense detachments and carry out both tactical as well as shooting training. We will institute first aid courses in all schools and educational institutions. We will transmit knowledge about how to act in emergency situations."

In a word, the situation in Armenia remains tense.

Armenian Ex-President Sargsyan Investigated in New Graft Case

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Former Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan is being prosecuted in a new corruption case, officials and his lawyer say.

Marina Ohanjanian, a spokesperson for the Anti-Corruption Committee, confirmed on November 22 Sargsyan's status as an accused party in the criminal case. She did not provide details.

The Anti-Corruption Committee was set up earlier this year to prosecute corruption-related crimes.

Earlier on Tuesday, Sargsyan's lawyer announced that his client had been summoned by the committee to be interrogated in a new criminal case.

Lawyer Amram Makinyan wrote on Facebook that the case is linked to testimony made against Sargsyan, who was presi-

dent between 2008 and 2018, by a woman whom he identified only as Silva.

Makinyan was apparently referring to businesswoman Silva Hambardzumyan, whose name has been associated with a high-profile corruption case against another former Armenian president, Robert Kocharyan.

"The irony is that, after 3 1/2 years, they have decided that Silva would testify that she gave a bribe to Serzh Sargsyan too," the lawyer said.

"As part of the same case, Serzh Sargsyan was questioned as a witness two years ago, and no new circumstances have emerged legally since then," he wrote, suggesting that the case had been initiated for political reasons.

Sargsyan went on trial in Yerevan a year

ago to face corruption charges he has also rejected as being politically motivated.

The ex-president is accused of organizing the embezzlement of about \$ 1 million in relation to the alleged misappropriation of fuel.

Sargsyan is also suspected of abuse of power in a criminal case launched last month over the alleged misappropriation of state money.

The case was opened after a leading Armenian investigation website, the Fact Investigation Platform, reported that during Sargsyan's tenure as president, the presidential plane made more than a dozen flights to the German resort of Baden-Baden at the expense of the budget.

Sargsyan and members of his political team also reject these allegations as politically motivated.



ARMENIA

Meeting to Take Place Between Aliyev, Pashinyan

MEETING, from page 1

The statement did not specify when such a line could become operational.

“The aim of the forthcoming talks is to establish some sort of trust between the two leaders via confidence building measures, especially in the field of connectivity,” the EU official said.

“We are talking here about transport corridors in Nagorno-Karabakh, transport projects involving both Armenia and Azerbaijan,” the source added.

The Russia-brokered ceasefire agreement that Armenia and Azerbaijan signed to put an end to six weeks of fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh last November also referred to a new route for a connection between Armenians inside Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia that was understood to be approved within the next three years, with the agreement of the parties, after which Russian peacekeepers would be redeployed to protect that route. It has been a year since the signing of that trilateral statement, but so far nothing has been reported about any agreement reached between the parties.

The passing week has seen a further escalation of tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan that on November 16 had their worst fighting along their un-demarcated border since the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

It was during that escalation that the president of the European Council had phone talks with Pashinyan and Aliyev, calling for “urgent de-escalation and full

respect of the ceasefire.”

According to the EU source, “Michel, Pashinyan and Aliyev have built up quite a good rapport in the last couple of months, and Michel has spoken to them 4-6 times in the last couple of months.” Besides, Michel also speaks regularly with the presidents of Turkey and Russia, the source added.

In early November Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that a trilateral meeting of the leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan was being prepared in Moscow. Shortly after that announcement Armenia’s prime minister said that there was no agreement about any such meeting yet. It is still unclear whether Aliyev and Pashinyan will have a tripartite meeting together with Russian President Vladimir Putin any time soon, or if they do, whether this meeting will be before or after their announced meeting in Brussels.

Confirming the news of the upcoming meeting in Brussels, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry said on Saturday that Baku has repeatedly stated its position on the post-conflict situation in the region, including in the international arena.

“In this regard, we believe that the summit of the Eastern Partnership, and the meeting that will take place on the sidelines of this event will create additional opportunities,” Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry spokesperson Leyla Abdullayeva said.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry has also confirmed the news of the upcoming meeting, but has not provided any further comments on that yet.

Turkey Mediation

Armenia has asked Russia to mediate in the normalization of its relations with Turkey, an Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesman said on November 22.

Vahan Hunanyan said a number of Armenia’s partners, including Russia, have expressed readiness to mediate in Turkish-Armenian normalization and the Armenian side has asked Moscow to be a go-between.

A number of international partners, including Russia, have stated that they are ready to support the Armenian-Turkish settlement process. And we have informed Russia that we are ready to start the Armenian-Turkish settlement process without preconditions. When and if such a process starts, naturally, we will provide information on that, “Hunanyan said.

In August, the leaders of Armenia and Turkey spoke about “positive signals” coming from the other side of the border. In September, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan even revealed that through Georgia’s prime minister, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan had offered him to meet. He added, however, that for such a meeting to take place, Yerevan had to take “clear steps” towards “[opening] the Zangezur corri-

dor [for Azerbaijan].”

Shortly afterwards Pashinyan reiterated through a spokesperson that Armenia does not accept what he called ‘corridor logic’ in unblocking transport links in the region, but added that Yerevan was ready for contacts with Ankara.

According to the Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesman, no direct talks have taken place between Yerevan and Ankara yet.

In a recent interview with *Le Figaro*, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said that Ankara was setting new conditions for starting a dialogue with Yerevan, including the provision of an extraterritorial corridor that would connect Azerbaijan and its exclave of Nakhichevan.

Mirzoyan told the French daily that the demand for such a corridor was out of the question.

“States must allow transit while maintaining sovereignty over their territory,” he said. “All transport links in the region must be reopened.”

Foreign Ministry spokesman Hunanyan said Mirzoyan’s remarks were based “on public statements made by Turkey about the so-called Zangezur corridor.”

“They [Turks] have constantly raised this subject at the level of both the president and the foreign minister. And we say that such a thing cannot happen. However, as I mentioned, there have been no negotiations,” the official added.

Opposition Groups Stage Protests Over Border Demarcation Risks

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — A number of smaller opposition groups in Armenia staged protests in Yerevan on Monday, expressing their concern about what they described as a potentially risky border demarcation with Azerbaijan and demanding that the government reveal details of the process expected to begin soon.

After deadly clashes along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border last week Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said that Armenia received proposals from Russia on the “preparatory stage” for the process of delimitating and demarcating its Soviet-era border with Azerbaijan. He said that the proposals were acceptable to Yerevan. Azerbaijan did not respond immediately to

what appeared to be a Russian offer also made to Baku.

Armenia’s hardline opposition groups began today’s protests in Yerevan in the morning by temporarily blocking traffic in several central streets. Some protesters were briefly detained by police.

Among active participants of the protests were the “5165” movement led by Karin Tonoyan, the Zartonk national Christian party led by former chairman of the Chamber of Advocates Ara Zohrabyan as well as former lawmaker Sofya Hovsepyan and other individuals.

The protesters said they believe that the document on the demarcation of the border with Azerbaijan may harm Armenia’s interests. In particular, they expressed their concern that by signing such a document Armenia may recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan, which, in their view, will harm the aspiration of local ethnic Armenians for self-determination.

“Is there another country in the world, another democracy where only one person decides the fate of the whole nation? “Our Constitution gives us the right to be informed on what is being decided about our country,” Tonoyan said.

She urged people to join their demonstrations. “The only thing that is required of you is to take to the streets, stand up and demand your right to be informed. We do



Karin Tonoyan (C), leader of the “5165” opposition movement, addresses a rally in front of the central government office in Yerevan, Armenia, November 22, 2021.

not want anything else at this moment,” she added.

The protesters submitted an application to the government and then moved to the presidential office and the National Assembly building.

In the evening, protesters gathered for a rally in Yerevan’s central Republic Square, then marched through the central streets of the capital.

Arpi Davoyan, a member of the pro-government Civil Contract faction in parliament, responded to the protesters’ demand.

In a Facebook post she wrote: “The people who have gathered demand the publication of some imaginary content of a document, spreading panic and instability in the process. This is tantamount to demanding in mid-summer an estimate of the amount of snow expected in the coming winter.”

There was no immediate response from the government to the protesters’ demand.

The prime minister’s office, however, announced that Pashinyan will answer questions of media and public organizations live on Facebook on Tuesday evening.

Armenian Soldier Killed Along Border With Azerbaijan

BORDER, from page 1

RFE / RL’s Armenian Service this week talked to Gegharkunik governor Karen Sargsyan who also confirmed that Azerbaijani armed forces fired in the direction of Norabak on Monday evening.

He said that an Armenian conscript was killed in the skirmish that was started by the Azerbaijani side.

The latest reported border incident comes less than a week after at least 13 troops were killed in fighting along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border that involved artillery, mortars, armored vehicles and other heavy weaponry.

Assistant House Speaker Slams Azerbaijan’s ‘Unprovoked Attack’ on Armenia

WASHINGTON — Assistant Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Katherine Clark slammed Azerbaijan for its latest “unprovoked attack” on Armenia. “I stand with the people of Armenia who have suffered another unprovoked attack,”

Clark said on Thursday, November 18.

“Azerbaijan must acknowledge and respect Armenian sovereignty. I condemn this latest act of aggression and urge the government to adhere to last year’s peace deal.”

In clashes launched by Azerbaijan on

November 16, the Armenian side has confirmed 6 deaths, while 13 soldiers have been captured by Azerbaijan. Two combat positions have fallen under the control of Azerbaijani forces and 24 Armenian troops have gone missing.



ARMENIA

Kooyrigs Send Aid to Refugees from Artsakh Facing Precarious Conditions in Syunik

REFUGEES, from page 1

All of the families she delivered items to on November 16 have been displaced from the neighboring Kashatagh region of Nagorno-Karabakh. Now, they face further displacement within sovereign Armenian territory because of Aliyev's pseudo-historic irredentism directed towards the Syunik, or Zangezur, region of Armenia proper.

Doudaklian's first stop was Shaki village in Sisian, near where Azerbaijan launched its offensive. The first house she came to sheltered three families and a total of 12 people. A few months back the house had no windows or doors and had curtains in their place — causing their children to become sick. With winter approaching, they built new doors and windows that would

Ishkhanasar, who has a total of eight children. They all live closest to the site of the attack at the Armenian border.

The villagers of Ishkhanasar, Noravan and Aghitu could all hear the gunfire from their homes, said Human Rights Defender of Armenia Arman Tatoyan. These people escaped their homes in Karabakh, some leaving family memorabilia behind, to find refuge in Armenia — only to be met with further aggression and fear of displacement. Even escaping to Armenia proper cannot protect them from Azerbaijani gunfire, evidently. Doudaklian spoke intimately with the mothers about how they were feeling, and described their state as follows: "Terrified, helpless and powerless... having their bags ready — any minute they might hear the news that they have to leave Syunik."

The next leg of the trip was to Goris and the neighboring village of Akner. On the way to Goris, fog began to drop and the road became significantly more dangerous. Visibility was low but Hagop was not hesitant in his driving.

Akner is home to two beneficiaries. Liana is native to Goris, and Mariam is from Kashatagh. Every family we visited that day set its table. The tradition of hyurasirutyun, literally meaning loving guests, is not forgotten even amidst attacks by Azerbaijan.

Liana's husband and father-



Grandma with Emil in Akner (photo Brandon Balayan)

in-law serve at nearby posts and she informed us that she heard bad news from the latter shortly before we came. "He said not too long ago they started firing at the border," Liana declared.

As she was describing how they were living day by day in uncertainty, a truck full of soldiers with their Kalashnikovs raced up the mountain towards the gunfire and waved to them goodbye. It was only then that we checked reports and saw that Azerbaijan had launched an offensive about an hour ago.

Doudaklian's next destination was Tegh,

and father-in-law came back home, quickly grabbed some warm clothes and left." They had gone off to defend the border.

After hanging up, Doudaklian began to break down. "The hardest part was leaving our [mothers] behind, knowing their husbands are fighting on the borders and them not feeling safe," Doudaklian said. In total, Doudaklian along with the driver Hagop delivered 32 boxes filled with food and hygienic products for mothers and their babies.



Marguerita Doudaklian unloading boxes of aid in Ishkhanasar (photo Brandon Balayan)

These stories of the border, and its volatile situation, are due to Azerbaijan's attacks and encroachment since May of this year, and obviously because of last year's war. Artsakh's inhabitants left to seek refuge in Armenia, and now the attempt of Aliyev to create a Zangezur corridor by force is leaving these displaced families in a constant state of uncertainty and fear for their lives.



Marguerita Doudaklian with Emil in Akner (photo Brandon Balayan)



Liana with Emil in Akner (photo Brandon Balayan)

properly insulate the house.

When asked about the situation at the border, they conveyed that they were not sure in what condition the country would be, and mentioned that it's more dangerous at the nearby village of Ishkhanasar, which was Doudaklian's next stop.

While driving, Doudaklian started speaking with the driver Hagop, who revealed that his son fought in last year's war and that he had made a promise to himself if fighting were to break out again: "My son fought in last year's war, so I promised myself if anything were to happen this year I would go fight with him," he said.

Hagop then took us to the beneficiary in



A displaced family in Sisian (photo Brandon Balayan)

the last village before one enters Nagorno Karabakh. We had trouble finding the house because of how dense the fog was. Since we were getting closer to the border, the fog was becoming denser, and night was falling, we could not stay at this family's house.

Doudaklian was then off to her last stop, Kornidzor. The reality of the relationship with Azerbaijan became clearer at this house. "We are packed and always ready to go," said Lilit, who lived there. Lilit's husband went out to get firewood for the house, but she could not stay in contact with him because the signal was getting lost, causing Lilit to worry.

While on the way back to Yerevan, Doudaklian received a call from Liana, the beneficiary from Goris, who asked if we were safe. Doudaklian in turn asked if they received any updates and Liana's response was grave. She said, "My husband



Shepherds in Syunik (photo Brandon Balayan)



INTERNATIONAL

Armenian FM Says Turkey Sets New Conditions for Normalization

PARIS (RFE/RL) — Turkey sets new conditions for normalizing its relations with Armenia, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said in a recent interview with the French *Le Figaro* daily that was published this week.

Talking to the newspaper during his recent visit to Paris on November 11, Mirzoyan stressed that Armenia has always supported normalization of relations with Turkey without preconditions and is ready for that now despite the “huge Turkish support” for Azerbaijan in the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

“We have received positive signals from Turkey to reopen the dialogue, but it remains complicated. Ankara sets new conditions. Among them is a “corridor” connecting Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan, “the top Armenian diplomat said in the interview the transcript of which the Armenian Foreign Ministry released on November 20.

Unblocking all transport links in the region is part of a Russia-brokered ceasefire that stopped the 44-day fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh last year. This includes Azerbaijan’s access to its Nakhichevan exclave via Armenian territory.

In the post-war talks Baku appears to have insisted on the extraterritorial status of

the future road that Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev calls the Zangezur corridor.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has rejected what he calls “corridor logic” for unblocking transport routes in the region.

Mirzoyan also told the French daily that the demand for what Azerbaijan seeks as an extraterritorial corridor cannot be a subject of discussion.

“States must allow transit while maintaining sovereignty over their territory. All transport links in the region must be reopened,” Mirzoyan added.

Turkey has long been a key regional ally of Azerbaijan and has kept its border with Armenia closed for nearly three decades, due to what it said was Armenia’s occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts, an issue that was resolved by the cease-fire deal .

The Armenian foreign minister also said that the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh remained tense.

“Over the past year Azerbaijan has committed about 30 serious violations of the ceasefire, as a result of which there have been casualties on the Armenian side. Civilians have also been killed. Nevertheless, Armenia is making every effort to establish

lasting peace in the region. However, in order for this process to be effective, these efforts must be bilateral,” Mirzoyan said.

Mirzoyan stressed that Armenia is ready to hand over to Azerbaijan all the maps of minefields in the region that it has its disposal. However, he said, Azerbaijan, “despite having an obligation, does not release Armenian prisoners of war.”

“While we talk about peace, Azerbaijan multiplies xenophobic statements. This is evidenced by the speeches of the president of Azerbaijan, the “Trophy Park” that was opened in Baku last spring, where Armenians are presented in a humiliated and ridiculed way, “the Armenian foreign minister said.

Mirzoyan also stressed the need for resuming talks under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chairs. “Certainly, the issue of the final settlement of the conflict remains on the agenda. ”But at this stage we have agreed to go forward by taking small steps, such as to secure the release of prisoners of war and access of international organizations, including UNESCO, to Nagorno-Karabakh for humanitarian purposes,” Mirzoyan said.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Figure Skater Adelia Petrosyan Lands Quadruple Rittberger Jump in a First For Women

PERM (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Russian figure skater of Armenian descent Adelia Petrosyan successfully landed a quadruple Rittberger jump for the first in the history of women’s single skating at an official competition in Perm on November 19, RBC reports.

Also called the loop jump, the Rittberger is an edge jump. The skater executes it by taking off from the back outside edge of the skating foot, turning one rotation in the air, and landing on the back outside edge of the same foot. In addition, in the free program the 14-year-old athlete performed a triple loop, a double axel, a triple flip – a triple toe loop, a triple flip – a triple Salchow and a triple lutz. As a result, Petrosyan collected 147.15 points and took first place.

Trade among EEU Member Countries Grows by 30% in 9 Months

YEREVAN (ARKA) — In the first 9 months of 2021, trade among the countries which are members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) grew by more than 30%, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said at an expanded meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council in Yerevan on November 23.

“Exports to third-party countries increased by almost 40 percent, while imports by a quarter,” he added. Mishustin noted that the trade in agricultural products shows good dynamics.

“We fully satisfy our needs for grain, sugar, vegetable oils and some other products through our own production,” he said.

According to Mishustin, this year, three barriers and two obstacles to the free movement of goods, services, capital and labor within EEU have been eliminated; a roadmap has been approved to eliminate exemptions and restrictions in the single market by the end of next year, according to him.

Leaders of Armenia, Russia, Azerbaijan to Meet in Sochi On November 26

MOSCOW (Public Radio of Armenia) — Trilateral talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan will take place in Sochi, timed to coincide with the anniversary of the signing of the November 9th statement on ceasefire and cessation of all hostilities in Nagorno Karabakh, Kremlin reported.

The meeting will take place on November 26 at the initiative of the Russian President.

Particular attention will be paid to the restoration and development of trade, economic and transport links.

Putin is expected to hold separate talks with Nikol Pashinyan and Ilham Aliyev.

Levon Aronian Wins Tata Steel Blitz in India

By Haykaram Nahapetyan
Mirror-Spectator Video Correspondent

KOLKATA, India — “My dear friends and supporters, I am thrilled that I performed well in India’s Calcutta and won the blitz tournament,” wrote chess grandmaster (GM) Levon Aronian on his Facebook page. Armenia’s top chess player participated in a top blitz tournament in India on November 17-21, finishing with a score of 11.5 out of 18. As GM Arjun Erigaisi, the rising start of Indian chess, attained an equal score, the competitors had to engage in playoff games.

Aronian and Ergaisi first tied in two additional tiebreaker matches, but the Armenian GM won the final match known as Armageddon. Despite tough competition, Aronian clinched the victory in the Tata Steel Blitz India Tournament. He noted on Facebook that he dedicated his victory to Armenia, to all compatriots who fell in the battlefield for Artsakh and Armenia and to all who live and struggle for the Armenian nation.

“Levon Aronian likes being in Kolkata. He might be liking it just a bit more now,” wrote India’s *Sportstar*, reporting about his victory.

Due to his participation in this prestigious tournament, Aronian was not able to play in the European Team Championship held in Slovenia on November 11-21. There, Armenia’s national squad consisted of GMs Gabriel Sargissian, Haik Martirosyan, Robert Hovhannisyanyan, Samvel Ter-Sahakyan, and Hovhannes Gabuzyan. After eight rounds, Armenia remained undefeated, scoring an equal number of four victories (against Belgium, Israel, France, and Serbia) and draws (Germany, Norway, Azerbaijan, and Spain). Before the final match, Armenia even appeared at the top of the chart. A draw with Ukraine in the last game could suffice to win the European tournament. Unfortunately, two of the Armenian GMs (Sargissian and Martirosyan) lost their games, and the other two (Hovhannisyanyan and Ter-Sahakyan) tied. Armenia ended up being seventh in the final chart. The women’s team was 11th with four victories, two draws, and three defeats.



Levon Aronian at left, with opponent Arjun Erigaisi (courtesy of chess.com)

Armenian Scientists Become Eligible for The EU’s Largest Funding Program

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The agreement on the participation of the Republic of Armenia in the Horizon Europe Research and Innovation Framework Program was signed between the European Union and Armenia on November 12 in Brussels. The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of the Republic of Armenia announced that according to the agreement, Armenia becomes a country fully associated with the European Union “Horizon Europe” program and the scientists of Armenia become eligible for the opportunities of the EU’s largest funding program with a budget of \$95.5 billion.

The agreement was signed by Anna Aghajanyan, the head of the Representation of the Republic of Armenia to the European Union, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Belgium, and Signe Ratso, Deputy Director General of the European Commission for Research and Innovation.

Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Artur Martirosyan noted that Armenia’s participation in the Horizon-Europe program is an important step for the development of Armenia’s national research system, an opportunity to gain new knowledge and experience.

Launched in 2021, Horizon Europe program will last until 2027. Participation in the program gives Armenian scientists the opportunity to integrate into the European scientific area, use the scientific infrastructure of EU countries, and participate in world-class scientific research.

INTERNATIONAL

Talaat, Tehirian And the Pursuit of Justice

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN — A hundred years ago Berlin was the scene of a criminal trial which was to go down in history. The Armenian Soghomon Tehirian stood trial for the murder of Talaat Pasha, whom he shot on March 15, 1921 in broad daylight. Talaat was the former Interior Minister of the Young Turk regime who had masterminded and directed the genocide against 1.5 million Armenians and countless other Christian minorities.

In the last week of October 2021, a group of human rights activists, historians, actors, musicians and jurists joined to commemorate these historic events, retracing the steps and actions of the protagonists, to reflect on their significance in the development of fundamental concepts of international law.

The Working Group Recognition – Against Genocide, for Understanding among Peoples (AGA) organized the commemoration in three events on October 24, 26 and 29: the first was a guided tour by genocide scholar and AGA Chairwoman Tessa Hofmann, down the Hardenberg-



Hardenbergstrasse in Berlin

strasse, the street in Berlin where Tehirian had shot and killed Talaat; the second featured a lecture by Hofmann on the importance of the subsequent trial in legal history, accompanied by readings from the trial testimony and from literary works dealing with the Armenian Genocide. The final event was a condensed re-enactment of the trial, held in the very same courthouse where the legal proceedings had unfolded.

Dr. Gerayer Koutcharian, AGA founding member, explained why Armenians commemorate the Hardenbergstrasse. In the genocide that began under Sultan Abdul Hamid II in the late 19th century and reached its climax in 1915-1923, Koutcharian said, an estimated “three million Christians were killed and more than 2 million more expelled and deprived of their citizenship.” The motivation? To establish a “Great Turan” of Turkic-speaking peoples stretching from the Adriatic to China, a vision, according to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, that is still being pursued in the unlawful aggression in Artsakh.

Hundreds of thousands of Genocide survivors, Koutch-



New York Times cover story from the time of the assassination

arian said, were “morally and spiritually broken” when they learned that the perpetrators had found refuge in post-war Germany, and “thirsted for revenge.” Thus the importance of this site in Berlin: “When Armenians come to Berlin,” he said, “they look for the place where they feel Soghomon Tehirian in 1921 reestablished the dignity of their people. And that is why they go, their heads held high, to the Hardenbergstrasse.”

The impact of those events was to be felt not only in Germany and on the Armenian community, but worldwide, and forever after, as Hofmann detailed in a speech, “From Assassination to UN Convention: The Berlin Criminal Trial against Soghomon Tehirian and Raphael Lemkin’s Consequences for International Law.”

Hofmann reviewed the political background of the dramatic events in Berlin, beginning with reference to the “Armenian Question,” the reforms that the European Great Powers listed in the 1878 Berlin Treaty and demanded the Ottoman Empire introduce. After 25 years of inaction, Turkey under the Young Turk regime, agreed in 1913, but took no action. As the German theologian Dr. Johannes Lepsius would note in his trial testimony, the Young Turks in 1913 threatened that, unless the Europeans desisted from demanding reforms, something would happen that would make the Hamidian massacres look like child’s play.

After the massacres began in spring 1915, the Great Powers issued a warning that they would hold the regime responsible for crimes against humanity — introducing for the first time this concept. It was only after the war that the Ottoman authorities, under pressure of occupying Allied forces, pursued suspects and opened war crimes tribunals. Among the Young Turk leaders who were tried, convicted and sentenced to death, most had fled and would be brought to justice only later by Armenian avengers. Following Mustafa Kemal’s establishment of the republic, a general amnesty was declared on March 31, 1923, war criminal suspects were freed, and the triumvirs were later declared national martyrs.

In 1919 the Armenian Revolutionary Party deliberated measures which led to the founding of the secret network, Nemesis, tasked with executing the Young Turk mass murderers who had been sentenced in absentia. Hofmann described the Nemesis organization and its leading members, and listed the perpetrators it succeeded in assassinating, among them Talaat.

Hofmann provided a biographical sketch of Mehmet Talaat, detailing his direct responsibility for the deportation and massacres, as documented by contemporary as well as later sources. After the armistice and his escape, he lived under an assumed name in Berlin, protected by the German authorities until Tehirian assassinated him. Under Hitler, Talaat’s mortal remains were transferred in 1943 to Turkey, where he was honored as a martyr, with mosques, plazas, streets, schools etc. named after him.

Hofmann followed with a biographical sketch of Tehirian, who attracted the attention of Nemesis in March

1920, when he had assassinated Harutyun Mkrtchian, who had drawn up the list of Armenian notables to be arrested on April 24, 1915 in Constantinople. Tehirian was invited to Boston and deployed by Nemesis to deal with Talaat, who headed their list of targets. During Tehirian’s later trial in Berlin, no mention was made of Nemesis.

In evaluating the legal and historical significance of the trial, which ended in a not-guilty verdict for Tehirian, Hofmann focused on the work of Raphael Lemkin, who was to coin the term genocide and lay the basis for the 1948 UN Genocide Convention. The Tehirian trial posed questions of moral and legal rights to the young jurist, who was motivated by the need to define the crime of mass murder. It was the first time a foreign court had dealt with the Young Turks’ genocide against the Armenians.

Hofmann summarized the trial proceedings, stressing the German government’s desire to conclude quickly and



Bishop Grigoris Balakian

to avoid a political trial by focusing attention on Tehirian’s psychological condition. Thanks to the testimony by Johannes Lepsius and two Armenian survivors, this failed. Lepsius could provide documented evidence of the deportations, death marches and deliberate killings. The Armenian witnesses, Christine Terzibashian and the Very Rev. Grigoris Balakian (later a bishop), gave eyewitness reports; she had been deported with family members from Erzerum in 1915, whereas Balakian was among those arrested on April 24, 1915 in Constantinople and deported to Chankiri.

The Voice of a Survivor

Christine Terzibashian’s memory came alive at the Berlin event, in a moving speech by her youngest son. Unable to attend in person for health reasons, Armen Terzibashian sent greetings which were read. His mother, he said, spoke seldom and unwillingly about the deportations. He described her as “motherly, a strong personality, and the most modest and loving person” he ever knew.

Her “struggle for survival made her creative ... which helped her later as a stateless person in a foreign country.” She had told her son about the “endless marches, walking by corpses and the dying, ... without water or food, the continuous stench of death, a terrible thirst that left her tongue as rigid as a stone.”

At one point along the Euphrates, called Boğazi Kemach gorge, there were “so many corpses lying in the river that one could have crossed it without getting their feet wet.” She described acts of brutality on the part of the Turkish guards, who smashed her six month old son against a cliff and killed her parents before her eyes; only she and two brothers survived. After five years’ wandering, during which she found refuge among Kurds, she made it to Berlin with the help of a relief organization and there was reunited with her husband.

“The devil in a man’s shape,” as she described Talaat, was not able to break her, he said, marveling at her vitality. He ended with a warning, that xenophobia had not yet been defeated, and quoted Bertolt Brecht, “The womb from which that crawled is fertile still.”

Bea Ehlers-Kerbekian, an Armenian-German actress from Berlin, then assumed the role of Christine Terzibashian, and read from her testimony at the 1921 trial. In simple, direct language she described the death marches in gruesome detail. Kerbekian concluded the evening with two more readings, this time from works by the late Turkish-German author and human rights activist Doğan Akhanlı. The selections from his novel “Madonna’s Last Dream” and play, “Anne’s Silence,” both deal with the Armenian genocide.

Berlin District Court III

On October 29, the scene shifted to the courtroom itself, the very same place where Tehirian stood trial for the murder of Talaat Pasha. In front of a group of invited guests present as well as those joining via Zoom, actors and actresses reenacted the spectacular trial in condensed, highly dramatic form. Following an introduction by Tessa Hofmann, Dr. Bernd Pickel, President of the Berlin Superior Court (Kammergericht), offered reflections on the special aspects of the proceedings, how they might be evaluated juridically and historically.

Stepan Gantralyan opened the proceedings with a song in Armenian, accompanied on the harpsichord by Vincent see JUSTICE, page 20

Community News

Armenian Bar Turns 32nd in New York

NEW YORK — New York City seldom disappoints and often dazzles, just as it did when it played host to the Armenian Bar Association's 32nd Annual Meeting November 5-6. The weekend was marked by a deep sense of camaraderie, commitment and collegiality among the many lawyers, law students and judges in attendance who assembled in-person for the first time in two years because of the worldwide pandemic. The Annual Meeting Weekend began with a marvelous welcome reception, followed by captivating panel discussions, meaningful reports on the Association's activities, and the election of new board members and executive officers.

The site for the Friday evening welcome reception was a roof-top oasis perched high above the Manhattan side of the East River, overlooking the shimmering lights of the outer boroughs. The stunning horizon was made possible by long-time Armenian Bar devotee and strategist, Emma Arakelian, and her husband, Tiran Nalbandyan, who are stakeholders in that magical residential tower. Approximately 150 members and guests were on hand for an evening holding both somber remembrances and joyful delights, all the while chock-full of sumptuous Armenian food and fine Armenian wines.

The Friday evening program featured a moving video tribute and personal reflections in honor of recently-passed, former Chairman Edvin Minassian. New York-based Claire Kedeshian was pitch-perfect as she



Lucy Varpetian

ushered in the most fitting mood for Edvin's memorial presentation during which Armenian Bar Chairwoman Lucy Varpetian, Dr. Antranig Kasparian (Edvin's former colleague in community-building efforts), and Bita Adham (Edvin's former law partner) offered compassionate and thoughtful words of reflection. The evening's musical interlude, provided by Joel A. Martin, aka Jazzical Komitas, was simply spectacular, moving many to tears, with several breathtaking renditions of the sacred music of Komitas Vartabed.

see ANNIVERSARY, page 8



Prof. Armen T. Marsoobian

Prof. Armen T. Marsoobian Appointed Ordjanian Visiting Professor at Columbia University For Spring Semester

NEW YORK — Prof. Armen T. Marsoobian has been appointed the Nikit and Eleonora Ordjanian Visiting Professor in the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University for the Spring of 2022, where he will be teaching a course entitled *The Resilience of Memory: the Armenian Genocide*. This course will explore the forms of memory resilience, such as words (in the form of poetry, memoir, drama, fiction) and images (in the form of photography, film, painting) used to combat the forgetting and the denial of genocidal crimes.

Armenians began a process of reflective resistance against their cultural loss in the decades after 1915. Yet it took another generation for artists and writers to foreground this resistance in their creative output. In parallel to the Jewish response to the Holocaust, the 1960's and 70's saw the awakening of an Armenian public response to the genocide. Along with memorialization and demands for justice, a heightened critical reflection on the meaning of loss took place. Historical studies of the genocide multiplied adding to an understanding of the nature of the violence. Alongside such scholarship, the broader discipline of memory studies immeasurably added to our understanding. The study of Holocaust memory will help us understand the Armenian resilience of memory. The art and literature explored will be supplemented by dialogue (in-person or virtually) with writers and artists whose works of resistance continue to be created today.

This seminar style course (MDES GU4328, Call # 16818) will be taught on Mondays from 12:10-2 p.m. and is open to auditors as well as matriculating students. Registration for auditors begins January 10-14 and classes begin January 24. The tuition for Auditors is \$2,400 and for Lifelong Learners (those aged 65 and over) is \$750. Registration for Auditors and Lifelong Learners may be done online at: sps.columbia.edu/admissions/course-auditors/application-requirements, where the Online Application Form and Lifelong Learners Proof of Age requirements are available.

Classes will be held in-person and the building and room location will be announced in January.

Marsoobian is professor of philosophy at Southern Connecticut State University and an affiliated faculty of the Human Rights Institute at the University of Connecticut, as well as a previous Ordjanian Visiting Professor at Columbia. He is the editor-in-chief of *Metaphilosophy* and has co-edited seven books, including *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Genocide and Memory* (2018), *Criticism and Compassion: The Ethics and Politics of Claudia Card* (2018), and *Genocide's Aftermath: Responsibility and Repair* (2017). He serves as First Vice President of the International Association of Genocide Scholars.

see APPOINTMENT, page 11

SAS Awards Travel, Research Grants to Graduate Students For Fall 2021

FRESNO — The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) has selected its awardees for its Graduate Research and Conference Grants Program for MA and PhD Students for Fall 2021. Established in 2019, the aim of the Grants Program is to provide resources for graduate students to conduct research and present papers at conferences. Grants of up to \$1000 are awarded semi-annually to eligible graduate students. The Fall 2021 group of applicants was chosen by a selection committee composed of members of the SAS Executive Council.

Haley Zovickian, is an MA student in the Department of Sociology at Columbia University, working on Armenian-American identity as seen through critical race theory.

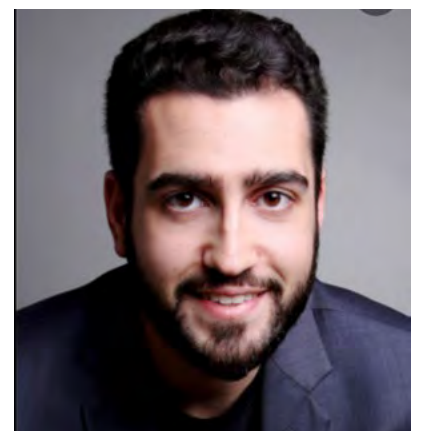
"I am so grateful to the Society for Armenian Studies for their support of my research on critical race theory



Haley Zovickian

and Armenian racialization. Thanks to the Society, I will be able to bring the experiences of the Armenian community into academic discourse on race in the United States. I am truly humbled and honored to receive this generous opportunity."

Daniel Ohanian, is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) working on dis-



Daniel Ohanian

sertation titled "Church of Armenia, Church of Rome: Faith, Print, and Power in Ottoman-Armenian History, 1688-1717."

"I am pursuing a PhD in history from UCLA, where my dissertation is supervised by Dr. Sebouh Aslanian. The SAS Graduate Research Grant is helping me fund a three-month research trip to France, where I will be investigating Ottoman-Armenian

see SAS, page 8



COMMUNITY NEWS

SAS Awards Travel, Research Grants to Graduate Students for Fall 2021

SAS, from page 7

history in various archives and libraries. Specifically, I will be looking into the Armenian and French missionaries who worked to spread Roman Catholicism among Ottoman Armenians around the year 1700 and the various reactions to their work. French institutions are home to some of the richest collections of letters and reports about this history, and I am grateful to the Society for Armenian Studies for helping me access them.”

Aram Ghoogasian, is a doctoral candidate at the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University working on the reading culture across the Armenian world in the mid-nineteenth century.

“The grant from the Society for Armenian Studies will allow me to visit the Mardigian, Boyadjian, and Demirjibashian libraries in the Greater Boston area this coming spring. My work in these institutions will contribute to my dissertation research on the effects of the industrialization of printing on Armenian language and culture. I am incredibly grateful for the SAS’s support – especially coming off a year in which travel was difficult and uncertain – for my own work and that of other early career scholars in the field.”

Hazal Ozdemir, is a doctoral student in the Department of History at Northwestern University. Her dissertation explores Armenian circular mobility between the Ottoman Empire and the United States between 1896-1908.

“It is a great honor to be a recipient of the SAS Grant. The generous assistance of the SAS will enable me to travel to Paris. Due to this significant grant, I can carry out research in the AGBU Nubar Library for my dissertation project, titled “They Vowed to Never Return: Photographic Documentation and Ottoman Armenian Mobility at the End of Empire.” Financial support of the SAS is very important for graduate students to pursue their academic goals.”



Hazal Ozdemir

Ruben Davtyan, is doctoral candidate at the International Max Planck Research School for the Anthropology, Archaeology and History of Eurasia (IMPRS ANARCHIE) working on the impacts of the Near East and Eurasian nomads in the South Caucasus and the representation of local elites during the Middle Iron Age. He was awarded the Nina G. Garsoian Graduate Research Grant for Ancient and Early Medieval Armenian History.

“I would like to thank the SAS for sup-



Ruben Davtyan

porting my research. My Ph.D. thesis focuses on the Iron Age tombs of the well-known necropolis of Lori Berd, in the north of Armenia. Kings of Urartu waged several military campaigns against Etiuni, an administrative confederation, which Lori Berd presumably belonged to. I examine the impact on the material assemblage from burial context, where not only separate objects of Urartian repertoire did reach Lori Berd, but also items and even practices of Urartian origin were locally imitated. These phenomena were, however, limited to the obviously large and rich burials. Since the majority of the objects are not published, my work will contribute to the archaeology in Armenia of Urartian period.”

Lori Pirinjian is a doctoral student in the Department Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles working on how Armenia’s “anti-gender” movement uses national rhetoric as a stage for the struggle for regional political power between the Russian Federation and the West.

“It is an honor to receive the SAS Travel Grant. I will be putting the funds toward my upcoming summer travel to Armenia in order to gain valuable face-time with my research constituents. These types of in-person, on the ground interactions are an irreplaceable part of my research, and it is thanks to the generosity of the SAS that I will be able to see this through.”

“This year we had the largest pool of applicants. Due to our tight budget, we were not able to support all of them. The awardees are conducting novel research in the field of Armenian Studies in the general understanding. We are extremely happy that we are able to support our graduate students in these difficult times” noted SAS President Bedross Der Matossian. “I would like to specifically thank the Armenian Chairs and Programs Directors and other Armenian Institutions for supporting us in



Lori Prinjian

fulfilling this objective. We hope to raise more money in the future in order to fund more graduate students.”

The next application cycle will have a deadline of April 15, 2022.

The SAS Graduate and Research Grant was made possible through the institutional support of the Armenian Studies Program, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; the Meghrouni Family Presidential Chair in Armenian Studies, University of California, Irvine; the Hovannisian Chair of Modern Armenian History, University of California, Los Angeles; the Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Chair of Armenian Art & Architecture, Tufts University; the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR); the Armenian Communities Department, Gulbenkian Foundation; the Armenian Studies Program, California State University, Fresno; the Institute of Armenian Studies, University of Southern California; the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center, and the AGBU Nubar Library, Paris. The Nina G. Garsoian Graduate Research Grant for Ancient and Early Medieval Armenian History is supported by Dr. Levon Avdoyan.

For membership information or more information on the Society for Armenian Studies, visit the SAS website, at societyforarmenianstudies.com.

Armenian Bar Turns 32nd in New York

ANNIVERSARY, from page 7

The next day, Midtown Manhattan--and more precisely the intersection of Madison Avenue and 43rd Street, was transformed into Armenian Bar headquarters for the panel discussions, the business and board meetings, and the election of officers. The auditorium was secured through the good graces of Taline Sahakian and Grant Petrosyan of Constantine Cannon LLP, which maintains its New York office in the same landmark location. Two solid panel discussions anchored the Saturday daytime legal education platform in that space.

The first program, “Accountability and Recourse under United Nations Treaty Bodies,” was moderated by Levon Golenukhin of Eversheds Sutherland (US) LLP and galvanized by Alexander Bedrosyan of Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP and Astghik Hairapetian, Law Clerk at the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Their discussion offered a primer on the sophisticated and timely topics of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, which sound similar but carry distinct characteristics. The panelists also highlighted the rights of individuals under various human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which is the bedrock of the Armenia vs. Azerbaijan state-to-state action currently pending before the International Court of Justice. CERD is also the legal

framework of an Armenian Bar-supported petition to the responsible United Nations Committee on behalf of individual victims of Azerbaijan’s illicit war of aggression against Artsakh.

The second continuing legal education presentation, “Free Speech on the Roberts Court and the Trump Court,” proved satisfying for practitioners and students in the field of First Amendment law, and equally gratifying for newcomers to the area. In the tradition of the best of professors who teach with uncomplicated, understandable, and relatable methods, Professor Gregory Magarian explained how the United States Supreme Court influences the quality of our public discussion insofar as it has the ability to define the scope and power of the First Amendment. Interestingly, Magarian, who teaches Constitutional Law at Washington University School of Law in St. Louis, explained how First Amendment legal doctrine is fundamentally formed not so much by the judicial branch which draws its brought outlines, but rather in political/social contexts as we experience them. Magarian is just one of a few Armenian-Americans who have served as judicial clerks to the United States Supreme Court, having worked as a judicial clerk for Justice John Paul Stevens. The presentation was moderated by Taline Sahakian of Constantine Cannon LLP.

During the ensuing business meeting, Chairwoman Lucy Varpetian presented a

comprehensive report on the association’s activities during the last year. The overview homed in on the current status and future plans for the Association’s pro bono clinics, domestic violence initiatives, mentorship and student outreach programs, and, in particular, on the mobilization of a great many Armenian Bar members during and following the 44-Day War in an effort to mount legal challenges to the wide spectrum of unlawful trespasses experienced by the Armenian nation.

The business meeting concluded with elections for open positions on the Board of Governors. Every year, 5-6 members are elected for three-year terms to serve on the 18-member board. Re-elected as governors are Karnig Kerkonian of Illinois, Mesrop Khoudagoulian of California, and Scott

Ohnegian of New Jersey. Elected for the first time to the board are Taline Sahakian of New York and Tigran Palyan of California who replace the expiring terms of Armenian Bar leaders and stalwarts Saro Kerkonian and Tina Odjaghian of California. Reflective of her enduring humility, board member Christine Engustian of Rhode Island offered her unexpired board seat to allow for the next generation of leaders to rise into the ranks of the Armenian Bar’s leadership. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Amy Ashvanian, a catalyst of several important Armenian Bar initiatives, has assumed that board seat.

The newly assembled Board of Governors then re-elected Lucy Varpetian of California as Chairperson, Taline Sahakian of New York and Raffi Sarrafian of Illinois as Vice Chairpersons, Grant Petrosyan of New York as Secretary, and Gerard Kassabian of California as Treasurer.

Scholarships Available

Students of Armenian Descent
Having Completed One Year of College by June, 2022
Applications and other information may be obtained from
ARMENIAN STUDENTS’ ASSOCIATION
Scholarship Committee
333 Atlantic Avenue • Warwick, RI 02888
Tel. 401 461-6114 • Fax 401 461-6112
e-mail: headasa@aol.com
Deadline for returning completed Applications: March 15, 2022



COMMUNITY NEWS

St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary, Important for St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, to Relocate

YONKERS, N.Y. — To address the growing need for priests and other vocations in the Orthodox Church, the Board of Trustees of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary (SVOTS) has voted to relocate SVOTS from its current location in Yonkers, NY. The new location and the timing of the move have yet to be determined, but the Board recognizes that the Seminary will not be able to expand and adapt to the needs of the twenty-first century Church if the campus remains in Yonkers.

Following eighteen months of extensive research and deliberation at five Board meetings, the Board reached the relocation decision on November 5. Board members and Seminary administration worked with three professional consulting groups during this process and concluded that SVOTS' current location is untenable for numerous reasons, including the following:

The New York City area's high and rising cost of living impacts seminarians, their families, and employees and makes it difficult for SVOTS to recruit faculty, staff, and students.

The Yonkers campus is landlocked, leaving no room for expansion. Expansion is needed due to rising enrollment, increasing operational and staffing needs, ongoing and future initiatives (such as adding on-line educational programs to current residential offerings), and other infrastructure needs.

The legal and regulatory environment in the New York area makes significant alterations to campus infrastructure or growth extremely difficult, even if expansion of

the current campus were possible.

Preliminary estimates from contractors have revealed it would take tens of millions of dollars to make necessary improvements to SVOTS' aging and deteriorating campus in order to be a viable institution in the twenty-first century. Simply bringing the Yonkers campus to an adequate standard could easily cost as much or more than relocating and building a brand new campus to fit the Seminary's needs for decades to come.

"Much prayer and a long process of due diligence and discussion led to the Board's unanimous decision to relocate the campus of St Vladimir's Seminary," said Dn. Michael Hyatt, trustee and executive chair of SVOTS. "We considered doing nothing; we explored investing into the campus in Yonkers; but we believe without doubt the legacy and long-term future of SVOTS lies with relocation in order to expand and meet the demands of the twenty-first century."

Fr. Chad Hatfield, president of SVOTS, said: "The time has come to make a bold move, not just to survive but to thrive and expand for the sake of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." A relocation task force will evaluate various cities throughout the country, and Seminary administration will complete a comprehensive project plan, a detailed fundraising plan, and a five-year financial model. The Board will consider the location and timeline for relocation at its May 2022 meeting.

St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in Armonk, N.Y. offers its master's of divinity degree through SVOTS.



Dr. Arman Tatoyan, second from left, with Ambassador Armen Baibourtoian

Consul General Baibourtoian Meets with Armenia Human Rights Defender Tatoyan

GLENDAL — On November 17, Consul General of Armenia in Los Angeles Ambassador Armen Baibourtoian met with the Human Rights Defender of Armenia Dr. Arman Tatoyan, who is on a visit to Los Angeles upon the invitation of the Armenian National Committee of America -Western Region (ANCA-WR). The meeting was attended by Nora Hovsepien, Esq., Chair of the Board of Directors of the ANCA-Western Region, Garo Ghazarian, Esq., Board member of the Armenian Bar Association, staff members of the Consulate General - Minister-Counselor Nelly Saroyan, and Counselors Varzadat Pahlavuni and Edgar Grigoryan.

During the meeting, issues related to the recent incursions of the Azerbaijani armed forces into the sovereign territory of Armenia and the situation developed as a result of this aggression were discussed.

During the meeting, Ombudsman Arman Tatoyan presented the activities of the Human Rights Defender of Armenia throughout the recent period. The interlocutors emphasized the importance of the work of documenting and disseminating information about human rights violations conducted by Azerbaijan. The participants of the meeting also discussed the ways of enhancing cooperation between the Foreign Ministry structure and the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia.

As it is known, the Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles jointly with the Armenian Bar Association organized a reception in honor of Human Rights Defenders of Armenia and Artsakh Arman Tatoyan and Artak Beglaryan in July 2019.

OBITUARY

Mary Ann Mozian

Dedicated to Family, Armenia

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, N.J. — Mary Ann Mozian, a longtime resident of Washington Township, passed away suddenly on November 17, 2021.

Born in Jersey City, she was baptized at the Holy Cross Armenian Apostolic Church in Union City, where she attended Sunday School. She grew up in North Bergen and attended Weehawken High School.

Mary Ann lived a life full of love and happiness and over the years touched the lives of many. Her presence always left a lasting impression. For close to 30 years Mary Ann worked tirelessly for the Church and the Armenian community. Her long hours and dedication to St. Leon's and the parishioners was unwavering. Her countless hours preparing for St. Leon's annual food festival, organizing events, answering the phones... just a short list of what she did for the church. Without hesitation, she always went out of her way to help anyone in need. She was the long-term administrator of St. Leon's Saturday Armenian language school.

Mary Ann was not only a pillar of the church community, but she was also a devoted volunteer to the Fuller Center for Housing. Over the years, along with close friends, she visited Armenia 8 times and helped Armenian families in need of housing.

Upon returning home, she always recounted that her most memorable times from the trip were working side by side with the families, plastering walls, and

sharing meals during their breaks. She will always be remembered for her kindness and selflessness.

For those that knew her, her family was the epicenter of her life. She was always the one to bring family together and keep alive memorable traditions. Whether it was Lamajeun Sundays, cousin dinners, and multiple first course meals at holiday dinners, her love for her family was paramount.

Over the years, her house was home to many. She welcomed family, friends, and friends of friends into her home and backyard. Whether it was for a day of swimming, a game of cards or extended stays, her door was always open.

It goes without saying her most cherished time was spent with her five loving grandchildren. Her greatest gift was being able to be a part of their lives and sharing a special relationship with each of them.

Mary Ann was predeceased by her parents, Peter and Juliette and her sister Jeanette Epstein. She is survived by her children, Jeannine Mosco and her husband Jeffrey and Craig Mozian and his wife Tara; sister Rose Ann Arzoomanian and her husband Antranig; brother Peter Baligian and his wife Renee; grandchildren Andrew, Brielle, Olivia Mosco and Carson and Amelia Mozian.

Her funeral was held on Monday, November 22, at St. Leon Armenian Church, in Fair Lawn, NJ. Interment followed at Cedar Grove Cemetery in Flushing, NY.

Donation

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator would like to thank Christine Rinck of Independence, MO, for her donation of \$50.

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COMMUNITY NEWS



Representatives from various New York area organizations, including the Tekeyan Cultural Association, with Artsakh State Minister Artak Beglaryan

Tekeyan Greater NY Chapter Meets with UN Amb. Margaryan, Artsakh State Minister Beglaryan

NEW YORK – The Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Greater New York Chapter visited Ambassador Mher Margaryan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia, with a delegation, cosponsored a meeting with Artsakh State Minister Artak Beglaryan, and participated in a second meeting with the latter in mid-November.

On November 11, a group of TCA Greater NY committee members met with Amb. Margaryan in his offices. The meeting was an opportunity to introduce the latter to new committee members and discuss how TCA can work with the UN Armenian Mission to strengthen the Armenian community in the tristate area.

On November 13, TCA Greater NY chair Hilda Hartounian participated on behalf of her chapter in a private luncheon and meeting with Beglaryan in New York City, along with representatives of other organizations, to discuss current events in Artsakh. The next day, the TCA chapter was a cosponsor with other organizations of a presentation by Beglaryan in the DoubleTree Hotel of Fort Lee, New Jersey.

Beglaryan spoke in detail about the current situation in Artsakh, border safety, the status of Armenian POWs, and permanent refugees. Hartounian in turn spoke with him about the TCA Sponsor a Teacher program that has been aiding teachers and school staff in Artsakh and Armenia for over 20 years, along with the fundraiser for the TCA Sustainable Assistance program, which helps displaced families from the Berdzor Tekeyan School in Artsakh by providing bee colonies or cattle to serve as a means of revenue.



From left, Serge Panossian, Shoghig Medzadurian, Vartan Ilanjan, Ambassador Mher Margaryan, Hilda Hartounian and Barkev Kalayjian. Missing from photo are Taleen Babayan and Sylvia Buzantian.

HALO Trust Saving Lives in Artsakh

HALO, from page 1
program manager for Nagorno Karabakh stationed in Yerevan, gave an overview and update of the work that has been done in clearing Artsakh of hazardous explosives.

A Broader Picture

The webinar began with Dr. Maranci's presentation on several beautiful and architecturally/historically important sites in the region. Maranci pointed out the buildings and monuments at Amaras, Gandzasar, Tsitsernavank, Dadivank and elsewhere. Amaras, which houses the 4th-century tomb of St. Grigoris (grandson of Gregory the Illuminator), is unique from an art historical perspective as one of the few early Christian churches built with the door to the East, a feature it shares with the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Tsitsernavank, a remarkable survival of a beautiful 4th-5th century basilica, has the odd addition of a second floor gallery directly above the apse (altar area). The lengthy Armenian inscriptions on the outside walls of Dadivank, and the sheer beauty of Gandzasar also drew attention. Maranci stressed time and again that proper study of these sites is impossible without going to them in person, and the layperson can easily see why.

Whatley, in turn, in an effort to put the Karabakh issue in context for his largely American audience, stressed the historical importance and cultural value of the region that these monuments attest to.



Miles Hawthorn

Touching on all angles of the issue, he stressed that helping Karabakh's people was reflective of American values, and that donors have included not only members of the Armenian Diaspora, but Americans of all backgrounds.

Humanitarian Commitment

The main component of the webinar was a presentation by Hawthorn on the situation on the ground in Karabakh, followed by a question-and-answer period. Hawthorn, a British native, is the program director for HALO Trust's operations in Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia. Currently residing in Yerevan, he along with the other four members of the international team,

two of whom are in Stepanakert, oversee teams predominantly made up of locals whom HALO has recruited and trained. Hawthorn noted during the question and answer phase, that HALO has been working in Karabakh since the first war and that they have developed a deep level of trust with locals. When residents see the HALO logo, Hawthorn says, they know they can trust the work that the organization does.

Since the last war, HALO has again been at work removing explosives in Nagorno-Karabakh. These are predominantly cluster munitions, rather than landmines, which were a problem in the 1990s. According to Human Rights Watch: "Cluster munitions pose an immediate threat to civilians during conflict by randomly scattering submunitions or bomblets over a wide area. They continue to pose a threat post-conflict by leaving remnants, including submunitions that fail to explode upon impact becoming de facto landmines."

Since the Armenian side didn't gain any territory in which the Azerbaijanis could have left behind landmines, the cluster munitions fired or dropped from the enemy side are the real problem today.

Hawthorn shared some startling slides depicting how many places in Artsakh have been riddled with these explosives have been found. But his numbers also painted a picture of tireless work on behalf of the organization and its predominantly

local team members. The organization has four main tasks: to survey residents as to the whereabouts of known explosives, to comb the urban and rural areas, to destroy explosives when found, and to educate local residents about how to remain safe under these conditions. Hawthorn also shared that HALO has been doing other work, like bringing needed supplies into the region, often partnering with Armenians in the Diaspora to do so.

An interesting facet of HALO's work is its hiring primarily women. HALO has been involved in empowering women in this regard, who further take on protecting their homeland. The role of women as expert de-miners goes back before the latest war.

The webinar ended with a question-and-answer session. There was also a call to action by Whatley for viewers to contact their congressional representatives. According to Whatley, HALO is looking to get an allocation for \$2 million toward Karabakh demining efforts added to the US federal budget. Whatley, who was formerly the executive director of the United Nations Association of the United States, and prior to that was with the International Republican Institute, said if federal funding is allocated, he would like to see the American flag patch on the HALO uniform, to show that the US is just as committed to the region as Russia.

COMMUNITY NEWS

San Francisco
Bay Area Artsakh
Task Force Raises
\$100,000 for IFS

SAN FRANCISCO — On Friday, November 12, the San Francisco Bay Area Artsakh Task Force Humanitarian Aid Committee (SFBAATF-HAC) donated \$100,000 to the Insurance Foundation for Servicemen in Armenia (IFS) at Krozian-Zekarian-Vasbouragan Armenian School in San Francisco, CA.

Earlier this year, SFBAATF- HAC hosted a virtual fundraising event which raised \$100,000 for wounded Artsakh soldiers and families of fallen soldiers.

The first-ever “For Our Soldiers” virtual gala and auction attracted over a few hundred attendees. Participants enjoyed touching musical performances, listened to encouraging messages from Archbishop Hovnan Derderian and Bishop Torkom Donoyan and watched moving personal messages from Artsakh soldiers.

The donations went through the nonprofit foundation, Friends of the Armenian Soldier and Family (FASF), and then sent to the Insurance Foundation for Servicemen in Armenia (IFS). IFS is a non-governmental organization that provides monetary compensation to the families of deceased and wounded soldiers in Armenia and Artsakh. For more information, see <https://www.1000plus.am/en>.

The San Francisco Bay Area Artsakh Task Force (SFBAATF) was established in October 2020 in response to the 2020 war in Artsakh with a specific focus on providing assistance to Artsakh by coordinating regional efforts. More information can be found at www.facebook.com/BayAreaArtsakhTaskForce.

Prof. Armen
T. Marsoobian
Appointed Ordjanian
Visiting Professor at
Columbia University
For Spring Semester

APPOINTMENT, from page 7

The Ordjanian Visiting Professorship program at Columbia is made possible by an endowment established by the late Dr. Nikit and Eleanor Ordjanian in 1988. Previous Ordjanian Visiting Professors have included Levon Abrahamian, Vardan Azatyan, Peter Balakian, Melissa Bilal, (the late) George Bournoutian, Seta Dadoyan, Helen Evans, Roberta Ervine, Rachel Goshgarian, Arman Grigoryan, (the late) Robert Hewsen, Khatchig Mouradian, Ara Sarafian and Khachig Tololyan.

The Ordjanian Visiting Professorship is one of several programs of the Armenian Center at Columbia, the organization that raised the initial funds to establish the Avedissian Chair of Armenian Studies at Columbia in 1979 and which continues to provide funds for scholarships, library acquisitions, academic publications, the Anahid Literary Award, lectures, conferences, and symposia.

For more information about Marsoobian’s upcoming course, contact him at marsoobiana1@southernct.edu.



IFS leadership receives \$100,000 donation from the San Francisco Bay Area Artsakh Task Force Humanitarian Aid Committee. Left to Right: Sona Baghdasaryan (IFS), Tatevik Yaghjyan (IFS), Christyne Davidian (SFBAATF-HAC), Angelique Arzoumanian (SFBAATF-HAC), Dicko Shahvekilian (SFBAATF-HAC), Narine Galstyan (IFS), Hrayr Sarkissian (SFBAATF-HAC)



To Our Readers

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* is the first English-language Armenian weekly published in the US, and for nearly 90 years, it has served the community. Readers can learn of the most important developments in Armenia, as well as international politics, art and culture throughout the world in a convenient and concise format.

Once again, it has been a challenging year. The *Mirror-Spectator* has covered the crises in Artsakh, Armenia and Lebanon, supported efforts at humanitarian fundraising, and secured new young correspondents in Armenia, Artsakh and the US. We continue to provide periodic video reports online. Send us your email if you wish to regularly receive links to articles and videos.

We continue with our annual tradition of publishing your Christmas and New Year’s wishes, and greetings to relatives and friends in the final issue of the year. In case you wish to give gift subscriptions of the *Mirror-Spectator* for Christmas, for your convenience, we are placing a gift subscription form in the newspaper as well as one below.

Sincerely,


Alin K. Gregorian
Editor


Aram Arkun
Managing Editor

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Arts & Culture

Anna Maria Mattaar

Translating from Armenian Into Dutch and Vice Versa

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — Dutch translator Anna Maria Mattaar speaks Armenian without any effort and without a foreign accent. She is one of those rare Armenian-speaking non Armenians, who translates not only from Armenian into their native languages, but also from other languages (in this case, from Dutch and English) into Armenian. In the person of Anna Maria, we have a tireless devotee to Armenian literature and culture in the Netherlands.

Mattaar lives in Hellevoetsluis visits Armenia every year. My conversation with her took place during her last visit to Armenia last October.



Anna jan, welcome to Armenia again. Surely you no longer know how many times you have been to Armenia.

I really do not know, Artsvi jan. I first came to Armenia in 1999 with my Armenian husband and three children. At that time, I only knew a few words in Armenian. Gradually I learned on my own and then started translating into Armenian. Before that I was translating from Spanish to Dutch.

How many books have you translated from Armenian so far?

I have only three Dutch translated Armenian books. The first one was Nairi Zaryan's *David of Sassoun*, which was republished five years after its publication. This is how my activity started. After that, a collection of poems by contemporary Armenian poet Vahe Arsen and recently Hovhannes Tumanyan's fairy tales with illustrations by a Dutch artist see TRANSLATING, page 13



Hayg Boyadjian in Bonn

Composer Hayg Boyadjian Meets (So to Speak) with Bach, Beethoven

LEXINGTON, Mass. — Grammy Nominee composer Hayg Boyadjian was recently in Bonn, Germany where his “unusual” solo piano composition Variations on a Theme by Bach (20 variations) was recorded for CD release beginning of next year. The recording was done in a concert hall with superior acoustics, on a brand new Steinway Concert Grand piano, with one of the top recording engineers in Europe, Peter Hertmans, and also supervising the recording the teacher-mentor of the recording virtuoso pianist Armen Manaseryan, Heribert Koch, who is also a concert pianist and a composer.

Armen Manaseryan will be performing in Frankfurt, Germany on December 2 at the prestigious Steinway Hall a lengthy solo concert pairing Boyadjian's recently recorded Bach variations with the 32 Variations by Beethoven. Manaseryan will close the concert with Tchaikovsky's The Seasons. The concert is sponsored by the Harvard Club of Germany. Many Harvard University luminaries will be present and Armen Manaseryan will introduce me to the audience in my absence.

The Boyadjian Bach variations take their inspiration from a 30-set variations by Bach. Bach utilizes extensively the bass line of the theme that opens the variations. It is called a chaconne or passacaglia and follows Bach's variations in a very similar way by using often the bass line.

“My first variation acts more as a prelude of things to come rather than a variation in see BEETHOVEN, page 13

Startseite

Club-Verzeichnis

Webinar

Mitgliedschaft

Events

Kalender

Deutschland

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RHEIN-MAIN

Harvard-Magazin

Forum

Über uns

Förderungen

Links

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Vorstellung:
Armen-Levon Manaseryan - Concert at Steinway & Sons
Frankfurt

Datum:
02.12.2021

Uhrzeit:
20.00 Uhr (Empfang ab 19.30 Uhr)

Ort:
Steinway & Sons
Böckenhimer Landstr. 47
60325 Frankfurt

2. Dezember 2021

Termin im Kalender eintragen

Announcement for the concert at the Harvard Club of Germany

Francis Kurkdjian, Talent Behind Baccarat Rouge 540, Is New Dior Master Perfumer

PARIS (Grazia) — Parfums Christian Dior in October announced the appointment of Francis Kurkdjian as Perfume Creation Director. Kurkdjian is stepping into the role previously held by industry veteran François Demachy.

The news comes as Grasse-born Demachy retires from his full time position, closing off what has been one of the most impressive tenures in the history of fine fragrance. Demachy is the nose behind a slew of iconic male and female perfumes, including Miss Dior Eau de Parfum, Dior Homme, Midnight Poison, Hypnotic Poison and the international best-seller Sauvage.

Kurkdjian, 52, is 20 years younger but still comes with an impressive transcript. After composing his first scent at just 25 (Jean-Paul Gaultier's Le Male) the perfumer went on to co-found Francis Kurkdjian — including the brand's incredibly famous Baccarat Rouge 540, a fragrance inspired by the ruby crystal used by French crystal house Baccarat on its signature chandeliers.

Perfumery is a rarified craft, so it's always interesting to witness new talent ascend the ranks at major fashion houses such as Dior. But with a knack



Francis Kurkdjian

for creating awe-inspiring fragrance, Kurkdjian is definitely the man for the job. And to those sweating at the thought of Baccarat Rouge 540 disappearing, don't worry — Kurkdjian will still work as the Creative Director on his eponymous brand.

“It is a tremendous honor for me to join Parfums Christian Dior, a maison with a richly inspiring history and a resolutely future-facing creative spirit. I am delighted to share my vision through my fragrance creations. Working at Maison Dior while continuing to create for my own maison is a great privilege. I want to sincerely thank Bernard Arnault for renewing his confidence in me as part of LVMH, and I extend my warm thanks to Claude Martinez, Stephanie Medi- oni, Laurent Kleitman and Marc Chaya for their support,” Kurkdjian said in a press release.



ARTS & CULTURE

Translating from Armenian into Dutch and Vice Versa

TRANSLATING, from page 12

were published in my Dutch translation. It is a very nice book and it sells well.

I have translated a book on the history of Armenian printing from English into Armenian. A few years ago, I translated a children's book called *Iep!* from Dutch into Armenian. Two years ago, Vernatun Publishing House of Yerevan published *The Diary of Anne Frank* in my Armenian translation. There was a translation from the 1960s from Russian from an abbreviated version. In connection with this book, together with the Dutch Embassy in Armenia and the Civil Society Institute, we developed a program that we implemented in small libraries in different regions of Armenia, during which young people talked about human rights based on Anne Frank's diary. I also translated into Armenian the 500-page knightly novel *The Letter for the King* by Dutch writer Tonke Dragt, which was recognized as the best children's book of the 20th century in the Netherlands. It was published by Zangak publishing house last year. Now I am translating another 900-page novel from Dutch into Armenian, which I hope I will finish by the end of the year.

It is rare that translators translate from their native language into a newly-learned language. That is a big challenge for you.

Really, very big. When I was translating *Iep!*, it seemed to everyone that it would be easy, because it is for children, but there were a lot of word games, verses, which was still a challenge. I hope it did not turn out badly. Of course, I always cooperate with Armenian editors. Now I translate more into Armenian, because there is more demand in Dutch literature here in Armenia than that of Armenian literature in the Netherlands. There are no other translators of Armenian fiction in the Netherlands. The biggest problem there is the publishing houses that do not want to publish Armenian literature. I have offered many books to different publishers, but I have always been told that publishing Armenian literature is a financial risk: no one will buy books by unknown writers, so they do not want to. I always think of finding an Armenian bestseller, after which Dutch publishers might be interested in publishing Armenian literature.

Apart from the translation, you have implemented many other Armenian ini-

tiatives in the Netherlands.

In 2011, I accidentally met the then Deputy Minister of Culture Davit Muradyan, who spoke about the 500th anniversary of Armenian printing and offered to organize an exhibition on that topic in the Netherlands. I tried and succeeded. At the University of Amsterdam, I organized a rather large exhibition on the history of Armenian printing, from there my interest in antique Armenian books arose. I began to study all the medieval Armenian books in the Netherlands. The University of Amsterdam has more than 100 old Armenian books, and the Royal Library of the Hague has about 150. There are also some at the University of Leiden, where I have not finished my studies yet because of COVID. Many of those books have handwritten colophons; I want to write a book about it.

I remember, years ago you said that in the Dutch archives you had found the first Dutchman interested in Armenian, Dionysios Vossius (1612-1633). Upon my request you wrote an article on that topic in Armenian, which was published in Azg newspaper. How did you find Vossius, and are there any other archival materials related to Armenians?

What I found was a handwritten notebook. Vossius was born into a scholarly family with a keen interest in languages. He studied Ancient Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Syriac and Arabic. Vossius published his first Arabic dictionary at the age of 16. It is a pity that he lived for a very short time as he died at the age of 21, otherwise he would have been the first Dutch Armenologist at that time. In the notebook I have mentioned he had copied excerpts from the Bible, in Latin on one side and in Armenian on the other, thus comparing and learning Armenian.

I also found other interesting things. At the beginning of the 18th century, after 17th century printer Voskan Yerevantsi, the second Armenian printing house was established in Amsterdam, where a German has worked there. He learned the Armenian language from the Armenian employees of this printing house and published a textbook of Armenian. At the University of Leiden, I found the first version of that book, which was defective. Seeing that this version is not good, they modified it and a few years later they published the complete version. But nobody in Armenia knows about that first version, so I am going to write an article about it.

Besides, I have an idea to compile a book summarizing the episodes about the Armenians in Dutch literature. There are Dutch novels, in which suddenly an Armenian character appears.

At the moment I am cooperating with the embassies of Armenia in the Netherlands and the Netherlands in Armenia. 2022 will mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Netherlands, and we want to organize events within the framework of that occasion. Next year we plan to organize an exhibition of Dutch paintings in the National Gallery of Armenia, an exhibition of books related to the Netherlands in the National Library in Yerevan, and an exhibition of books printed and written in the Netherlands in Matenadaran. And in Netherlands everything is much more difficult to organize. Let me tell you a story. Together with the Armenian Ambassador to the Netherlands, we were thinking of organizing an exhibition of books related to Armenia at the Hague Book Museum, which wanted to show the ties between the Netherlands and Armenia from the 4th century until today. [4th Century refers to the patron saint of the city of Maastricht, Servatius, an Armenian, who died in 384 – A. B.] I sent the program to the museum, talked on the phone, they were very interested, telling me they would discuss and contact us. I waited, I wrote them a month later and received an answer they had decided do not organize such an exhibition. I wanted to know the reason, they wrote something from which it was clear that it was an excuse. I called them and it turned out that next to that museum was the Turkish embassy, which they were afraid of.

I thought so. Is the Turkish-Azerbaijani lobby also strong in the Netherlands? Is there a lot of pressure?

It seems that it is not so much, but in general they are afraid of the Turks.

Anna, being a non-Armenian, unlike many of my compatriots, you speak Armenian like an Armenian. Can you tell me why you learned Armenian?

Armenian is a very rich language, the Armenian nation has a very rich literature from ancient times to the present, it has very interesting writers, a very rich history, which when you read, you understand that the Armenian nation is very resilient, there have survived so many catastrophes, disasters and difficulties, but they remained.

That is a very big issue.

Another catastrophe happened a year ago; in those days you were in Armenia again.

Yes, I came to Armenia to work on The Diary of Anne Frank. I came to Armenia on September 26 and the next morning the war started. Then, when I returned to Netherlands, it was very sad that they either did not know about the war at all, or they were saying: well, Armenians and Azeris always fight. I tried to explain that the Armenians are not fighting, but defending themselves, the Azeris attacked Armenia with the help of the Turks and others. But they do not understand or do not want to understand, which is very painful.

What do Armenians have to learn from the Dutch and vice versa?

The Dutch can learn patriotism towards their own nation from the Armenians, because it seems that there is no concept of nationality for the Dutch. The Dutch do not like their nation, their history, what other nations have written about them. And Armenians may learn from the Dutch to accept people as they are. In Netherlands you go out in strange clothes and no one looks at you, they do not say anything, they accept you as you are. I think that is a good thing.

You used to come to Armenia with your family, and for several years now you have been coming without your children.

Yes, I come twice a year, on business, for my cooperation with the embassies and for my studies. It is true that I was divorced from my Yerevan-born husband, but after that my connection with Armenia has become even stronger. When I came to Armenia with my ex-husband, I paid more family visits, but after the divorce I am more free to do my own job. That's why my workload has increased here. I am constantly trying to establish contacts between Armenian and Dutch institutions. Once we went to Amberd, where I accidentally met the staff of the Aragats Cosmic Ray Research Station. I connected them with their colleagues in the Netherlands, and I am glad that they cooperate now. My children still understand Armenian (although they say they do not). They even speak a little. And my daughter, who did not want to hear about Armenia for several years for obvious reasons, recently said that one day my children and I will definitely go to Armenia again to rediscover the country together...

Composer Hayg Boyadjian Meets (So to Speak) with Bach, Beethoven

BEETHOVEN, from page 12

There are a number of musical forms in both Bach and my variations, such as: canons, counterpoint, fugues, sarabands, etc. They all contribute to the richness of the composition. My variations are a unique composition in that it is modern but having roots in Bach's language and therefore sounding nothing like today's music, it is modern by not being modern. That is why there was an interest in recording the work because of being unusual," explained Boyadjian. "Originally the work had 32 variations like the Beethoven's variations, one can hear my original 32 variations on YouTube, but for recording purposes only twenty were recorded at the present. The 20 were chosen very carefully in order to keep the composition feeling complete in its reduced format."

While in Bonn the composer had the opportunity to visit the Beethoven House where the great composer was born and which is now the Beethoven Museum.

One room has his original piano.

He continued, "It was with great trepidation that I contemplated to write a set of variations for piano on a theme by Bach. The part that came easy was the choice of the theme, which in my set of variations comes only at the end of the composition. I planned to follow in the footsteps of Bach as to the structure of the variations and also in keeping the harmonic language to a great degree in the realm of traditional harmonies with modern harmonies used very sparingly so that the composition makes an almost direction towards the music of Bach. It is in my musical output a piece that stands completely outside of my normal harmonic language.

There is a very close resemblance to the music of Bach but infused with elements of modern musical language. Even these infusions are kept at a minimum so as to keep the general tendency of the work connected to the music of Bach."

Like the 32 variations version this present 20 variations version follow the same compositional patterns that Bach uses in his variations. Each new variation grows out of the previous one. Each has a specific harmonic language such as: in counterpoint, in fugues, basso ostinatos, canons, chaconne, etc. If one listens carefully one can hear the music of Bach and the Bach's theme of the variations.

Musicologist and critic Robin McNeil has said, "Keep in mind that this is a 21st century piece relying on the use of a Baroque period counterpoint. Boyadjian makes use of retrograde, inversion, varia-



Hayg Boyadjian in Bonn

tions of rhythmic figures and ornamentation, and canon. As the piece progresses, it begins to sound more and more familiar in spite of the avant-garde harmonies and enharmonic writing.....It truly is an epiphany."



ARTS & CULTURE

Books

Celeste Nazeli Snowber: On Motherhood, History And Longing

By Christopher Atamian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The Marrow of Longing: a strange but fitting title for an idiosyncratic and ultimately satisfying book of poetry. Dancer, poet, professor, spiritualist: Celeste Nazeli Snowber is a polymath and interdisciplinary artist who has created her own unique creative identity.

When her poems hit, as in “Beneath the Skin of Plum Black” they are lovely, heartfelt pieces that penetrate the reader’s consciousness deeper perhaps than those of more established wordsmiths. This poem encapsulates much of what Snowber expresses elsewhere about food, tradition and familial love:

“Aromas took second place
to hues of dark purple
it was your colours
my mother was
in love with.

Eggplant.
Jeweled in sautéed onions
adorned with red
pepper, a hint
of green parsley
a slice of lamb.

Plum black
you are love marinated
in drips of oil
tenderized in
the h/earth
in a New England kitchen.”

Later on in the poem, Snowber’s mother offers a culinary lesson that the poet passes down to the reader:

Never leave the pan without
a hint of green, she said,
Look how stunning the red
Pepper accents blackened violet

Here the poet paraphrases her mother, whose speech is itself poetic, so she doesn’t heighten or embellish it with fancy turn-of-phrase or rhyme.

Snowber’s relationship with her Armenian mother who was also an artist and her evident love for her are reflected in her longing for history to have somehow been thwarted and her mother’s talent celebrated. This longing informs the crux of poems such as “In praise of the Kitchen-Studio”: My mother’s kitchen was an art studio/ cooking with color/creating flower arrangements/with metal, plexiglass/driftwood and plant life. In “Where is the lexicon of women artists?” Snowber delivers a prose-poetic ode to her mother’s brilliance and her love of all things artistic: “At the early age of five she brings me to the Guggenheim Museum in New York City, weeps in front of “Improvisation 28,” where I have my first art history lesson — aesthetics of color has hidden meaning.” And the title poem “The Marrow of Longing” which begins with “Longing resides in my marrow” and ends with “Longing is the land I dwell” brings home the Armenian notion of garod which drives much of the poet’s personal and creative search.

Some of Snowber’s metaphors and images are less convincing as in “Seaweed

Torment,” when she dives into “the seaweed/of my own torment” or in “Vowels of the Body” where “Seasons enter my flesh/ internal tides, external rhythms/rain, mist, flames, ice/hormones.” And then there is “Diaspora Dreams” which is a fine poem even if it repeats tropes that we’ve seen before in Armenian American literature, revolving around a sense of shame and the loss of language: “I was never taught/the vowels, syllables of her native tongue/my mother held the shame/of being an immigrant.”

Snowber’s poems are accompanied by some fascinating artwork by Marsha Nouritza Odabashian who uses an ancient

Armenian onion skin dyeing technique to create her work. The many hues of brown and shades of grey and orange have an earthy appeal and the designs manage to be simultaneously abstract and representative. Interestingly enough though, my favorite of Odabashian’s pieces is a pink watercolor at the beginning of the book titled “Kitchen Studio” which doesn’t seem to use this technique: it has a rare lightness to it as a cook joyfully dances around her kitchen.

From the one example of Grace Terzian’s work in the book, a photo of a large arresting flower sculpture titled “Tricentennial, 1976 (Interpreting Light Year 2076),” it seems clear that Grace Terzian had a unique talent. Snowber links her mother to other female artists such as Anne Sexton (and why not Sylvia Plath and Virginia Wolf) — who suffered for being women and/or mothers. In the 1940’s Terzian was apparently friends with some of the luminaries of the time such as Hyman Bloom, Ravi Shankar and Alan Hovhannes. But lack of opportu-

nity, of time to create, and of psychic space to mend, as well as her responsibilities as a wife and mother meant that she had could not follow her dreams, as her male counterparts did. In one poem Snowber fille recounts her mother’s many screaming fits and one imagines the effect that they had on her as a child who probably could not fully comprehend their roots or context. I for one would be interested in knowing if more of Terzian’s sculptures exist still and how they might be exhibited, even if in photographs.

In her introduction to the book, Snowber notes that the poems that follow were danced/sung as well as read, and it would be interesting to see how they are all rendered in such performances.

Snowber is to be credited for her remarkable bonhomie in reaching out and working with other artists—*The Marrow of Longing* feels and reads like a true collaboration. There are some lovely poems and thoughts expressed in this volume, and much history too that make it well worth reading.



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ARTS & CULTURE

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian



Jon Koobation's Roasted Pork Loin Stuffed with Spinach, Jalapenos And Blue Cheese

FRESNO — “Pork is a versatile cut of meat and easy to prepare, says Fresno’s award-winning chef Jon Koobation, a retired restaurateur and author. Jon grew up in the farming town of Dinuba, California, the eldest of four children to Ed and Mary Koobation. His parents gave each of their children abiding love and instilled in them at an early age a sense of responsibility and a solid work ethic. Jon is the former chef/proprietor, owner and head chef at the acclaimed Jon’s Bear Club in Reedley, Calif. for several decades until his retirement in 2013.*

Jon’s Roasted Pork Loin Stuffed with Spinach, Jalapenos and Blue Cheese is featured in *Cooking with Jon*, his engaging cookbook published in 2017. “My cookbook is the child I never had; that is, it is warm, cold, sweet, spicy and savory, but most importantly, shared with love,” he says. *Cooking with Jon* is a tribute to his extraordinary culinary history, and includes many of his signature recipes along with family photos, memories and recollections about his life, career, and growing up with devoted Armenian parents and grandparents. He shares family traditions and his love for great food for readers to enjoy.

One interviewer of Jon’s cookbook says, “I fondly remember eating traditional Armenian cuisine at Jon’s parent’s home in Dinuba. Jon inherited the love of cooking from his mother and grandmother. I was thrilled when I learned that Jon had published a cookbook. My husband and I recently hosted an Armenian dinner party which featured Jon’s shish kebab and rice pilaf. The lamb was moist and very flavorful and the rice pilaf had a rich flavor due to the Swanson’s chicken broth and butter. If you make these recipes, follow Jon’s directions and do not substitute with other ingredients. I had always used a robust red wine to marinate the lamb, but Jon’s recommendation to use cream sherry gave the meat a much smoother and rich flavor. The layout of the cookbook is beautiful, and a delight to work from, and I look forward to trying many more of his recipes.”

The Bear Club has been around since 1935, when it began as a small bar, serving mostly farmers and farm laborers behind a grocery store. As a young man, Jon first worked as a prep cook and sous chef at major Lake Tahoe-area restaurants before returning to Reedley. He worked at the famous Vallis’ Restaurant in Kingsburg, the Redwood Inn of Sultana, Dinuba Ranch, and at the Swedish Mill in Kingsburg. In 1973, he applied to The Culinary Institute of America, but he enrolled too late for the fall semester. He accepted a position as a chef at The Bear Club that same year. In 1985, he became the owner until his retirement.

Through the 1970s and mid-1980s, Jon’s restaurant established itself as a fine steakhouse featuring outstanding food and friendly customer service. “Using the freshest ingredients available each season was valued and expected by our guests, and one of the reasons they chose to return again and again for this sensational

pork recipe,” he adds.

“The recipe was created for the Women In Ag symposium at the World Ag Expo in Tulare, California,” says Jon. “After the demonstration we would serve sample tastings to 150-200 attendees. I conducted demonstrations for the World Ag Expo for 27 years. It was a lot of fun and an opportunity to get out of the kitchen and do some PR. I was originally introduced to the Women In Ag Expo by Greg and David Vartanian (from the Vintage Press Restaurant in Visalia), who were the original presenters.”

“As we age, our tastes evolve,” adds Jon. “I remember, as a child, how much my father liked blue cheese dressing. I didn’t understand how its offensive odor and pungent flavor could even be edible. Likewise, a homemade vinaigrette he appreciated was unacceptable to me as a small child. Eventually, I was savoring both dressings as much as my father.”

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds boneless pork loin, trimmed
- Kosher salt and cracked black pepper
- 2 ounces fresh spinach leaves, chopped
- 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
- 4 ounces crumbled blue cheese
- 1 large clove garlic, minced

With a sharp knife, cut the pork loin lengthwise (butterfly) being careful not to cut all the way through. Open and season with salt and fresh pepper, mix remaining ingredients together and place down the center of the pork and close. Tie with butchers twine and season outside with salt and pepper. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven until an internal temperature of 160 degrees is reached. Remove from oven and let rest for 10 minutes.

SUNDRIED TOMATO POLENTA:

- 3 cups boiling water or chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- Fresh cracked black pepper
- 1 cup instant polenta
- 4 tablespoons chopped sundried tomato in oil
- 2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup heavy cream

In a heavy bottomed stainless steel saucepan, season water and gradually add polenta to the boiling water and stir with a wooden spoon. Lower temperature and continue stirring until the polenta becomes soft. About 8-10 minutes. Add remaining ingredients and stir until smooth.

HONEY MUSTARD BEURRE BLANC:

- 1 shallot, minced
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons honey mustard
- 4 ounces cold butter (cut into pieces)

In a heavy stainless steel saucepan over medium heat, reduce wine and shallot until almost dry, add cream and reduce by half, add honey mustard to combine. With the heat on low, whisk the butter into the pan until all is combined. Remove from the heat and keep warm.

To serve: In the center of a warm plate, place a spoon of polenta with two slices of pork loin alongside and drizzle honey-mustard sauce around. Serve with your favorite vegetable. Serves 4.

*Jon received the 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award in the California Restaurant Association’s “Best of the Valley” awards. Cookbook recipes include: Chicken George, Lebanese Lentils and Rice, Baja Cobb Salad, JBC Crab Cakes, Braised Lamb Shanks with Bulgur Pilaf, Cabbage Dolma with Beef and Lamb, Meyer Lemon Homemade Ice Cream, Cracked Wheat and Kale Salad, Herb-Seared Lamb Tenderloin with Eggplant Caviar and Basil Oil, Lulu Kebab, and the legendary Grandma Bazarian’s Shish Kebab. (<<https://mirrorspectator.com/2021/01/07/recipe-corner-heroine-hatoon-bazarians-shish-kebab-recipe/>><https://mirrorspectator.com/2021/01/07/recipe-corner-heroine-hatoon-bazarians-shish-kebab-recipe/>).

ORDER TODAY: Enjoy professional recipes you can make at home from this highly respected chef. Contact Jon at: chefjonkoobation@gmail.com to order his cookbook and for a personally signed copy. His cookbook is also available for sale at the Market Grocery Store and at Sam’s Deli & Cucina in Fresno, California.

For Jon’s recipes featured in the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* newspaper, go to: <https://mirrorspectator.com/?s=jon+koobation>

For more recipes, go to:

<https://m.facebook.com/Cooking-With-JON-290341461421629/>

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ARTS & CULTURE



The church at Saghmosavank, built by Vache Vachutian in 1215, overlooking the Kasakh Gorge

In Medieval Armenia, Everyday Life Was Cosmopolitan

By Harry Kezelian
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BELMONT, Mass. — The headline above may be a simplification of the new book, *Everyday Cosmopolitanisms: Living the Silk Road in Medieval Armenia*, by Dr. Kate Franklin. However, the idea that everyday life can be cosmopolitan or, to hew closer to Franklin’s perspective, the idea that everyday life is an integral part of what are often thought of as overarching worldwide systems,



Dr. Kate Franklin, archaeologist

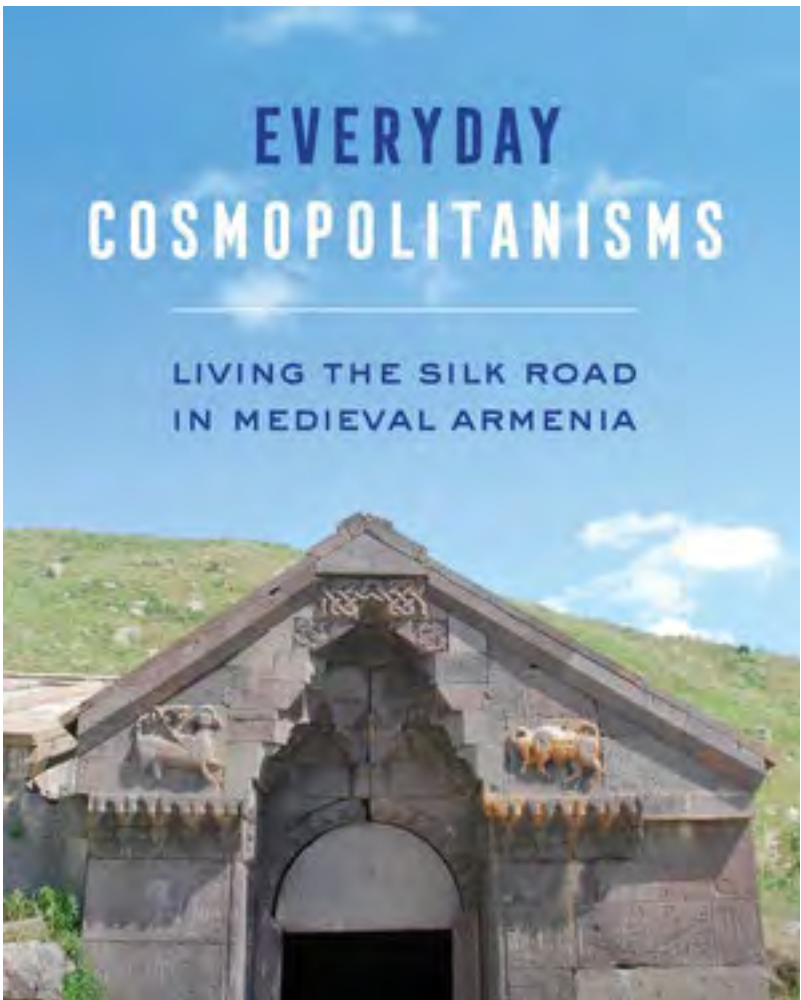
was one of the takeaways from her October 31 talk, sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and London’s Armenian Institute.

Franklin is an archaeologist and professor in the Department of History, Classics, and Archaeology at Birbeck,

University of London, where she is the director of the Master’s Program in Medieval History, as well as the director of studies in the Department of History, Classics and Archeology, and lecturer. The Zoom lecture, coordinated by Marc Mamigonian of NAASR and with Dr. Nik Matheou of the Armenian Institute as discussant, focused on the themes in her new book.

Franklin, she explained, has been interested in the stories of the fabled Silk Road since she was young. A network of trade routes that link China with Europe in the Medieval era, the Silk Road has been the subject of romanticized accounts since the time of Marco Polo, and gained popularity as an academic subject in the 19th century as Western Europeans travelled the world in the era of Imperialism. The traditional narratives often depict intrepid travelers (European or otherwise) trekking to exotic lands; generally males from an elite class. Franklin’s goal seems to be to show that women and lower socio-economic classes were part of the Silk Road story as well, even if they weren’t making trips from Venice to Inner Mongolia, and aspects of everyday life like meals were just as important to the international silk trade as the silk itself.

Franklin opened her talk with a story that will resonate even with Armenians that have never set foot in Armenia; while on a journey to a small village inspecting medieval ruins, she came across a middle-aged Armenian woman who insisted she come into the house and eat, even to the point of unwrapping small chocolates and putting them on her plate. The story exemplified Franklin’s realization of the importance that food, hospitality, and the lives of women must have had to anyone travelling long distances in the Middle Ages. By the same token, the lives of people who lived along trade routes could be just as cosmopolitan as that of the merchants and travelers, due to



the cultural interchange that was constantly taking place.

Both Franklin and Matheou touched upon the prevalence of “World Systems Theory,” an overarching paradigm for world history which emphasizes the “world system,” particularly in an economic role, rather than nation-states. Franklin expressed her wish to provide a counter to that kind of analysis, not to refocus on the nation-state, but to emphasize the local and particular.

Much of Franklin’s attention has been directed to the role of caravanserais (roadside inns) which served as accommodations for trade caravans. The best-preserved

continued on next page



ARTS & CULTURE



Side View of the Orbelian Caravanserai

from previous page

caravanserai in Armenia today is the Orbelian Caravanserai in the Vayots Dzor region, which graces the cover of Franklin's book. However, in her talk, she focused on Arayi-Bazarjik Caravanserai, in the Kasakh Valley region north of Yerevan (near Abaran). This structure was built by the princely Vachutian family. Travelers to Armenia will likely have visited the family's seat of power, Amberd Fortress.

The story of the Vachutians, as Franklin tells it, shows the changing identifications and cultural influences of medieval Armenia, as well as shedding light on the realities of the Silk Road. At one point, the churches built by dynasty founder Vache Vachutian were rebuilt by his son Kurd, who mentions in an inscription that this rebuilding takes place after the invasion and destruction wrought by the “Nation of the Archers” — the Mongols, who invaded the Near East, including Armenia, throughout the

middle of the thirteenth century. (Notably, Vache's wife Mamakhatur and Kurd's wife Khorishah are mentioned along with their husbands in the inscriptions.) The Mongol invasion was seen in near-apocalyptic terms by medieval Armenians, said Franklin, and the Vachutians saw themselves as survivors of this catastrophe, rebuilding for their descendants. Yet, only a few decades later, the Armenians had begun to view the Mongols with respect and admiration; numerous Armenian leaders noted the honor they were shown by the Great Khan in positive terms, while others even depicted themselves in artwork with stereotypical "Mongol" facial features. The understanding of what was native and what was foreign was thus "cosmopolitan" and much more complex than many today believe, who are fixated on a homogenous picture of ethnic history described in nationalist terms, she said.

Franklin's presentation provoked questions about cultural exchange and influence, which as she has shown, has been a part of daily life in Armenia going back at least to the Middle Ages. The issues she raises should serve as a bit of a corrective to those fixated on "pure" ethnic artistic and cultural expression. Historically, her work sheds light not only on Armenia's role in the international community of medieval times, but also the importance of average people in a society that is increasingly viewed in terms of overarching economic, political, and social frameworks. Economically, the work questions what she calls the neo-liberal narrative that free trade leads to peace. Franklin also delivered a lecture at the University of Michigan on Thursday, November 18, that evidently touched on the same themes from her recent book, which is available in hard copy from the NAASR bookstore as well as in a free e-version from the OAPEN Open Access library (<https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/50279>).



Amberd Fortress, Seat of the Vachutian Princes

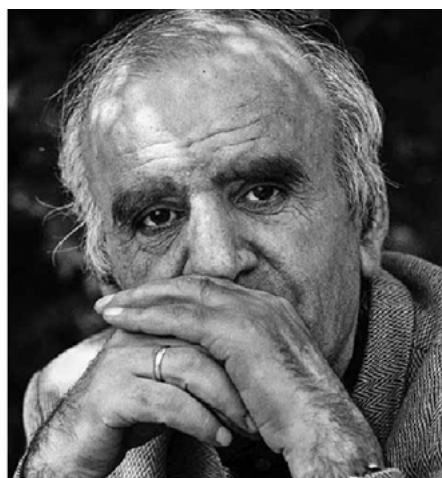
Veteran Filmmaker Peleshyan Receives Lifetime Achievement Award at Amsterdam Festival

AMSTERDAM (Armenpress) — Legendary Armenian director of documentaries, Artavazd Peleshyan, received the “Lifetime Achievement Award” in the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA), on November 22.

His film, "Nature," had its European premiere on November 19 on the sidelines of the IDFA.

Peleshyan didn't pick up the award personally because of health problems. However, general director of the Cartier Foundation for Contemporary Art of Paris Hervé Chandès and director Andrei Ujika accepted it on his behalf.

"Nature's" world premiere was held at the New York Film Festival-59. Premiered by the Fondation Cartier, the documentary brings together amateur shots of nature, such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes,



Ardavazd Peleshyan

tsunamis, and grandiose landscapes from the internet, juxtaposing the overpowering force of nature with human ambition.

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RHODE ISLAND

Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church of Providence continues programming the Armenian Cultural Hour programs, every Friday at 7:30 p.m. The program can be livestreamed on the church's Facebook page by everyone at <https://www.facebook.com/armenianchurchprovidence>
NOVEMBER 26 – Armenian Spiritual Music

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COMMENTARY

EDITORIAL

After Marathon Speculations, Next Stop Brussels



By Edmond Y.
Azadian

A tripartite meeting with Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan had been anticipated on the first anniversary of the ceasefire declaration, on November 9, 2021. That meeting was supposed to mark the culmination of the respective countries' deputy prime ministers' work over the last year.

Presidents Vladimir Putin and Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan were to sign an agreement about the unblocking of roads and lines of communication in the Caucasus.

However, that meeting was postponed indefinitely because of Azerbaijan's renewed aggression against Armenia. Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Overchuk had announced that all roads and communication lines that would be unblocked would operate under the sovereignty of their respective countries. This declaration was supposed to be the culmination of the deputy prime ministers' work and yearlong negotiations, which implied also the consent of the Azerbaijani side.

However, Azerbaijan's aggression and Aliyev's and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's repeated insistence on the Zangezur Corridor at the conference of the Organization of Turkic States meeting in Istanbul earlier this month shattered those hopes and made it abundantly clear that Moscow and Yerevan were operating only under the illusion that they had an agreement at hand.

After dashing all hopes for a timely settlement in the region, the situation has become unexpectedly volatile. This precariousness led to an announcement by the office of Charles Michel, the president of the European Union, that Pashinyan and Aliyev had agreed to meet on December 15, on the sidelines of the EU's Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels. A spokesman for Mr. Michel stated, "The goal is to bring Pashinyan and Aliyev to the same table for confidence-building measures."

The news about Pashinyan's trip to Brussels, compounded by an earlier commitment by Armenia's premier to participate in President Joe Biden's conference on democracy December 9-10, triggered the pro-Kremlin news media in Yerevan and Moscow to accuse Armenia's foreign policy of shifting toward the West.

That was followed by news that the Putin-Aliyev-Pashinyan summit had been finalized to take place in Sochi on November 26 to preempt any unforeseen developments in Brussels.

Every move that the minor players decide to make spurs the major powers to vigilance in order not to let their relationships slip through their fingers. Moscow is particularly concerned that the political agenda in the Caucasus may come under the control of the West.

One level of the Russia-West competition is the contrast between the 3+3 format promoted by the Baku-Ankara tandem, which purports to solve the problems in the Caucasus through Russia, Turkey and Iran, with the participation of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The thrust of this format is to keep the West away from the region, a position shared by Russia, Turkey and Iran, to the detriment of Armenia and Georgia.

The recent reactivation of the Organization for Security and Cooption in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group at least will entertain the issue of Karabakh's status, which Moscow would like to postpone indefinitely, while Baku and Ankara have already declared that the issue was settled by the 44-day war.

Moscow's possessiveness on Armenian issues is manifested in a statement by Stanislav Tarasov, an editor of the Russian Regnum News Agency, who asks what the agenda of the Brussels meeting might be. If the issue of demarcation and delineation is to be discussed, he says, that cannot happen without Moscow's participation.

Russia has demonstrated that it has a perplexing concept of its role as Armenia's strategic partner; when Azerbaijan has occupied 41 square kilometers of Armenia's sovereign territory and continues toward the border crossings in Syunik and Gegharkunik and Armenia appeals to this ally for help, the obscene answer is that Armenia has not formulated its appeal in writing!

Russian peacekeeping forces are supposed to be stationed be-

tween the opposing parties in Armenia to prevent bloodshed. Instead, the Russian peacekeepers are nowhere to be found during Azerbaijani incursions, but they arrive after the shooting stops to count the number of the dead and expect gratitude from Armenia for the service, suggesting that the worst was averted because of the presence of Russia's peacekeeping mission.

In reality, help should have already been on its way thanks to the stipulations of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), headed by Russia, and of which Armenia is a member, and by the immediate mobilization of the 102nd Russian base in Gyumri.

This aversion by Russia to get its hands dirty in Armenia is seriously debated and defended by Kremlin advocates, like Sergei Markedonov, the leading researcher at the Euro-Atlantic Security Center of the MGIMO Institute for International Studies in Moscow.

Here is Markedonov's inverted logic for the strategic partnership: "Turkey is a consistent supporter of Azerbaijan, while Russia is a moderator in the conflict, whose moderation is accepted by Baku, Yerevan and the OSCE Minsk Group.

"In this light, the positions of Moscow and Ankara should be compared, without going beyond the framework of correctness, in my opinion, only in the full understanding of these fundamental differences between Turkey and Russia. ... And it was Russia



that contributed to the suspension of the hostilities on November 16."

Herein lies the basic fallacy of the Russian logic: Russia had to prevent the hostilities in the first place rather than contributing to their suspension, after so many casualties were incurred.

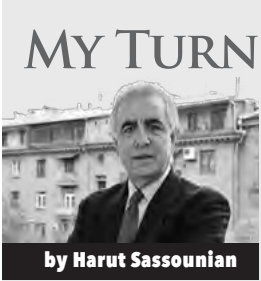
Russia itself is in a precarious position vis-à-vis Baku, because its lack of a mandate to introduce its peacekeeping forces in Azerbaijan is its Achilles' heel. At Erdogan's instruction, Aliyev thus far has refused to sign that mandate, keeping the legality of the peacekeeping forces in the region in limbo. That is why Moscow feels that it has to cater to Baku, to Armenia's detriment, whereas when Russian bases were ousted from Georgia and Azerbaijan, Armenia was the only country that gave a military foothold to Russia in the Caucasus, allowing Moscow to project its power all the way to the Middle East. If that foothold is not maintained for its own sake and Moscow's sake, it may spell disaster for both parties.

Recently, Turkish Nationalist Party leader Devlet Bahçeli offered a map of "Great Turan" to Erdogan, who proudly touted it to his public. That map included some territories of the Russian Federation in the future Turanic Empire, which Mr. Erdogan is dreaming of and planning to build. In view of that scene, President Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov offered a mild historic rebuke. What Peskov and his master need to do is to draw some lessons from history. Today's Russia is akin to the Byzantine Empire, whose leaders constantly weakened medieval Armenia, which served as a buffer state on the peripheries of their empire. Eventually, the Byzantines brought down the Armenian Bagratid kingdom and took over the capital city of Ani in 1046,

continued on next page



COMMENTARY



US Invites Armenia to Democracy Summit; But Not Azerbaijan and Turkey

The White House announced recently that it has invited over 100 countries to a virtual “Summit for Democracy” on Dec. 9-10.

On the guest list are Armenia and Georgia, but not Azerbaijan and Turkey which are dictatorships. Interestingly, the latter two countries did not complain about their absence from the Summit until they found out that Armenia was invited.

In a statement, the White House announced that “the challenge of our time is to demonstrate that democracies can deliver by improving the lives of their own people and by addressing the greatest problems facing the wider world.” The President “has rebuilt our alliances with our democratic partners and allies, rallying the world to stand up against human rights abuses, to address the climate crisis, and to fight the global pandemic, including by donating hundreds of millions of vaccine doses to countries around the globe.”

The White House announcement also stated that this Summit is “to be followed in roughly a year’s time by a second, in-person Summit. The virtual Summit, to take place on December 9 and 10, [2021], will galvanize commitments and initiatives across three principal themes: defending against authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights. Following a year of consultation, coordination, and action, President Biden will then invite world leaders to gather once more to showcase progress made against their commitments. Both Summits will bring together heads of state, civil society, philanthropy, and the private sector, serving as an opportunity for world leaders to listen to one another and to their citizens, share successes, drive international collaboration, and speak honestly about the challenges facing democracy so as to collectively strengthen the foundation for democratic renewal.”

After the White House made this announcement, a heated discussion broke out as to why certain countries were invited to the Summit, while others were not. Obviously, this Summit is intended to form a coalition led by the United States against its rivals, China and Russia. Do some of the invited leaders have any concerns about being viewed as “pro-western” and “anti-China and Russia?” This is a particularly sensitive issue for Armenia which has strong military and economic ties with Russia and is in the process of establishing closer

relations with China. How will China and Russia view Armenia’s participation in such an adversarial Summit? PM Nikol Pashinyan, who has accepted the US’ invitation, has to give serious thought to the negative Russian reaction for his participation in such a summit. However, the refusal to participate would also have consequences with the United States.

While Armenia welcomes its invitation to the Summit for Democracy, Pashinyan has regrettably regressed from his initially-declared democratic values by harassing or jailing protesters, muzzling the media and taking unilateral decisions without any input from the public or even those in his ruling circle. For someone who came to power by espousing democratic ideals, Pashinyan bizarrely campaigned during the June elections while holding a hammer in his hand and threatening to bash the heads of his political opponents.

By inviting Armenia to the summit, the United States is probably enticing the Armenian government to come closer to the west. A US official “involved in the planning of the summit told Reuters that invites were sent to countries with different experiences of democracy from all regions of the world. ‘This was not about endorsing, ‘You’re a democracy, you are not a democracy.’ That is not the process we went through.’ Biden administration officials say they had to ‘make choices’ to ensure regional diversity and broad participation,” Reuters reported.

Naturally, Azerbaijan and Turkey were not too pleased that Armenia was invited to the summit, while they were excluded. In an article published by AzerNews newspaper titled, “Democracy summit or clear example of double standards,” Ayya Lmahamad quoted Vugar Iskandarov, a member of Azerbaijan’s Parliament, who complained, “it is ridiculous that countries such as Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Hungary are not invited to the summit, where the level of democracy is much higher than that in the majority of invited countries.” Iskandarov must be completely blind to the grave human rights abuses and absence of democracy in the autocratic regimes of Azerbaijan and Turkey.

The Azeri news website Day.az went even further by claiming that Armenia was invited due to the influence of Armenian-Americans in the US: “No need to go deep into the previous years, it is enough to see what has been happening and continues to happen in Washington-Armenian Diaspora relations over the past year. The curtsies of American diplomacy towards Yerevan, the endless anti-Azerbaijani discussions and decisions made at the insistence of the Armenian lobby speak for themselves.”

While this Azeri website made a completely exaggerated assessment of the power of Armenian-Americans in Washington, nevertheless, it is a welcome compliment. Azerbaijan and Turkey may not fear Armenia, but they seem terrified of the political clout of the Armenian lobby in the US.

from previous page

while the Seljuk Turks were advancing toward Asia Minor from their Central Asian base.

After the demise of the Bagratid buffer state, the Seljuks in three centuries moved to conquer Constantinople itself in 1453. Erdogan likes to think of himself as the reincarnation of Sultan Mehmed II and does not hide his intentions from anyone, including Russians. Great Turan is not only an existential threat to Armenia, but also to Russia, since today’s political developments move at a faster pace than in medieval times. Moscow’s shortsighted expediency may cost it dearly in the near future as well as the long run.

Charles Michel will certainly promote the Minsk agenda on December 15 and Mr. Aliyev is participating in the meeting with the hope that he can shift the agenda in his favor thanks to the nation’s oil production.

Moscow eventually may play an active role in the Minsk format by steering away the agenda from Karabakh status to humanitarian issues like the release of Armenian POWs and protection of cultural and religious heritage now under Azerbaijani rule. Moscow had committed to settle those issues by signing the November 9, 2020 declaration but so far it has failed to deliver on its commitments.

The Brussels meeting is only one step on the difficult road ahead. No one knows how the demarcation and delimitation will be conducted and what kind of a map will emerge from that process.

Aliyev has surrendered his country’s sovereignty to Turkey in return for his personal rule in Azerbaijan; it is Turkey that is calling the shots in Azerbaijan. Ankara has a never-ending list of demands from Armenia. For a long time, Ankara’s condition for establishing ties with Armenia was the settlement of the Karabakh conflict in Azerbaijan’s favor. Now that the conflict has been settled to Ankara’s pleasure, Erdogan has been insisting on the opening of Zangezur Corridor. Armenia is dead set against the idea; even if Yerevan gives in, Ankara will move the goal post and demand something even more outrageous. Therefore, it is foolhardy for Armenia to claim, as it just did, that it has no pre-conditions to normalize relations with Turkey. Unless Armenia fails to put its own conditions on the negation table, there will be no limit to Mr. Erdogan’s appetite.

In order to be able to cancel out Turkey’s preconditions, Armenia must come up with its own conditions, even going beyond the realistic issues, like adding the abrogation of the Kars Treaty of 1921, along with the recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

We are painfully reminded that Armenia’s diplomacy will not be able to match that of its enemies. The meeting with Brussels may be organized with the best of intentions by its hosts, but the only definite expectation is outrageous words and deeds by Azerbaijan and its Turanic overlord.

Armenia’s Options in the Face of Coercive Azerbaijani Tactics Are Limited

By Benyamin Poghosyan

Since the end of the 2020 Karabakh war, Armenia has faced a new, harsh reality along its borders with Azerbaijan. Some in Armenia had hoped that after taking back most of the territories which Baku lost during the first Karabakh war of 1992-1994, an era of regional peace would start in the South Caucasus, while Azerbaijan would agree to continue negotiations to fix the status of Nagorno Karabakh within its 1988 borders. Baku was quite quick to dampen such perceptions. Azerbaijan established an economic region of Karabakh in July 2021 and started to aggressively push forward the narrative that war had ended not only the conflict, but Nagorno Karabakh itself, and thus it was senseless to negotiate over the status of a non-existing entity.

On the issue of the normalization of relations with Armenia, Azerbaijan put forward two main conditions: that Armenia recognizes the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within the 1991 borders of Soviet Azerbaijan, thus publicly and officially accepting Nagorno Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan; and that Armenia provides uncontrolled transit access (no border, passport or customs control) for Azerbaijan via its Syunik province to reach its exclave the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic and onwards to Turkey. Azerbaijani officials use the term “Zangezur corridor” to describe these routes, but for them, the main issue is not the term but the substance. Azerbaijan may therefore agree to Russia controlling these routes, replicating in the Syunik the arrangements already in place in the Lachin corridor as established by the November 10 trilateral statement.

These demands caught the Armenian leadership by surprise. The ruling Civic Contract party participated in the June 2021 early parliamentary elections with a peace-oriented platform, discussing the normalization of relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey. After a landslide victory in elections, the

new government used very cautious language in its five-year program, dropping the term Nagorno Karabakh Republic and being vague on the future status and territories of Nagorno Karabakh. Prime Minister Pashinyan talked about positive signals from Turkey to normalize bilateral relations, and probably established a back channel with President Erdogan to exchange views.

Meanwhile, the new Armenian government was not ready to implement, at least immediately, the two primary demands of Azerbaijan — to recognize Nagorno Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan and have zero control on those roads and highways via the Syunik province, which would connect Azerbaijan with the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic.

The other political forces in Armenia took a tougher line on relations with Azerbaijan. They spoke about the necessity to declare at least some of the territories taken by Azerbaijan in 2020 as occupied territories of the unrecognized Nagorno Karabakh Republic. They warned about Turkey’s future economic domination of Armenia if the normalization of relations would entail the opening up of the Armenian economy for Turkish investments. In this context, Civic Contract hoped that Baku and Ankara should be interested to see them as interlocutors, and not take steps to weaken their positions.

Unfortunately for the ruling party, these calculations were far from reality. Azerbaijan not only consistently pushed forward for the implementation of its two demands but very quickly deployed the tools of coercive diplomacy and military blackmail to reach them. In April 2021, President Aliyev publicly stated that if Armenia did not provide the “Zangezur corridor” by good will, Azerbaijan would either force Armenia to do that or open the corridor by force. Only weeks after that statement, Azerbaijani troops encroached into Armenian see OPTIONS, Page 20



Talaat, Tehlirian and the Pursuit of Justice

JUSTICE, from page 6

Julien Piot. Considered an unofficial national hymn, especially among members of the Diaspora, it is entitled “Cilicia.” The text is attributed to Nahapet Rusinjan (1819-1876). Bea Ehlers-Kerbekian took the role of Tehlirian, Tuncay Gary portrayed the judge. Birte Flint and Anja Haverland read the remaining parts.

The trial opens on June 2, 1921. It is a sunny day, huge crowds have gathered and the international press is on hand. The suspect, a thin, intellectual young man, enters, swearing in proceedings follow, a harpsichord sounds.

The accused takes the stand and answers questions, his name and family background. He lived in Pakarich, then moved to Erzinjan, where in June 1915 the deportation order came. The inhabitants had to leave in caravans and columns, the gendarmes robbed and plundered, and when one of them tried to take his sister, his mother protested; his parents were among the first to be killed. “I don’t want to remember that day any longer. I would rather die now, than describe that black day any further...”

Lepsius provides facts and figures: that there were 1,850,000 Armenians before the war, and where they lived; how 1,400,000 were deported, leaving fewer than half a million, 200,000 of them were from Constantinople, Smyrna and Aleppo.

The accused answers more questions, recounts how he fled to a village in the hills, where Kurds offered him refuge, then travelled farther to Persia, then Tiflis, then Almas, where he stayed a year. When he received news that the Russians had taken Erzinjan, he returned home in 1916, only to find the village almost deserted, his family home devastated. Overwhelmed, he fell unconscious. When he came to, he searched for money and found it where his family had buried it, took it and travelled to Tbilisi (Tiflis), where he stayed two years and learned Russian, from there to Constantinople after the war, then to Salonika. There, too, he had seizures, fell unconscious.

“Not I am the Murderer”

The court clerk reads the charges: Soghomon Tehlirian, accused of killing Grand Vizier Talaat Pasha on March 15, 1921 in Berlin. Asked for his plea, whether he answers yes or no to the charges, Tehlirian responds, “No.” Defense lawyer Dr. Adolf von Gorden asks why he considers himself innocent, why he has a clear conscience, and he answers, “I killed a man, but I am not a murderer.” Did he not want to kill him? Yes, he did kill him. Yes, he had a plan, he says. He had had a vision: his dead mother had appeared to him and asked how he could be indifferent, knowing Talaat was there. “You are no longer my son,” were her words. And when he awoke, he decided to kill him.

Edward Apelian, secretary at the Armenian Consulate in

Berlin, takes the stand. He lived at the same place as the accused, and could report having seen him during seizures he suffered. Has he ever spoken of Talaat, and a plan to kill him? No. Once, Apelian recalls, they had been reading a book by Lepsius about the massacres, but the accused didn’t want “to open old wounds.” Apelian had no idea that Talaat was in Berlin.

The Assassination

Tehlirian again on the stand: he explains why he moved to lodgings on the Hardenbergstrasse. Perchance he had seen men nearby at the Zoological Garden, who were speaking Turkish, and recognized Talaat, whom the others addressed as Pasha. Motivated by the vision of his mother, he decided to carry out his plan. From his new lodgings, he could observe Talaat; on March 15, he saw him on a balcony, then leaving the building. Tehlirian grabbed his pistol, went out, followed Talaat, crossed the street and shot him dead. Under questioning, Tehlirian describes every moment, how he saw blood, and crowds gathering. Knowing they would apprehend him, he fled, throwing away his weapon while running.

Nicholas Jessen, a merchant from Berlin, was at the scene of the crime and provides testimony that confirms what the accused has just said. And how did the assailant feel after having fired the shot? Tehlirian answers that, when taken to the police office, he felt a sense of satisfaction. “Even today I am still very satisfied with my action.” He again recalls his mother’s order to kill Talaat, and explains, he was so changed that he did not know he should not kill.

Deportations and the Young Turks

The court now hears testimony on the crimes of Talaat. Christine Terzibashian takes the stand, 26 years old and a survivor. In painstaking detail she describes how the deportation orders came in July 1915, and in four groups over eight days, the people of her town were sent out on foot, including her extended family of 21 people. With her own eyes, she saw all but three of them killed, and swore the orders had come from Constantinople. Men were tied together and thrown into the water, others killed with bayonets. One brother was beheaded and when her mother saw this, she fell dead. Christine, two brothers and her father managed to escape, but her father succumbed to sickness. When asked, “Is that all really true? Isn’t that fantasy?” she answers, “What I have reported is much less than the reality. It was much worse.”

Lepsius provides the political context to the massacres, reaching back to the 19th century, and presenting the Armenian question as “a creation of European diplomacy.” Despite the promises of the Great Powers to protect the Christians and to force through reforms, “not one of them lifted a finger to save them or even to punish the murder-

ers.” Then, although the Armenians and Turks made the revolution together and their leaders supported one another, on April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian intellectuals were arrested and deported, only 15 would survive. “It was the Armenian intelligentsia of Constantinople.”

The next to offer testimony is one of those few survivors, Grigoris Balakian, an Armenian clergyman, who offers a first-hand account. Balakian reports on a meeting he and a Professor Diran Kelekian, who had been a newspaper editor, in Changiri with the Deputy Governor Asaf Bey. The latter had displayed respect for Kelekian, who had been his teacher, and also for Balakian, as a man of the church. He showed them a telegram, signed by Talaat, demanding to know “how many Armenians are already dead and how many still alive.” Both Armenians reacted with disbelief, until Asaf Bey explained that was an order to start the massacres. A member of the jury wants to know whose signature was on the telegram. Balakian replies, it was “Talaat, I saw that with my own eyes.”

Back to the accused, and the motives for his actions. Professor Dr. Richard Cassirer describes Tehlirian as a patient he examined twice in his practice in February. From the symptoms described, Dr. Cassirer had initially diagnosed epilepsy and prescribed medication, which had heavy side effects. But now, after having followed the court proceedings, he has to alter his diagnosis; it is not a real form of epilepsy, but rather seizures provoked by the trauma and shock of what the accused had gone through during the war years. Though not prepared to declare that the accused bore no responsibility for his actions, Dr. Cassirer suggests that §51 of the penal code be applicable, a clause that says a person is not punishable if mentally incapable at the time, temporarily insane.

The following day the court reconvenes, the prosecution and the defense present their final arguments. Defense attorney Dr. Johannes Werthauer stresses the historical significance of the case, that “the eyes of the world are on us,” and says the implications will be felt for a thousand years. His colleague Dr. Niemayer points also to the political implications, reminding the court that Germany had been blamed as complicit in the Young Turks’ crimes, indeed it had been charged that “the Germans were the real Talaats in Turkey.” A not guilty verdict, he said, would rectify this; and “the world will see acquittal as an act of higher justice.”

Otto Reinicke, Chairman of the Jury, delivers the verdict: Not guilty.

Friends and supporters of the accused applaud and congratulate Tehlirian.

(The reenactment of the trial was filmed and can be viewed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PX-2L8E1PNXU>)

Armenia’s Options in the Face of Coercive Azerbaijani Tactics Are Limited

OPTIONS, from page 19

territory in Syunik and Gegharkunik regions. During the summer, Azerbaijan added Ararat province in its military pressure campaign, coming closer to Yerevan.

In parallel with the Azerbaijani military pressure campaign, negotiations were underway between Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia to come to agreements on borders delimitation and demarcation processes and restoration of communications. The talks appeared to reach a conclusion at the beginning of November, and the Russian President’s Press Secretary announced an online trilateral leaders meeting in the week of November 8-12. Simultaneously, there was a leak in the Armenian media that during the meeting, scheduled for either November 9 or 10, Aliyev, Pashinyan, and Putin would sign two documents on borders and routes, which, the sources claimed, would violate Armenian national interests.

On November 7, 2021, the Armenian Prime Minister rejected the rumors on the upcoming meeting during an interview with Armenian Public Television. The meeting did not take place. Apparently, the Armenian side asked to postpone or cancel it. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan increased its political and military pressure on Armenia by deploying customs posts on roads connecting several cities and villages in the Syunik province, in practice closing them for Armenians. On November 14, Azerbaijani troops advanced their positions in the Syunik province, meeting no resistance, while on November 16 a six-hour mini-war broke out in Syunik which resulted in additional encroachment of Azerbaijani troops, while both sides reported heavy casualties.

Azerbaijan has a clear strategy – any start of border delimitation and demarcation process is possible only if Armenia agrees on the main principle – recognizing Nagorno Karabakh as a part of Azerbaijan. If Armenia rejects this demand, no delimitation process will start. The absence of the delimitation process means the absence of fixed borders, which implies that Armenia cannot blame Azerbaijan for border encroachment into its sovereign territory. That in turn means Armenia will not be able to trigger its mutual defense arrangements with Russia, nor the mutual defense clauses envisaged by the CSTO military alliance. Azerbaijan will seek to continue its advance into Armenian territories, simultaneously rejecting the accusations of violating Armenian borders. As for uncontrolled (or as the worst-case scenario for Azerbaijan only Russia controlled) access via Syunik to Nakhijevan, the Azerbaijan’s position is clear — if Armenia rejects this option, Azerbaijan will demand to establish its checkpoints in the Lachin corridor to implement joint Russia — Azerbaijan control there.

The documents prepared for the postponed or canceled Moscow virtual summit were not published, so assessing their content and implications is challenging. However, as Armenia probably asked to postpone the meeting, we may assume that the government had concerns that their signature may trigger another domestic political crisis in Armenia. Interestingly after the mini-war of November 16, Prime Minister Pashinyan stated that Armenia received new offers on delimitation and demarcation from the Russian Ministry of Defense, which were acceptable for Armenia. The government has however stated that it would not publicize them as this may hinder the negotia-

tion process.

Azerbaijan is very clear in its intentions — to continue to put military pressure on Armenia by making more advances into Armenian territories to force Yerevan to accept its two primary demands. In the current situation, Armenia has four options available;

to accept Azerbaijani demands, which will be equal to capitulation,

to stop the Azerbaijani army’s further advance in Syunik through military means to deprive Azerbaijan of its tool of military blackmail – that is if Yerevan has such military capabilities,

to involve in the process external powers, which will force Azerbaijan to stop its military pressure without Armenia accepting Baku’s demands,

to reject Azerbaijani demands and continue to lose territories and bear casualties with no light at the end of the tunnel.

The acceptable choices for Armenia are the second and third options or some combination of them.

Meanwhile, the developments of the last year proved that assessments according to which by taking some 8500 square km of territories in the 2020 Karabakh war, Azerbaijan will be satisfied, will forget about the remaining part of Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia, and an era of peaceful development will be launched for Armenians, were highly exaggerated, and had little semblance to reality.

(Benyamin Poghosyan is the founder and chairman of the Center for Political and Economic Strategic Studies in Yerevan. This column originally appeared on November 20 on the website commonspace.eu.)