

THE ARMENIAN
Mirror-Spectator
Volume LXXX, NOs. 27, Issue 4121 \$ 2.00

The First English Language Armenian Weekly in the United States

NEWS IN BRIEF

Court OKs Turkey Protocols

By Anush Martirosian,
Ruzanna Stepanian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Constitutional Court upheld on Tuesday the legality of Armenia’s normalization agreements with Turkey amid continuing protests staged by nationalist groups opposed to the deal.

The widely anticipated verdict paved the way for the agreements’ ratification by parliament. The National Assembly is not expected, however, to start debating the two “protocols” before their endorsement by Turkey’s parliament.

The Constitutional Court handed down the ruling several hours after it started examining their conformity with the Armenian constitution. The session was open to the media for only four minutes.

The court decided that the examination will follow a “written procedure” that does not involve public hearings and verbal questioning of government officials and experts. The court chairman, Gagik Harutiunian, announced that the panel of nine judges will only consider written statements submitted by the Armenian Foreign Ministry and other interested parties.

“This is an issue which has an exception-



Opponents of the Turkish-Armenian Agreements Demonstrate outside the Constitutional Court on January 12 (Photolure Photo)

al significance,” he said. “All those written documents that have been submitted to the Constitutional Court are available in the deliberations room and the members of the court can take them into account.”

Harutiunian added that they would also look into a nine-page petition from the

Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun) and other vocal opponents of the Turkish-Armenian protocols. “I am convinced that the members of the court will also familiarize themselves with it during the examination to clarify their legal positions,” he said.

Dashnaksutyun leaders handed the document as more than a thousand of its supporters marched to the court building in Yerevan on Monday. They demanded that the Constitutional Court declare the protocols at least “partly unconstitutional.”

Several dozen demonstrators gathered outside the court building on Tuesday to see COURT, page 20

Secretary of State Clinton to Consult with Armenian-American Organizations Regarding Protocols

Meeting Scheduled as Turkey
Continues to Link Nagorno
Karabagh

WASHINGTON – US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will meet with Armenian-American organizations next month to consult on the protocols between Armenia and Turkey announced the Armenian Assembly of America. The Assembly requested a meeting with Secretary Clinton to discuss issues of concern to the community.

Invited to attend the meeting with Clinton are: the Armenian Assembly of

America, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), the Diocese of the Armenian Church (Western), the Knights of Vartan and the Armenian National Committee of America.

“The Republic of Armenia through its president, has taken bold steps, yet the Republic of Turkey continues its counter-productive actions with respect to normalizing relations with Armenia,” stated Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. “As such, this meeting offers an see CLINTON, page 20

Turkey Envoy: ‘Israel’s Shameful Display Is Worst I’ve Ever Seen’

ANKARA (*Ha’aretz*) – The Turkish Foreign Ministry last Tuesday summoned Israeli Ambassador Gaby Levy for clarification, a day after the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem called in Ankara’s envoy to Israel for what the latter described to Army Radio as the most shameful experience of his 35-year career.

Israel’s Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon did not intend to humiliate Ambassador Ahmet Oguz Celikkol by seating him in a lower chair without flag representation during their meeting.

Celikkol was called in regarding a recent Turkish television drama depicting actors dressed as Shin Bet officers who kidnap babies.

The Foreign Ministry stressed that it had summoned the envoy and ordered the seating arrangement to make clear that it would respond to any insult made by the Turkish leadership.

Three months ago, a similar diplomatic instance occurred between the two countries after Turkey aired the controversial television drama “Ayrilik” (“Separation”) which featured actors dressed as Israeli soldiers killing Palestinian children.

During the meeting, Turkey’s ambassador was seated in a low sofa, and facing him, in higher chairs, were Ayalon and two other officials – an arrangement carried out at Lieberman’s orders.

see ISRAEL, page 4

Turkish Court: Apology Campaign Not a Crime

ISTANBUL (Hetq) – The Court of Appeals’ 9th Criminal Office in Turkey has decided that the Internet signature campaign “I apologize to the Armenians” (*Erminilerden Özür Diliyorum*) does not constitute a crime.

A group of Turkish intellectuals had initiated the campaign in 2008 regarding the events of 1915. More than 30,000 people have already supported the campaign with their signatures.

The campaign sent the following message to the Armenian community: “I cannot reconcile my conscience to denial of and insensitivity about the great Ottoman disaster the Armenians were imposed to in 1915. I reject this injustice and share the feelings and grief of my Armenian brothers and sisters. I apologize to them.”

Patriarchal Vicar in Jerusalem Resigns

JERUSALEM – The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem released a statement on January 7 announcing the resignation of Patriarchal Vicar Archbishop Nourhan Manougian from his post. Manougian was the deputy of the patriarch, Archbishop Torkom Manougian.

According to the brief statement, the Patriarch had appointed Manougian to the second-in-command post, elevating him from the rank of Grand Sacristan, in December 2008.

Archbishop Nourhan Manougian had submitted his resignation on November 5, 2009, and, according to the statement, “the members of the Holy Synod have expressed their concerns about the Patriarchal Vicar’s indifference towards his responsibilities.”

Two Candidates for Co-Patriarch in Istanbul

ISTANBUL (*Today’s Zaman*) – Turkey’s Armenian citizens have two candidates for the position of co-patriarch, as the Armenian Patriarchate in Istanbul tries to appoint an assistant to Patriarch of Constantinople Mesrob Mutafian, in light of his debilitating illness.

Two clerics have announced their candidacy: Sebouh Chuljyan, the primate of the Gougark Diocese in Armenia, and the leader of the Armenian Church in Germany, Archbishop Karekin Bekdjian. Both meet the requirement for the Patriarchate, as both were born in Turkey.

The Turkish-Armenian community recognizes Mutafian as their spiritual leader until the end of his life. The Patriarchate’s statement noted that until the emergence of health problems, Mutafian had served for 11 years and that on December 24, 2008, the Patriarchate voted that he would be the community’s spiritual leader until his death.

INSIDE

Nora Armani

Page 12

INDEX

Armenia	2,3
Arts and Living	12
Calendar	17
Community News	6
Editorial	18
International	4,5



CELEBRATING THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY AT ST. VARTAN CATHEDRAL, SEE STORY AND PHOTOS ON PAGE 6



ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Overall 53,000 People Visited Matenadaran In 2009

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – About 3,632 groups paid a visit in 2009 to the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, the Matenadaran, encompassing a total of 53,000 visitors, said the head of the exhibition-hall of Matenadaran, Aida Charkhchyan. She added that the figure has decreased slightly from the previous year.

About 3,717 groups visited the Matenadaran in 2008, including 56,640 people. According to Charkhchyan, the decrease is connected with the global financial crisis, as well as with AH1N1 infection.

“A great number of school-children visit the Matenadaran annually over the months of December and November, but schools were closed this year because of the infection,” Charkhchyan said.

France is in first place in terms of the number of tourists who visited Matenadaran, followed by Italy, Germany, Russia and the US. Last year the number of tourists Germany was especially great. The number of tourists arrived from Japan has decreased this year compared to 2008 as well.

Brandy Production in Armenia for Jan-Nov 2009 down 43.1%

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – Brandy production in Armenia for Jan-Nov 2009 versus the same period of 2008 was down 43.1 percent to 8,469 thousand liters, according to the The National Statistical Service of Armenia.

From January to November 2008, brandy production in Armenia amounted to 14,889 thousand liters. Vodka and liqueur production in Armenia, in January to November 2009 was up 9 percent to 11,509.4 thousand liters. Wine production grew 30.8 percent to 3513 thousand liters. Champagne wines production was down 13.6 percent to 248.3 thousand liters. Beer production was up 2.4 percent to 10,346.9 thousand liters for the period under review. Non-alcohol drinks production made up 32.2 million liters falling 15 percent versus Jan-Nov 2008.

Precious Metals Growing In Price in Armenia

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – The official price of gold (gold bullions) established for the current week (January 11-17) in Armenia were up 2.8 percent as compared to the prices for the last week (13,309.34 drams) and totaled 13,676.07 drams per gram, according to the Depository of Precious Metals and Stones of Armenia.

The ex-factory silver price was up 4 percent to 215.96 drams/g (207.66 drams last week), platinum – 8 percent to 18,664.66 drams/g (17,296.48 drams last week), and palladium – 16.2 percent to 5151.22 drams/g (4,432.67 drams).

Children in Armenia Back to School after One-Month Quarantine

YEREVAN (Tert.am) – Children went back to school in Armenia this week, after schools and kindergartens were closed for a little over a month in an effort to curb the spread of respiratory illnesses in the republic.

The decision to close schools, made on December 8, was made by the Armenian Minister of Healthcare and the Armenian Minister of Education and Science.

Though children got an early start to the holidays, the decision to close schools resulted in working parents scrambling to secure childcare – a consequence which the state didn't take into account apparently.

Around 80 US Companies in Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – About 80 US companies operate in Armenia. They cover various sectors of economy, such as IT, banking, tourism and hospitality, manufacturing, etc. Executive Director of American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia (AmCham) Diana Gaziyan said that these, as well as heavy industry, are the spheres which are of particular interest for US companies.

According to her assessment, even though there are some obvious issues hindering the development of business in Armenia, the country's business legislation is rather liberal and foreign investment oriented. There is no need to create new laws; the fair application of the existing ones will be enough. The country is quite attractive from doing business perspective, which is proven by the fact of the presence of some major

international players.

According to the Armenian Statistical Service, the US investments in the real sector of the economy during the January-September were \$15.7 million. This index, though, as compared with the same span of the past year, had been reduced by 27.9 percent. Gaziyan says because of the depreciation of the dram, attractive sectors are those which export or add value or manufacture here.

The American Chamber of Commerce in Armenia has been operating in Armenia since 2000. Currently, AmCham has around 80 member companies, which represent various sectors or economy, such as financial services, insurance, banking, energy and mining, information technologies, consumer goods, manufacturing, tourism, marketing and promotion, infrastructure devel-

opment, international organizations, etc. AmCham is a member of the US Chamber of Commerce and European Council of American Chambers of Commerce.

The executive director assures that one of the most important areas of AmCham activities is lobbying for the business interests of its members in its strive to create more competitive business environment in Armenia. AmCham creates opportunities for its members to network, enlarge the scope of their business contacts and find new partners. Gaziyan says another important direction is increasing the business relations between Armenia and Turkey, and AmCham realizes that the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border will have a significant impact on the business environment development in Armenia.

Fadey Sargisian Dies At Age 86

YEREVAN (armradio.am and PanArmenian.net) – Dr. Fadey Sargisian, an adviser to Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargisian, died on January 10 at the age of 86.

Sargisian was chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR (1977-1989), parliamentarian (1995-1999) and had the rank of major general.

He graduated from the Leningrad Budyonov Military Academy (1946).

He researched in radio electronics, computer engineering and automatic control systems.

Sargisian held different leading positions in the Scientific Technical Committee of the Central Rocket Artillery Administration of the USSR Ministry of



Fadey Sargisian

Defense (1946-1959), was director of Yerevan Scientific Research Institute of Mathematical Machines (1963-1977), chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR (1977-1989), Academician-secretary of the Division of physico-mathematical and technical sciences of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia (1989-1993) and President of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia (1993-2006).

Sargisian was born September 18, 1923 in Yerevan. He was a foreign member of the Russian, Georgian and Portuguese Academies of Sciences, Honorary Member of the International Academy of Engineering Sciences, the Ararat International Academy of Sciences, the Armenian Philosophical Academy, the International Academy of Sciences, Education, Industry and Arts, among others. He was double laureate of state award of the USSR, laureate of state award of the Ukrainian SSR. He has been honored with orders of Lenin, October Revolution, Red Banner of Labor (three times) and Saint Mesrop Mashtots and served as adviser to the prime minister of the Republic of Armenia since 2006.

A governmental committee will be in charge of funeral organization.

Armenian PM Vows to Expose Wealthy Officials

By Ruben Meloyan

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Prime Minister Tigran Sargisian pledged last week to crack down on wealthy and presumably corrupt state officials, saying that will be a key element of his drive to strengthen the rule of law in Armenia.

Sargisian stood by his ambitious reform agenda that puts the emphasis on tackling tax evasion by the rich, improving the country's business environment and, in particular, breaking up “oligopolies” that have monopolized key sectors of the Armenian economy.

The de facto monopolies are widely believed to be controlled not only wealthy businessmen but also high-ranking government and security officials. Local anti-graft campaigners say this is the root cause of government corruption in Armenia.

“I think we can conclude, together with you, that officials engage in business nowadays,” Sargisian acknowledged during a year-end news conference. “We can make such a political evaluation.”

He complained Armenia's existing laws make it all but impossible for the authorities to expose and punish officials with extensive business interests of dubious origin. “That's what makes us refrain from publicizing names and

prompts us to create and introduce, together with you, [legal] mechanisms that would address this problem,” he said.

“We are going to fight against oligopolies, rather than oligarchs,” stressed the prime minister. “These are different things.”

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank also increasingly stress the importance of tackling the oligopolistic structures. Officials from both multilateral institutions have warned in recent months that Armenia cannot return to the path of robust growth without combating government corruption and creating a level playing field for all businesses.

Sargisian argued that his government has already obligated the country's 500 largest companies to issue more detailed financial reports certified by foreign auditors starting from next year. He described that as the first step towards breaking up the oligopolies.

Sargisian again defended the government's response to the global economic crisis that has plunged Armenia into its worst recession since the 1990s. He claimed that the country is emerging from the slump with “minimal losses.”

The Armenian economy is on track to contract by at least 15 percent this year. The government anticipates that economic growth will resume already in 2010.

Central Bank: 2010 to Be Year of Recovery for Armenia

YEREVAN (Arka) – Earlier this month, Vache Gabrielyan, deputy chairman of the Central Bank of Armenia, summarizing the results of 2009, said 2010 would be a year of recovery for the country.

He said that 2009 was very difficult for Armenia because of impacts of the global recession, but the country's financial sector has managed to resist these challenges.

“But it doesn't mean that everything is O.K. in Armenia's financial and banking sectors, and they are free from troubles. The opposite - we have plenty to do.”

However, he said, the course of the system's development shows that precipitous decline in the first half of 2009

was followed by a rally.

Gabrielyan said that new loans extended to the economy and the increased financial mediation amid the crisis played an important part in healing the situation.

At the same time, he said that many problems are still waiting for their solutions.

Among these problems, he singled out the lack of diversification and competition as well as shadow economy that directly affect the financial sector.

“We enter 2010 with higher inflation than in 2009. But recovery needs certain expenses, and we made them. We are convinced that these expenses were necessary and will produce results.”



ARMENIA

'Armenian Elvis' Keeps King's Legend Alive

By Tatevik Lazarian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Narek Markarian is the first to admit that physically, he isn't a dead ringer for the King of Rock and Roll, despite his glossy pompadour and sleek black sideburns. But Markarian, who has come to be known as the "Armenian Elvis," says that preserving the musical memory of the King of Rock and Roll – born 75 years ago on January 8 – is what matters to him most.

The 26-year-old Markarian began to collect Presley's recordings and memorabilia while he was still a schoolboy: "I mainly collect the records. Songs are the greatest riches that Elvis has left to us."

Now an entire room of his home in Yerevan is devoted to the King, with hundreds of books, posters and recordings, and even articles of clothing that once belonged to Presley, who died in 1977 at the age of 42. "It may seem odd to have a thousand CDs by the same artist," he said. "But when you get to know these people [who produce these CDs], you begin to understand that what they've done is put serious research into a cultural phenomenon."

"Elvis is a cultural phenomenon with a lasting influence. And people continue to study that phenomenon and give lectures on it. It's very interesting. And it's very important that history should not be forgotten."

Markarian is a teacher at Yerevan's Bryusov Linguistic University. But at night, he turns into "the Armenian Elvis." He dons shiny suit jackets, swivels his hips and performs songs such as *Suspicious Minds*, *Jailhouse Rock* and other Elvis hits at clubs throughout Armenia. He has also performed in the United States, and in 2007, performed as Elvis in a charity concert in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek.

Markarian says he uses his stage shows to introduce his audiences to a lesser-known side of Elvis, in addition to performing the classics: "Elvis has a large repertoire that includes more than 700 songs. I perform 100 of them. I always try to include songs that, for whatever reason, aren't known to wider audiences but deserve to be. That way people aren't listening only to things they've already heard a hundred times."

Markarian has also created an Armenian website dedicated to Elvis (www.elvis.am). But the country has no fan club dedicated to Elvis Presley. For that, Markarian has had to join a



Narek Markarian with a poster of his hero, Elvis Presley

club in neighboring Russia.

This year, Markarian is hoping to record his first album, filled mainly with songs from Elvis's repertoire. He says he also hopes to write a book about the role of the King of Rock and Roll in the USSR, where he was revered on a level with the Beatles as a symbol of the West.

"My concept is to talk about Elvis in the context of the Soviet Union. Because there's no point in writing another basic biography about him," he says. "I don't like it when a person reads four or five serious books and then writes another

dull, 100-page biography based on that. A lot of things are either incorrect or a repetition."

No special Elvis commemorations took place in Armenia on January 8. Instead, celebrations have been pushed back to February, when Elvis fans around the world are poised to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of Presley's US Army service in 1960.

Markarian, whose possessions include an army uniform modeled after one worn by the King, is preparing for the event with a set of performances in a Yerevan club next month.

Library in the Lurch: Martuni's 75,000 Books Wasting Away

By Grisha Balasanyan

MARTUNI, Armenia (Hetq) – "We've had it up to here with our situation, of constantly filing petitions and requests, of writing letters to this and that official, telling them, someone, to help us in saving this library of ours."

These were the words of Lida Aleksanyan, Director of the Martuni Library in the Gegharkunik Province, when this reporter went to cover the story of the library on the brink of ruin. The library building itself is in desperate need of repair.

Aleksanyan said that the building is beyond repair however. "The site is dank and damp. Repairs won't cut it. A new building is what's needed," she argued. Library employees say that the books on the shelves have doubled in weight due to the dampness and the texts are fading. The library has a collection of 75,000 books and 3,000 members.

The old and frayed books can be checked out theoretically but they aren't; the demand is too great. But a reader is hard pressed to get through a book in normal fashion because so many pages are missing or illegible. The adventurous reader must borrow several copies of the same text to make up for the missing pages found in each.

No funds for renovations or for new books

"The last time we received a new batch of books was back in June; from the Book Assistance Fund. Otherwise, we haven't received any new literature for the past few years. We just don't have the funds to buy anything," Aleksanyan stated.

The library is a branch of the Martuni Municipality and it's the mayor who is supposed to see to it that new books are acquired.

Khachik Khlghatyan, the mayor's chief of staff, said that the library is slated to be renovated in 2010.

"If the financial crisis doesn't come a' knocking at the door of the federal government and the Martuni mayor's office next year, we'll have state funds to renovate the building," Khlghatyan stated. The town official said that they would rather not "inconvenience" the federal government in a time of crisis but that the books are rotting away and they have no alternative.

Gluuing the Pages of Tattered Books

Roza Zhamkharyan has been working at the library for many long years. Every day she's busy gluing pages together, making sure that at least some of the books remain in circulation. The library serves the local community and surrounding area. Residents from the district's seventeen villages even make the trip to the library to pick up a "good read".

Back in the day, there was a branch library and a children's library in Martuni, but they're closed now. All the books have been gathered at the central library. Many of the books sit in piles on the floor, tied up with twine. As a consequence, they aren't available to the public.

"Karineh Hayrapetyan, who heads the library's member services department, stated that they had requested a bit more patience from their readers to unpack all the books and get them on the shelves. But Aleksanyan confessed that they didn't have adequate space in the library to properly house all the books. The library has no reading room. People have to check out the books.

"I've been the director here for five years. We've requested help from all government bodies and the Ministry of Culture. We asked the regional governor and other officials to come

see the situation for themselves. They show up, say how terrible things are, and then shake their heads, saying they just don't have the resources to help. They promised to allocate some funds this year, but then the crisis came and, nothing," Aleksanyan added. Library workers told us that the only time officials show an interest is around election time. During the

campaign, they say that the library will be at the top of their list of priorities. After they're elected it's another matter.

The dedicated staff holds out hope that a benefactor will come forth to save the crumbling library and the books. "It's a real shame. We have many readers. Just look at all the well-thumbed books," he said.

Jubilee Stamps Marking AGBU's Centennial Are Put into Circulation in Armenia

YEREVAN – During AGBU's centennial in 2006, the Armenia's Hai Post postal service, by order of the Ministry of Communications of the Republic of Armenia, printed stamps in Armenia dedicated to AGBU. Upon the initiative of the AGBU Armenia Representation and with the cooperation of the Ministry of Communications of the Republic of Armenia, the sheet of three stamps



depicts the organization's founder and first president, Boghos Nubar, the minutes of the founding meeting of the organization, and a portrait of honorary life president of AGBU Alex Manoogian. To mark AGBU's centennial in 2006, the Republic of Nagorno-Karabagh's postal service also issued a stamp, which depicted the statue of Alex Manoogian located on his namesake street in the Karabagh capital of Stepanakert.

In celebration of Christmas and the New Year, the AGBU Armenia Representation sent out cards this season using the AGBU stamp.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Turkey and China Sign \$1.05B in Contracts

ISTANBUL (PanArmenian.Net) – China and Turkey have signed some 38 contracts for a total of \$1.05 billion upon closing the forum in Istanbul, aimed to economic cooperation between the two states, Turtsia.ru reported.

Contracts are related to imports of minerals, marble and other products from Turkey to China, as well as joint projects to build power plants.

Direct Chinese investments in the Turkish economy by late September 2009 reached \$313 million, Turkish exports to China in 2008 totaled \$1.98 billion since 2000. In 2008 trade between the countries rose from \$1 billion to \$12.6 billion.

Armenian Striker Ilya Javorijan to Try for Toronto FC

TORONTO (IMScouting) – The MLS side Toronto FC will have a 10-day trial period with Armenian striker Ilya Javorijan, starting from February 8.

The 28-year-old target man has been plying his trade in Israel since 2004, and this season he has been a major disappointment for Maccabi Tel Aviv despite scoring four goals in 10 league appearances.

According to reports in Israel, Maccabi Tel Aviv are trying to get rid of the striker, who doesn't wish to play for other sides in the country and prefers a move abroad.

Javorijan has been playing for Israeli sides Hapoel Petach Tikva, Hapoel Tel Aviv, Irony Kiriat Shmona and Bnei Sakhnin before moving to Maccabi Tel Aviv in the summer of 2008 for \$515,000. His contract runs out in the coming summer.

Scouts in Israel describe the Armenian international (three caps) as a "very strong striker, with perceived presence in the box. Mostly useful inside the box, as he is heavy and limited in his movement. He is a bit clumsy but a fairly good finisher in front of goal. He still hasn't proved that he can handle the pressure of playing for a big side."

Vladimir Zhirinovski: Russia Must Recognize Nagorno Karabagh

RIGA, Latvia (Arminfo) – "Russia must recognize Nagorno Karabagh if it declares independence," says Vladimir Zhirinovski, Leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, Vice-Speaker of the Russian State Duma, in an interview with Latvian "Neatkarigas Rita Avize."

"I am not against either Armenians or Azerbaijanis, but they will never agree on Nagorno Karabagh like Georgian will never agree with Abkhazia. Arabs will never agree with the Jews. Kurds and Turks will never reach an agreement either," he says. Zhirinovski mentions that Russia has called recognizing all the territories that did not want to be part of their former Soviet republics. "Russia has been calling for recognition of Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transdnistria and Nagorno Karabagh for already 16 years," he says.

Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry Considers Dropping Visa Requirement for Turkey

BAKU (Arminfo) – The possibility of the elimination of visa requirement between Turkey and Azerbaijan is currently being considered by the Azeri Foreign Ministry.

"After detailed consideration, a relevant decision will be adopted," said Azerbaijan's Deputy Foreign Minister Vagif Sadikhov.

Iran has eliminated the visa requirement for Azerbaijan, which will go into effect on February 1. Turkey eliminated the visa requirement for Azerbaijani citizens last year.

Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division at International Space Weather Initiative

SHEIBENIK, Croatia – On September 4-18, 2009 a delegation from the Yerevan Physics Institute (YerPhI) consisting of Prof. Ashot Chilingarian, YerPhI's director and head of its Cosmic Ray Division (CRD), with CRD scientists and engineers participated in the International conference on the Heliophysical Phenomena and the Earth Environment in Shibenik, Croatia. The regional meeting of Balkan, Black Sea and Caspian Sea participants was held for the third time within the framework of the International Heliophysical Year, now being continued as the International Space Weather Initiative (ISWI). This initiative is supported by NASA and the United Nations' Outer Space Office in Vienna, Austria.

Armenia's Cosmic Ray Division has deployed Armenian designed cosmic ray particle detectors in Croatia and Bulgaria, with other countries to follow in the near future. The new networked arrays of particle detectors are part of the Space Environment Viewing and Analysis Network (SEVAN) which was developed largely by young CRD scientists under the direction of Chilingarian and CRD's senior staff with international funding.

The result of CRD's research was presented in a number of papers by Prof. Ashot Chilingarian, Bagrat Malyan, Armen Hovhannisyanyan, A. Daryan, Karen Arakelyan and Artur Reymers.

Chilingarian was one of four scientists especially invited to report to the conference on particle detectors for space weather and solar physics research. The other invited speakers were from research institutes in the US and Russia. Armenian doctoral



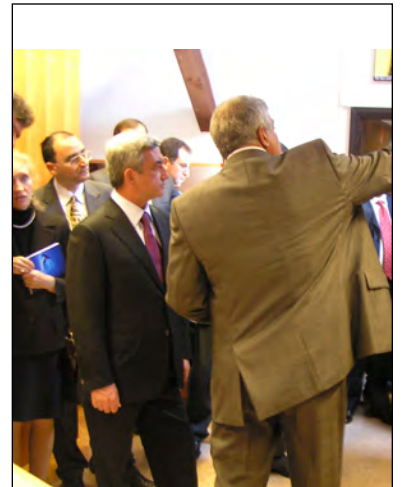
Prof Chilingarian at ISWI Conference, third person from right, talking to a reporter to his left, with Armenian President Sargsisian looking on

students participated in the presentation of two reports at a training session on cosmic rays and neutron monitors.

President of Armenia Serge Sargsisian, Minister of Economy Nerses Yeritsyan, and minister of Foreign Affairs Edward Nalbandian who were visiting Croatia on September 8 met with the Croatian and Armenian physicists at the Zagreb observatory and congratulated them on the successful collaboration and the launch of the SEVAN equipment in Croatia.

The SEVAN system of networked cosmic ray monitors received support at the meeting in Croatia, and is scheduled to receive a boost in 2010.

For more information on this topic and on the Cosmic Ray Division visit http://crdlx5.yerphi.am/press_releases/ and <http://www.crdfriends.org>.



Prof Chilingarian explaining SEVAN Cosmic Ray Monitor designed by CRD scientists and students, and being deployed internationally

Armenians Saved Abdul Hamid's Grandson and His Family: *Hurriyet*

ISTANBUL (News.am) – "Our family 'owed their lives' to French-Armenians after their exile from Turkey. We were penniless. Our Armenian friends helped us. There was an Armenian lady who welcomed us to her chateau and we lived there for a long time. I cannot deny the good deeds Armenians have done for my family," Beyzade Balent Osman, grandson of Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II stated in the interview with Turkish *Hurriyet* daily.

After Young Turks suppressed counter-revolution on April 27, 1909 Abdul Hamid was dethroned and arrest-

ed. He was conveyed into captivity in Salonika till 1912, then returned to Constantinople, where he died in the prison. The members of Ottoman dynasty were deported from the country.

"I am on the side of the truth, but we need to look to the future now. The French and the Germans had also slaughtered each other, came into conflict but still managed to establish dialogue," the daily quotes Osman's words.

"I witnessed his grandmother crying many times when he was a child.

They thought Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (the founder of First Republic of Turkey-NEWS.am's note) would be unsuccessful in his cause and that we would return to the old days. My grandmother and mother wanted us to learn Turkish. My father, however, was a republican by all means and was supportive of Ataturk's principles," the source cites Osman.

In 1894-1896 massacres of Christian population, firstly Armenians were perpetrated in Eastern Anatolia and other places of Ottoman Empire by direct order of Sultan Abdul Hamid II.

Turkey Envoy: 'Israel's Shameful Display Is Worst I've Ever Seen'

ISRAEL, from page 1

A photo-op was held at the start of the meeting, during which Ayalon told the photographers in Hebrew: "Pay attention that he is sitting in a lower chair and we are in the higher ones, that there is only an Israeli flag on the table and that we are not smiling."

Celikkol's associates told Army Radio on Tuesday, that the meeting with Ayalon was "the most shameful display" he had seen in 35 years as a diplomat.

According to the associates, Celikkol had no idea what the topic of conversation was to be when first seated. When the cameras left the room, the sources said, the meeting was normal and professional.

"Had the ambassador understood Ayalon's intentions, which were only expressed in Hebrew, he would have

responded in kind," the source told Army Radio.

Meanwhile, ministry sources said Monday that Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman was trying to stop Defense Minister Ehud Barak from visiting to Turkey next week, in order to keep up the recent tensions between the two allied countries.

Barak was scheduled to leave for Turkey on Sunday to meet with his counterpart and the foreign minister there, in an attempt to improve deteriorating relations.

Tensions were renewed on Monday, after Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared that Israel was endangering world peace by using exaggerated force against the Palestinians, breaching Lebanon's air space and waters and for not revealing the details

of its nuclear program.

According to Foreign Ministry sources, Lieberman is now looking to "heat things up" before Barak's trip, so as to torpedo attempts to mend the tensions.

"We get the sense that Lieberman wants to heat things up before Barak's visit," a senior Foreign Ministry source said. "All of the recent activities were part of Lieberman's political agenda."

The Turkish government was expected to give a warm welcome to Barak, who alongside Labor Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer was looking to bring the allies' relations back to stability.

The Foreign Ministry sources surmised that Lieberman's efforts were aimed at preventing Turkey from resuming its role as mediator in Israel's peace talks with Syria.



INTERNATIONAL

AGBU Brazil Celebrates Its 45th Anniversary

SAO PAULO, Brazil – On Sunday, October 25, 2009, AGBU Brazil celebrated its 45th anniversary at Buffet Maison du France here. Close to 500 guests of all ages came out to celebrate the milestone event, which was notable for the large presence from the emerging generation of Brazilian Armenians.

The event was attended by numerous guests, including Valery Mkrtumian, consul general of the Republic of Armenia; Anatoly Kapko, consul general of Russia; Rev. Yesnig Guzelian, representing Archbishop Datev Karibian; Rev. Boghos Baronian and Rev. Roy Abrahamian of the Armenian Protestant Church. Also in attendance were Ruben Kechichian, chairman of AGBU Buenos Aires and member of AGBU Central Board of Directors, and his wife, Elsa.

The event honored three AGBU Brazil members for their commitment to the organization and its work: former AGBU Brazil chairman Carlos Matheus Der Haroutiounian, former

AGBU Brazil Board Member Hampartsum Moundjian, and Manuel Kherlakian Neto, an AGBU member and supporter of AGBU Brazil's many programs. Der Haroutiounian and Moundjian received AGBU Honor Member diplomas, granted by AGBU Central Board of Directors, while Neto was given the chapter's annual Personality of the Year award.

AGBU Brazil Chairman Krikor Manukian congratulated the honorees during his speech and thanked everyone for the success of the event. He also enthusiastically mentioned the youth who participated in the South American Olympic Games, organized by Córdoba. Ruben Kechichian passed along a message of congratulations from AGBU President Berge Setrakian, and expressed his happiness and pride in participating in the 45th-anniversary celebration. The evening's guests were treated to a live music performance by the band Yerevan 50 of Montevideo, Uruguay.



Chairman of AGBU Buenos Aires Chapter and member of the AGBU Central Board of Directors Ruben Kechichian expresses his thoughts on the 45th-anniversary celebration in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Arshile Gorky Exhibition at the Tate Modern

By Mark Hudson

LONDON (*The Sunday Times*) – The Armenian-born artist, best known for his tragic life, has his pioneering work showcased at the Tate Modern next month.

In February 1948, the American magazine *Life* ran a photo spread on the Glass House, a modernist farmhouse conversion in rural Connecticut. Sitting hunched by one of the wide windows is a male figure, his dark hair rather long for the period, face averted – referred to in the caption simply as the house's tenant, Arshile Gorky, an artist. To anyone even slightly acquainted with American art, that figure will be of infinitely greater interest than the house.

Yet the evasive posture is significant. A vivid presence on the New York art scene for nearly three decades, Gorky has remained elusive in death as he was in life. The question of whether he was the progenitor of the great age of American painting – which gave the world Pollock and Rothko – or simply an imitative quasi-surrealist or even a misplaced Eurasian folk artist remains open. What isn't in dispute is his status as one of the most tragic artists of the 20th century. Five months after this photograph was taken, he hanged himself in a nearby shed.

"Gorky saw things differently from other people," says his widow, Mougouch, pointing to a vigorous semi-abstract drawing on her sitting room wall. "For him, clouds and trees were full of threatening forces. As you walked around with him, you realized what you were seeing was completely different to what he was seeing." In another drawing, hanging in a corner of the room, is the pale, almost ghostly image of the other great female presence in Gorky's life, her placid, wide-eyed features framed by a headscarf – his mother.

The image is one of many Gorky produced from a photograph he kept close to him at all times. It shows the artist's 12-year-old self looking gravely out at us from his mother's side. In some of these images, the mother appears serene; in others, there's a sense of barely concealed anxiety. The greatest of them, large paintings hanging in the Whitney Museum, New York, and the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, are considered American masterpieces, icons of the immigrant experience. Yet Gorky never talked about the circumstances surrounding them.

On arriving in New York in the early 1920s, Gorky let it be understood that he was Russian, a cousin of the writer Maxim Gorky. In fact, he was born Vostanig Manuk Adoian in an Armenian village in eastern Turkey, circa 1900. The stories Gorky told of an idyllic village childhood – of bread baking in village ovens, brilliant red poppies, incandescent moons – weren't entirely fabricated, but they referred only to his earliest years, before he and his mother and sisters moved to the local capital, Van.

He never discussed the fact that he was pre-

sent during the siege of Van in the early stages of the Armenian Genocide of 1915; that, at the age of 15, he walked, along with the rest of the city's Armenian population, to Yerevan, in Russian Armenia, with many dying on the eight-day march; or that his mother subsequently died of malnutrition during a famine that killed a third of the city's population.

Gorky and his sister Vartush made their way to America, where Gorky set about turning himself into an artist, educating himself piecemeal at various institutions in New York and Boston while taking menial jobs. He used the pseudonym Arshile Gorky for the first time in 1924.

His early work was painfully derivative of other artists: first, Cézanne, then Picasso, Léger and Miro. By the 1930s, however, Gorky had had some commercial success in an art scene that still looked to Europe for leadership, where the artists who would make New York the global art capital two decades later – the Pollocks and Rothkos – were footling around with provincial variants on surrealism and social realism. "De Kooning was just an inarticulate guy who cleaned Arshile Gorky's brushes," one observer claimed.

Yet Gorky evaded every attempt to pin down his ideas and intentions, even discouraging his students from taking notes in class. "He may have felt that clarifications and explanations would lead back to the truth about his past," says his son-in-law and biographer, Matthew Spender. "And since he felt nobody else could understand what he'd been through, that was something he could never discuss."

Gorky's brief first marriage and subsequent relationships foundered on his simultaneous obsession with work and morbid fear of betrayal. Then, in 1941, he met a striking 19-year-old art student, Agnes Magruder, an admiral's daughter and former debutante, who was to become his wife and partner for the rest of his life. He named her Mougouch, an Armenian term of endearment.

"We met at a party," she recalls. "I'd been warned that he'd sing and dance and take the whole place over. But this tall, dark man came and sat beside me, and said absolutely nothing. Then, at the end of the evening, he asked me if I'd have coffee with him."

A slight but well-preserved 86-year-old, she pulls ruminatively on a roll-up as she looks back nearly 70 years. "I'd been trying to paint myself, and he encouraged me to continue. But I realized I had nothing to say. What he was doing seemed infinitely more interesting than anything I could ever do."

The couple's meeting coincided with a new unleashing of energy in Gorky's work. At last, he had found his own path, in passionate responses to the New England woods and fields, seen on his in-laws' farm, which echoed in some way the Armenian landscapes in his mind – captured in luscious, lyrical and apparently completely abstract paintings. This sense of liberation was the result, at least in part, of the influence of the

Chilean artist Roberto Matta. A charismatic self-publicist, one of a wave of European modernists who had arrived in New York on the outbreak of war, Matta became a close friend of Gorky, introducing him to the surrealist technique of "automatic" or completely spontaneous painting. "He told Gorky not to try so hard," Mougouch says. "He told him, just do it. Let yourself go."

Yet things were never easy. There was constant worrying about money, a continual moving between the houses of wealthier friends and Gorky's New York studio, which wasn't big enough to contain the couple and the two daughters who arrived in quick succession.

It was in early 1946, however, that the sense of disaster began to escalate. First, Gorky's studio burnt down, with the loss of about 20 important paintings; then he was diagnosed with cancer, and underwent an immediate colostomy. Physically weakened, he went on painting furiously, though he feared he was being left behind by a changing art world.

"American art was coming into its own," Spender says. "America had won the war, and it wanted to show something completely new to the world. The New York artists were staking out their territories in this new dispensation. Gorky couldn't do that. He was incapable of politicking and intrigue."

His mood swings became more severe. "He got irritated with me," Mougouch says. "He adored the children, but he got irritated with the noise they made. He was growing weaker, and he was frightened." Unable to discuss his Armenian background, even when his father died, inhibited in discussing his ideas by what he saw as his lack of formal education, but with a free-spirited wife, 20 years his junior, and two boisterous children dependent on him, Gorky felt frustrated and humiliated at every turn.

On June 17, 1948, while Gorky was working in New York, Mougouch left the children with a childminder and spent several days with Matta, who lived only 40 miles from the Glass House. When Gorky learnt of their fling, he summoned Matta to a meeting in Central Park and threatened him physically. Matta managed to calm Gorky, but his artistic standing was permanently harmed by the disclosure of the affair.

A week later, Gorky broke his neck in a car accident. The driver, his dealer, Julian Levy, was apparently drunk. Forced to wear a cumbersome neck brace, which restricted his painting arm, Gorky was now suicidal.

In mid-July 1948, Mougouch departed with the children for her parents' house in Virginia, writing to a friend that "the situation is untenable, and I can no longer hold on." Gorky's body was found a week later, hanging in a shed near the house.

What one critic referred to disparagingly as the "canonization" of Gorky by the New York art world began almost immediately. The sustained invention of his final years, maintained through every adversity, can be seen as one of the transcendent achievements of 20th-century art. Yet his status and significance have

France to Set up Genocide Court

PARIS (BBC) – The French government has announced that it will set up a new panel to try cases of genocide and war crimes committed in France or abroad.

The new court would speed up the way genocide cases are tried where the suspect is on French territory but the process involves several jurisdictions.

The unit is to include linguists and specialists with historical knowledge.

French authorities are currently hearing several cases against Rwandan genocide suspects living in France.

Those being investigated include Agathe Habyarimana, the widow of the late president Juvenal Habyarimana, whose plane was shot down in 1994, triggering the violence and killing inside Rwanda.

In a joint statement to the newspaper *Le Monde*, the French foreign minister, Bernard Kouchner, and the justice minister, Michelle Alliot-Marie, said legislation to create a new unit within the Paris High Court would be presented in the coming six months.

"As the homeland of human rights, France will never be a sanctuary for the authors of genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity," the statement said.

The move, part of broader legal reform in France, will not change French war crimes law.

However, it will enable courts to move more rapidly through the complicated international procedures involved in investigating crimes committed outside France.

The announcement comes as Kouchner is in Rwanda at the start of an African tour, which will also take him to Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burkina Faso.

Kouchner is due to hold talks in Kigali with the Rwandan president Paul Kagame, in his first visit following the resumption of diplomatic ties between France and Rwanda last November.

remained uncertain, particularly in Britain, which has never, Spender claims, quite taken to Gorky. This situation will be rectified by the Tate's spectacular show, in which Mougouch has been closely involved. "When I think of Gorky, I think about my life beginning," she says. "I rarely think of my life before then. For me, it all began with Gorky."

The exhibition of Arshile Gorky's works will be at the Tate Modern, SE1, from February 10-May 3.

(Mark Hudson is the author of *Titian, the Last Days*.)

Community News

Las Vegas Shooting Victim Once Fought To Stay in the United States

LAS VEGAS (KLAS-TV) – One of two Las Vegas women who were shot and killed over the weekend was once embroiled in a highly publicized immigration case.

Channel 8 first met Miriam Sarkisian and her sister in 2005. The federal government threatened to deport the girls to Armenia, despite the fact they lived in the United States nearly their entire lives. Their story gained the attention of US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.), who pleaded their case to the Department of Homeland Security.

In the end, the girls were temporarily allowed to stay in the country. “We cried. We hugged each other and gave each other kisses. I saw my dog again,” Sarkisian told Channel 8 in 2005 after reuniting with her family.

But, Sarkisian’s story had a tragic ending Sunday night. Police say 23-year-old Gregg Thomas went to her home unannounced. Family friends say he broke in and opened fire. They say Thomas and Sarkisian had recently split and were arguing over their 1-year-old daughter.

“They feared something,” family friend Yelena Flangas said. “But, I don’t think anybody suspected it would go to this level... (Thomas) broke the door wide open. Miriam was standing. He shot her. (Miriam’s mother) was on the couch. He shot her (too).” Flangas said Miriam’s youngest sister screamed to Thomas as he was leaving. “She asked, ‘Why did you do this?’ He turned around and shot himself,” Flangas said.

Friends say the family’s long immigration fight was difficult enough. Now, they are left to struggle with this tragedy. “It’s going to make them (a) stronger and tighter family. But it’s going to be very tough,” Flangas said.

The family has set up an account at Wells Fargo for those who would like to help with funeral expenses.

Lecture Focuses on Armenian Genocide Through Prism of Adana Massacres

TORONTO – Bedross Der Matossian, a professor in the Department of History at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), in Cambridge, Mass., will give a lecture on Friday, January 29, at the Toronto French School, sponsored by the Zoryan Institute.

Matossian will discuss the different levels of reactions to the Adana massacres and the extent to which this new analysis can add to the understanding of the larger scope of violence that was inflicted on the indigenous Armenian population during World War I. The Adana massacres have also been described by historians to be a turning point for the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire. Unlike the existing historiographies on the subject, this lecture will provide a new analysis of the massacres by examining the erosion of social and political stability in Anatolia and changes in the dynamics of power as a result of the revolution.

The lecture will take place at 7 p.m., at the Toronto French School Multipurpose Room, 318 Lawrence Ave. East (west of Bayview), Toronto.

Admission is free; free parking is also available.

This event is presented by The Zoryan Institute of Canada.



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian during the Blessing of Water ceremony at St. Vartan Cathedral with Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian

Celebrating the Feast of the Nativity at St. Vartan Cathedral

NEW YORK – Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), reminded the faithful gathered for Christmas services at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral on Wednesday, January 6, that “Christ’s purpose in life was to exemplify God’s love – and to call everyone to make that love a reality in our hearts.”

“God, our Heavenly Father, from His infinite love gave the most precious gift to us: He sent His Only Begotten Son in order to save us,” Archbishop Barsamian said. “Christ came to this earth, walked among us, preached, performed miracles, carried the heavy burden of the cross, and was crucified because...He loves each one of us.”

“This feeling of joy and love is what God calls each of us to discover, in our own lives,” the Primate said. “Our Lord calls to each and every one of us – and we must



Ambassador Garen Nazarian delivers a toast at the Christmas luncheon.

be attentive to hear his call, and accept our God-given roles in life. To some, that role is to take up our Lord’s pastoral staff: to serve him, and serve his people, as priests of the church. In the coming year, throughout our Diocese, we will explore and encourage this most precious calling in our ‘Year of Vocations: The Call to Serve.’”

Sharing his personal story of becoming a priest in the Armenian Church, the Primate said that it was love that “first motivated me to answer God’s call. Love is what strengthens me every day as I live out my vocation as a priest.”

Barsamian celebrated the Divine Liturgy and performed the Blessing of Water ceremony. Randy Sapah-Gulian, chair of the board of directors of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), served as the godfather for the Blessing of Water ceremony.

During the ceremony, which symbolizes Christ’s baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, Sapah-Gulian took up the ornate hand-cross after it was immersed in water by Barsamian. At the conclusion of the service, Sapah-Gulian held up the cross for the faithful to kiss as they walked up to receive the water blessed with the Holy Muron (Holy Oil). Corinne Sapah-Gulian, his wife, also attended the service.

“It was very moving,” Randy Sapah-Gulian said of the Blessing of Water ceremony. “I am very happy and honored to have been asked by Srpazan Hayr to be the godfather, and it’s something I shall remember forever.”

Reflecting on his role as the chair of the board of directors of the Fund for

see NATIVITY, page 8

St. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church Officially Welcomes New Pastor

WYNNEWOOD, Penn. – On Sunday, January 3, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), visited St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church of Wynnewood, where he celebrated the Divine Liturgy and joined the community in officially welcoming its new pastor, the Very Rev. Oshagan Gulgolian.

“Fr. Oshagan has been a loyal shepherd of the Armenian Church, who has faithfully served God and our national heritage,” the Primate said. “His energetic presence has benefited our own Diocese and the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, as well as the Armenian community of India, where he served with distinction, and drew world attention to the country’s venerable but little-known Armenian presence.”

A welcome banquet was held in Gulgolian’s honor following services, with almost 200 people in attendance. The Very Rev. Haigazoun Najarian, Diocesan Vicar and a former pastor of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church, delivered the invocation.

The program featured remarks and musical performances by violinist Angela Kodokian and vocalist Karine Hovnanian. The parish also presented Gulgolian with a cross during the banquet.

Fr. Armenag Bedrossian, pastor of St. Mark’s Armenian Catholic Church, offered congratulations to Gulgolian on behalf of the Philadelphia-region Armenian clergy.

Diocesan delegate George Kodokian offered a welcoming toast in honor of Gulgolian. “Some of you in the audience may know the following passage from the Bible: ‘A new friend is as new wine; when it is old, thou shall drink it with pleasure.’ (Ecclesiastes 9:10),” he said. “Hayr Sourp, we believe that through your spiritual leadership you will flourish and nurture the friendships in our community so that one day we will all say together: our friendships are now old and let’s drink it with pleasure.”

see PASTOR, page 8

Lincy Foundation Donates \$150,000 to TCA Arshag Dickranian Armenian School

LOS ANGELES – In a letter dated December 22, 2009, the Lincy Foundation approved a contribution in the amount of \$150,000 to the Tekeyan Cultural Association Arshag Dickranian Armenian School, enclosing a check in full payment.

“We are overjoyed and very grateful to the Board Members of The Lincy Foundation for responding to our grant applications in such a timely and generous manner,” said George K. Mandossian, chairman of the School Board of Trustees.

Arshag Dickranian School has long been listed as a beneficiary of The Lincy Foundation, its latest gift constituting the 11th such contribution. In June 2008, the foundation’s president, Jay Rakow, and senior vice president, Harut Sassounian, visited the school. The two guests spent more than an hour meeting with the school trustees, gathering first-hand information about the school’s daily activities and touring the campus.

The Lincy Foundation has long earned worldwide acclaim for its diverse and exemplary benevolence throughout the United States and Armenia.

Located at 1200 North Cahuenga Blvd., Los Angeles, the TCA Arshag Dickranian Armenian School is a federally tax exempt, pre-K to 12th-grade private educational institution. For more information, visit www.dickranianschool.org.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Fr. Dajad Davidian and Fr. Arsen Barsamian Honored at St. James Church on 50th Anniversary of Ordination

WATERTOWN, Mass. — Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), visited St. James Armenian Church, on Sunday, December 13, as the parish honored two former pastors, Rev. Arsen Barsamian and Rev. Dajad Davidian, to mark the 50th anniversary of their ordinations into the holy priesthood. The day also marked the 78th anniversary of St. James Church.

Barsamian celebrated the Divine Liturgy, and Davidian delivered the day's sermon. In the sanctuary, the Primate presented both clergymen with Pontifical Encyclicals on behalf of Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

Archbishop Barsamian expressed his appreciation to Rev. Barsamian and Davidian for their dedication to the Armenian Church, and said he was glad that Karekin II, too, was honoring their years of service.

"Today is a day of celebration and a day of recommitment," the Primate said. "We are here to say thank you to Father Arsen and Father Dajad. It is also an opportunity for us to commit ourselves to the task of ensuring that there will be other priests like them to continue the mission of the Armenian Church."

In this "Year of Vocations," the Primate encouraged parishioners to guide young people, especially young men, who are serving their church. "It is so instructive to hold up these two worthy examples of dedication to God," Archbishop Barsamian said of the day's honorees, "two distinct paths of service, united in their response to our Lord's calling, leading them to the common destination of holiness."

'A Good Shepherd'

A native of South Milwaukee, Wis., Fr. Arsen Barsamian was preparing for a career in music when he felt the calling to become a

priest. After three years of studying music theory and composition at the University of Wisconsin, he traveled to Lebanon to study theology at the seminary of the Great House of Cilicia in 1953. Later he continued his work at the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, and completed coursework at several seminaries in the US.

On March 13, 1960, he was ordained into the holy priesthood by then-Primate Archbishop Sion Manoogian at St. Mesrob Armenian Church of Racine, Wis., and appointed pastor of St. George Armenian Church of Waukegan, Ill., where he would serve for the next four years. During this time, Arsen Barsamian also visited parishes in Illinois and Wisconsin, serving communities without a permanent pastor.

In 1967, he became pastor of St. James Armenian Church of Richmond, Va. He also has served at St. Mary Armenian Church of Washington, DC., Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cheltenham, Penn., St. Gregory of Narek Armenian Church of Cleveland, Ohio and St. John the Baptist Armenian Church of Milwaukee.

In 1989, Fr. Barsamian became the associate pastor of St. James Armenian Church of Watertown, where he served until his retirement in 2002. He continues to assist the parish's current pastor, Rev. Arakel Aljalian.

"For over 50 years, as a good shepherd, you have nurtured the spiritual needs of our faithful in the Eastern Diocese of the United States," Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II wrote to Fr. Arsen Barsamian in the encyclical. "We are very pleased to know that even after your retirement, you continue to contribute to the spiritual growth of our faithful, and to help realize our church's Christ-given mission."

Fr. Arsen Barsamian and Yn. Varteni Barsamian have three children: Loosaper Anjel, Steven Asadour and Raphael Shnork.

From Watertown to Armenia

Fr. Dajad Davidian was born in Worcester, Mass. Like Fr. Barsamian, he began his theological studies at the seminary of the Great House of Cilicia, in 1952. Returning to the US three years later, he enrolled at General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York City, graduating in 1958.

Davidian was ordained into the priesthood on July 17, 1960, by Archbishop Sion Manoogian. Following ordination, he served at the Armenian Church of Bergen County, in New Jersey, was the executive secretary of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA) and held the position of editor of *The Armenian Guardian*.

In 1962, he joined the staff of St. Nerses Armenian Seminary and later became pastor of St. Mesrob Church of Racine, Wis. In 1969, he was appointed pastor of St. James Church of Watertown, where he served until his retirement in 1999.

After his retirement, Davidian traveled to Armenia, where he has spent time preaching, organizing new parishes, and directing youth centers. He also works with Radio Vem, a radio station based in Armenia which features religious programming.

'Role Models for a Younger Generation'

Following services on December 13, the community gathered for the 78th anniversary name day banquet at St. James Church. During the banquet, the Primate presented Spiritual Leadership Awards to Barsamian and Davidian on behalf of the Eastern Diocese.

"For a generation, the people of this parish were fortunate to enjoy the pastoral leadership of Der Dajad and Der Arsen," Archbishop Barsamian said.

"Through his deep learning, his inexhaustible energy, and his warm, open-hearted personality, Dajad has been a worthy servant to our Diocese and our people in general. He is a true soldier of the Armenian Church: indomitable in spirit, protective of our traditions, and passionate about exerting the church's influence in the surrounding world."

"While a quieter soul by nature, Father Arsen has been no less of a forceful presence in the life of our church. He has embraced the role of teacher and author, pouring his learning into resources meant to awaken our people to the treasures of our heritage — and to waken, also, a deeper awareness of God's presence among us. Numerous souls have found both consolation and inspiration in Der Arsen's dignified,



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian presented Spiritual Leadership Awards to Rev. Arsen Barsamian and Rev. Dajad Davidian on behalf of the Eastern Diocese.

"It gives us great joy that you are realizing this very important task of reaching our youth in Armenia, providing spiritual education, and helping them create ties with their heritage," Karekin II wrote to Davidian in the encyclical. "We pray that our Heavenly Father keeps you under His care and protection so that you may continue your fruitful church-building mission in Armenia."

Davidian was married to the late Yerezgin Rosemarie, with whom he had three children: Ari, Susan and Raymond.

peaceful spirituality."

More than 400 people attended the event, which was organized by the Rev. Arakel Aljalian and the parishioners of St. James Church. Aljalian said many in the parish have been touched by the work of Arsen Barsamian and Davidian.

"They are very devoted pastors of St. James Church," he said. "They have contributed tremendously to the well-being of this church, and they have become role models for a younger generation."

Armenian Heritage Park

On the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway, Boston



Coming in 2010

You can make the difference!

For Sponsorship/Naming Opportunities, please call
James Kalustian 781-777-2407 Charles Guleserian 617-484-6100
Haig Deranian 617-484-2215 Walter Nahabedian 781-891-7249
Dr. Jack Kasarjian 617-232-6350

Visit www.ArmenianHeritagePark.net

Running ~ Wolf
Photography
BY

JACOB ~Demirdjian

YOUR ONE STOP
INTERNATIONAL
ART DEALER

626~795-4493





COMMUNITY NEWS

Celebrating the Feast of the Nativity at St. Vartan Cathedral

NATIVITY, from page 6

Armenian Relief, he stressed the importance of the organization and its array of programs for families in Armenia. This year the Fund for Armenian Relief is marking its 20th anniversary.

"Corinne and I are very involved," he said, "and everything that the Diocese does [through FAR] – whether it's FAR's child protection programs or the senior citizen programs – is an integral part of helping our brothers and sisters in Armenia."

More than 900 people took part in services at the cathedral. In the sanctuary, the energy was palpable throughout the morning as some rose to light candles. The St. Vartan Cathedral Choir sang the sacred music under the direction of conductor Khoren Mekanejian, with Florence Avakian on the organ.

After the January 6 services, a home blessing service and Christmas luncheon were held in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium.

The event featured remarks by the Primate; toasts by St. Vartan Cathedral dean the Rev. Mardiros Chevian, Randy Sapah-Gulian and Armenia's Ambassador to the United Nations Garen Nazarian; and performances by the Antranig Dance Ensemble and members of the St. Vartan Cathedral Choir. Dr. Raffy Hovanesian, vice chair of the Diocesan Council, served as the master of ceremonies.

Nazarian made the first toast of the afternoon, thanking the Eastern Diocese for a wonderful year and close cooperation on new projects. "May 2010 bring newly-found prosperity to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh," Nazarian said.

Mardiros Chevian made a toast to Sapah-

Gulian and thanked him for his dedication to the Armenian Church and to the people of Armenia, many of whom benefit from the programs offered by FAR.

Mekanejian led performances of Armenian songs by Hasmik Mekanejian and 10-year-old Dzovinar Aghavian. Anahid Zakarian was accompanied by Vagharshag Ohanian on the piano.

Eight members of the AGBU's Antranig Dance Ensemble performed two dances. Barsamian presented the dancers with small gifts in appreciation of their hard work. He also mentioned that Sapah-Gulian, once a member of the ensemble, is one of its founders.

Sapah-Gulian offered the last toast of the program, thanking Barsamian for the opportunity to serve as godfather for the Blessing of Water ceremony.

Barsamian said, "This is the season when we have to remember that love has to be at the center of who we are and what we do. When there is love, there is peace. When there is love, there is understanding. When there is love, there is unity."

The day's meal was prepared by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan.

Nativity Eve Festivities

On Tuesday, January 5, the Eve of the Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of Jesus Christ, Archbishop Yeghishe Gizirian celebrated the Divine Liturgy at St. Vartan Cathedral.

Students from the Diocesan Khrimian Lyceum read scriptures in Armenian and assisted the Cathedral Choir. The Khrimian Lyceum is an Armenian language and culture school for students ages 12 to 17.

Author/Songwriter to Speak at St. James Men's Club Meeting

WATERTOWN, Mass. – Vahan (Hovhannissian) Hovey, an author and songwriter, will speak at the St. James Men's Club dinner meeting on Monday, February 1. The topic will be "The Hand of God – His experiences in the Second World War."

Hovey came from Armenia to this country at the age of 3 with his parents in 1928. At the age 5, he performed his first concert. After graduating from high school, Hovey volunteered for the army in 1942, serving in Europe. He was shot in combat, taken prisoner by the Germans and was a POW/MIA until the war's end in 1945. His experiences during these years shaped his faith and guided his life.

Following his graduation from Cornell University, he opened an office in the heart of the music industry known as Tin Pan Alley, where he wrote and published and recorded many songs, and was associated with the likes of Benny Goodman, Connie Francis, the Andrew Sisters and Roy Rogers. He also collaborated with Mitch Miller in song writing, including a number recorded by Rosemary Clooney.

Hovey continues to write music and speak about his experiences during the war, of which he has written about in his book titled *The Hand of God*.

The dinner meeting will be held at the St. James Armenian Church Cultural Center, 465 Mt. Auburn St.

The social hour will start at 6:15 p.m., followed by a traditional Armenian dinner at 7 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

St. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church Officially Welcomes New Pastor

PASTOR, from page 6

The banquet was co-chaired by Diocesan delegate Lisa Manookian and Parish Council vice chair John Torcomian. It was sponsored by the United Armenian Charities.

'A Fresh Start'

Gulgulian began serving at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church last summer, moving to the Philadelphia area from India, where he served most recently as the manager of the Armenian Philanthropic Academy and pastor of the Armenian churches of India.

A native of Beirut, Lebanon, he studied at the Theological Seminary of the Great House of Cilicia and at the Gevorgian Theological Seminary at the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin. He was ordained into the holy priesthood in February 1987, and continued his education in Geneva, Switzerland and at Columbia University in New York City. In April 2003, he received a Master of Divinity Degree in pastoral ministry and a religious teaching certificate from Trinity Theological Seminary in Indiana.

Gulgulian has served in the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Canada as well as in the Eastern Diocese, including the communities of Richmond, Va., Miami, Fla. and Chelmsford, Mass.

He said he was familiar with the community at St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church from time spent in the Eastern Diocese. "It's a very unique parish," he said. "They embraced me and they welcomed me."

Currently, the parish is preparing to co-host the 2010 ACYOA Juniors Fall Sports Weekend over Columbus Day Weekend with Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cheltenham. The community also would like to build an athletic complex – a project Gulgulian hopes to help the parish realize in the coming years.

He said the community was glad to welcome the Primate last week, on the first Sunday of the new year. "It was a fresh start for all of us,"



The Very Rev. Oshagan Gulgulian, the new pastor of St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church of Wynnewood, Penn., was officially welcomed by the parish on January 3.

Gulgulian said.

"I know that Hayr Soorp takes his vocation most seriously, and is determined to share the spiritual riches of our church with all of his parishioners," Barsamian said. "His enthusiasm,

his human kindness and his warm sense of humor will not fail to inspire his new flock. And I have faith that the people of Wynnewood will do everything they can to aid and strengthen his ministry."

Nardolillo Funeral Home

Est. 1906

John K. Najarian, Jr.

Rhode Island's Only Licensed Armenian Funeral Director

1278 Park Ave. Cranston, RI 02910 (401) 942-1220
1111 Boston Neck Rd. Narragansett, RI 02882 (401) 789-6300

www.nardolillo.com

Giragosian

FUNERAL HOME

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC
Funeral Counselor

576 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02472, TEL: 617-924-0606

www.giragosianfuneralhome.com

Armenian History Class Offered At Middlesex Community College

BEDFORD, Mass. – A non-credit evening class on Armenian history, culture and the American-Armenian community will be offered again at the Bedford campus of Middlesex Community College starting on Monday, February 1. The class will be conducted on five successive Mondays, from 7 to 9 p.m. This is the same course that was offered in the fall of 2009, with the exception that it has been expanded from four to five weeks.

Topics range from the pre-history of the Armenian plateau to the present times, with aspects of Armenian culture. Also discussed will be early Armenian immigration to the United States. The course is an introductory, but non-trivial, survey of Armenian history. There is no text book for the course but a number of up-to-date books will be recommended. The lectures

will be accompanied by photographs.

This is the second time Joseph Dagdigian, of Harvard, Mass., will be teaching this course. The course will be tailored to the interests of the attendees. It is intended for both Armenians and non-Armenians of all ages.

Dagdigian is an active member of the Merrimack Valley Armenian community and has visited Armenia numerous times. He has been working actively to support scientists and students at the Cosmic Ray Division of the Yerevan Physics Institute and has traveled extensively in Armenia.

For more information and to enroll, visit the website of Middlesex Community College at middlesex.mass.edu/. Look under "non-credit" courses for "personal enrichment" courses and then for "Introduction to Armenian History PER 680."

Telephone (617) 924-7400

Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, Inc.

Continuous Service By The Bedrosian Family Since 1945

558 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02472

MARION BEDROSIAN
PAUL BEDROSIAN
LARRY BEDROSIAN



New York METRO

Robert Morgenthau Feted in New York

NEW YORK — On the evening of Wednesday, December 2, Robert M. Morgenthau, district attorney of the County of New York for nearly 35 years and a living legend among prosecutors, needed to be in three places at the same time. He was late for a dinner being thrown by the Institute for Jewish Humanities, which was honoring him for a lifetime of achievement of public service. At the same time, he was scheduled to act as master of ceremonies for a lecture by Peter Balakian introducing his latest book about the Armenian Genocide. But meanwhile, a controversy had erupted with City Hall, and for the moment, duty required Morgenthau to answer the questions of a pack of reporters who had descended upon his office. Finally, the hour grew late, and Morgenthau apologized to the newspeople, explaining that he had to be on his way. But just before he (Mr. Morgenthau) left, he turned to the reporters and said, “any of you guys interested in the Armenian Genocide?”

To anyone who knows Robert Morgenthau, the question should not have come as a surprise. Morgenthau is fiercely and unapologetically loyal to the Armenian community on a host of humanitarian concerns, but never more passionately so than when the cause is the one most closely associated with his grandfather, Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Sr.: the Armenian Genocide. As demonstrated in an exhibit about the Morgenthau family currently on display at the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City, it was Ambassador Morgenthau’s witness of the Genocide of the Armenians, which, more than any other experience, galvanized him in his commitment to public service and ethical principle. And when, despite truly heroic efforts, Ambassador Morgenthau was unable to save so many



The Museum where the Harry Morgenthau poster and photos of Armenian refugees give full details of the Genocide.

Armenians from annihilation, he channeled his despair into vast projects, such as the Near East Relief Committee, as well as into countless individual acts of compassion and sacrifice, to help the dispersed Armenians. As a result, nearly every Armenian family that survived has a story to tell about how Ambassador Morgenthau touched their lives.

Accompanying District Attorney Morgenthau throughout that hectic evening, as he accepted his award and introduced the Genocide lecture, was his longest-serving Armenian-American Assistant District Attorney Peter Kougasian. Kougasian has served under Morgenthau ever since his graduation from Yale Law School in 1979. Morgenthau likes to note that when his hiring panel interviewed Peter for the job back in the 1970s, they recommended rejecting him

HARRY L. KOUNDAKJIAN PHOTO



District Attorney of the County of New York for nearly 35 years Robert Morgenthau addressing the meeting of Lawyers, jurists and businessmen at the Jewish Museum



HARRY L. KOUNDAKJIAN PHOTO

The only and longest serving Armenian-American Assistant District Attorney, Peter Kougasian seen with Robert Morgenthau

because he was “too intellectual.” Morgenthau overrode their recommendation. “I took one look into Peter’s eyes,” DA Morgenthau jokes, “and I realized: Peter is no intellectual!” Kougasian has held the positions of director of Legal Staff Training, senior trial counsel, and currently is a bureau chief in the Office of the Special Narcotics Prosecutor. He is a vice president and Board Member of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, and a member of the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York.

He has also served as a vice president of the New York City Bar Association and chaired that Association’s Executive Committee. “The best and the brightest from all over America come to work for Robert Morgenthau,” Kougasian says. And it’s not hard to substantiate that claim: one of Kougasian’s Yale classmates who joined him

in the District Attorney’s Office in 1979 was United States Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. “Justice Sotomayor and I were college classmates and law school classmates. We studied for the bar together, and started in the District Attorney’s Office, in the same trial bureau, on the same day in 1979. Even back then, to anyone who knew her work well, it would have come as no surprise that she would one day be chosen for the Supreme Court. She is an astonishing lawyer.”

“Most lawyers have many jobs in the course of their career; in a real sense, I have had only one,” Kougasian says. “There’s an easy explanation for that: when you work for Robert Morgenthau, you begin every day with a deep sense of gratitude: It is the greatest of blessings to have shared so much with so great a man.”

— Harry Koundakjian



SAVE THE DATE
MARCH 8, 2010

**St. David Armenian Church
Charity Golf Tournament**
Boca Country Club • Boca Raton, Florida

Seeking Reporter/Assistant Editor

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* is seeking an assistant editor to help with reporting, copy editing and proof reading. The position will be available at the start of the New Year.

The job entails 20 hours a week. Salary is commensurate with experience. Armenian language skills are preferred but not necessary. Familiarity with Word and Quark programs is preferred.

Send resumes and writing samples to editor@mirrorspectator.com.



New York METRO

Armenia Can Be a Champion of Medical Care

NEW YORK – Throughout his two decades of working in alliance with the Armenian people, Dr. Edgar Housepian's faith in their strength and resilience has grown. A retired Columbia University neurosurgeon, Housepian is a co-founder of the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), vice chairman of the organization's Board of Directors, and chair of its Medical Committee.

On January 15, FAR will honor this great man with a gala at Cipriani Wall Street. And while the evening will indeed pay homage to



Graduates of FAR's Continuing Medical Education Program, like Dr. Hrant Kalenteryan, providing lifesaving medical care for patients in Armenia. (Credit: Felix Aroustamyan)

Housepian's incredible life achievements, it will also focus on his vision of the nation of Armenia one day being an international center for medicine, medical education, and research. Through FAR's Dr. Edgar Housepian Medical Education Fund, it is indeed possible to make this hope a reality.

Each of FAR's medical education projects – many of which Housepian pioneered – specifically target areas that are essential to not only Armenia's success as an international center for medical care, but also to the success of the

nation as a whole.

Housepian was an inspiration behind the founding of the FAR Fellowship Alumni Association, a non-governmental organization of medical professionals who are aimed at improving the healthcare system of the community and advancing medical sciences in Armenia. This group has not only helped to develop a culture of volunteerism and philanthropy in Armenia, but it also established the Continuing Medical Education (CME) program.

Through CME, doctors from all over Armenia have an opportunity to advance their medical training under the mentorship of leading medical experts in Yerevan, and establish partnerships and networks that can guide them into the future. Since many of Armenia's doctors work in rural and isolated settings and have not had a chance to advance their skills since medical school, learn the latest discoveries in the field, or work with the latest equipment, this program is often the only opportunity these physicians have to make changes and save more lives.

Housepian advocates the expansion of the CME program, as it helps to elevate the level of medical practice in Armenia to international standards.

Housepian and FAR have also greatly improved Armenia's National Medical Library. It now serves as a medical center with course offerings, com-



Edgar Housepian (right) with Dr. Aram Chobanian (left), president of Boston University Medical School



Graduates of FAR's Continuing Medical Education Program providing lifesaving medical care for patients in Armenia

puter training opportunities, research programs, and partnerships with other medical institutions around the world. With further support, the library will become a regional showcase for medical education, research, and training.

He has been actively supporting Dr. Aram Chobanian and his colleagues from around the World in the International Board of Advisors of the Yerevan State Medical University, to reform the entire medical education system of Armenia.

Housepian was instrumental in creating the Armenian National Science and Education Fund (ANSEF), which provides research grants to Armenia's top scientists, engineers and scholars, giving them the opportunity to pursue major steps of their groundbreaking research within their own borders.

Each of these programs has the potential to make groundbreaking change in the Armenian healthcare system and the overall health of the Armenian people. Together, these initiatives can change the nation as a whole, and make it leader on the international stage.

Since its founding in response to the 1988 earthquake, FAR has served hundreds of thousands of people through more than 220 relief and development programs in Armenia and Karabagh. It has channeled more than \$265 million in humanitarian assistance by implementing a wide range of projects including emergency relief, construction, education, medical aid, and economic development.

For more information on FAR, write to FAR, 630 Second Ave., New York, NY 10016 or press@farusa.org.

Humble FAR Honoree Housepian Follows in Parents' Footsteps

NEW YORK – The following interview was conducted by Hagop Vartivarian, chair of the ADL Press Committee, recently in New York, with Dr. Edgar Housepian, who is being honored by the Fund for Armenian Relief on Friday, January 15.

Hagop Vartivarian: Dear Dr. Housepian. Let me begin by telling you that this interview is with our Ramgavar newspapers. We are all aware that your father was in fact a father to all the immigrants of the Big New York. How did he dedicate his time and soul to his people?

Dr. Edgar Housepian: It's very hard to say why he was very generous and very patriotic, but I think there's only one reason of why he was able to accomplish his role in the Armenian community and that was by believing that when he is helping the Armenian community, he is in fact helping humanity. In addition to that, he had a great sense of humor, which indirectly helped increase the morals of the immigrated Armenians.

He had brought back a lot of his childhood memories from Kessab, which was one of the main reasons of why he offered his willingness to the Armenian community and the society to become helpful when he was a young scholar: he believed that serving humanity was his mission.

My father was born in Kessab and he was a witness of the slaughters in 1895. With his friends he tried to struggle against the unjust and inhumane attitude, but because of very hard situations, they could not return to their homes. Instead my father and his friends ended up in Egypt, with the stream of deportations. For a short period of time, he participated in an Armenian theatre, just to be able to save

enough money for his daily necessities. After some time, he wished to attend pharmaceutical studies, but then realized that it was not his aim in life.

He moved to America in 1900 and started studying at a medical school, at the Long Island Medical College. He gained most of his experience by working on dead bodies. He graduated as a physician in 1905, after which he started to work in this field officially. His younger brother was not educated, so he used his paycheck for his brothers' education. He continued to collect more medical practice from 1905 till 1909 [serving as a physician on a British ship].

In 1916, he joined the Red Cross and went to Russia, then passing on to Armenia. He stayed there from till March 1918, because of the very hard political situation there.

In 1920, when the medical field improved, he started practicing being a family doctor. In 1951 he suffered from leukemia. He passed away at the age of 76 in 1952.

HV: Do you remember anything about his friendship with Archbishop Tourian?

EH: I was in the first grade when I heard about the assassination of the archbishop. It was a very sad operation, a tragic end especially since it was acted on an archbishop – a clergyman.

HV: What can you remember about the cooperation with yourself and other national leaders and Ramgavar collaborators, as for Dr. Dzovigian, Hratch Yervant etc...?

EH: Our house was always full of national personalities. I was very young and I don't exactly recall the names of the individuals and every occurrence, however I recollect his intimate friendship with Dr. Dzovigian.

HV: And how about your mother's (Makrouhi Housepian) contribution to the AGBU?

EH: My mother was an ideal figure of a real Armenian activist woman. She was a long-term, veteran member of the AGBU, and has dedicated unlimited assistance. In the meantime she was also an active member in other Armenian organizations and all her hard work led to new fruitful ideas, and her successful experiences have been a key model for the coming generations. Being in assistance to the Armenian community is an impressive quality within our family, you would think it is a family heir that keeps on living within the generations, and of which we cannot be detached as it is a big part of our lives.

HV: Dr. Housepian, you followed your father's path as a mission for your life. Your father sought to aid the survivors of the Genocide in 1915, and you as well sought to aid the victims of the last earthquake in Armenia, in order to provide medical and humane services. What can you tell us about the feelings that you felt at the time?

EH: During those tragic days, I was suffering from indecisive actions, as there were horrible losses and distressing aspects. By going to Yerevan I was able to share the sufferings of my fellow Armenians. Although this was a depressing circumstance, but at the same times it was a nice experience. It was painful to see the tortures that my brothers were facing, and it was pleasant to be able to reach their needs as a doctor. I organized a group of volunteers that reached up to 200 and within a couple of days more than 30 professional doctors and I were ready to take off to Armenia, to be able to help the victims of the earthquake.

By doing so, I was convinced that the best way to help humanity is to diversify the medical knowledge.

HV: Other than medical field, what else interests you?

EH: Almost all types of fields interest me, but I love collecting postal stamps. I always travel to be able to see and experience new places and cultures. At the moment, I have three children and that is why I enjoy the coziness of my family.

HV: Have you ever been to Lebanon?

EH: I have not had the pleasure to visit the Middle Eastern countries that often. I have only been to Syria once, but I did not have the opportunity to see Lebanon and to experience the warm Armenian-Lebanese community. The fact that in the name of my father there is a club branch within the Tekeyan center brings me great pleasure.

(Dr. Edgar M. Housepian, a professor emeritus of clinical neurological surgery at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, earned his bachelor's degree in 1949 and graduated cum laude from Columbia College. He acquired his Doctor of Medicine degree from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1953, and received certification from the American Board of Neurological Surgery in November 1961. He is a member of more than 40 professional societies and has held positions on numerous university, hospital and departmental committees. Housepian has participated in various study groups, and received research grants and prestigious honors for his outstanding work in his field. He has authored numerous articles and books on medical research and methods in neurological studies. He is also chairman of FAR's Medical Committee.)



New York METRO

Christmas Celebrations HMADS Style

BAYSIDE, N.Y. – It is the tradition at the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School (HMADS) to spread Christmas cheer and share students' artistic talents with the community. HMADS students' first visit was on Wednesday, December 9, 2009, as they took the trip to the Armenian Home of Flushing, where the elderly in the community are cared for with love and respect.

Students showered the residents of the Armenian Home with special handcrafted Christmas ornaments and artifacts to ornate and bring cheers to their rooms. A bouquet of Christmas carols in Armenian and English along with recitations filled the hearts of the elderly with joy bringing back the fond memories of their youth. *Kurisdos dsunav yev Haydnetsav - Tsezi Mezi Meds Avedis* was the conclusive message as the students, teachers and parents departed from the Armenian Home promising to visit again.

The next event was to bring cheer to the Holy Martyrs Seniors' at their Christmas party on December 15 with a special program. HMADS students were praised by the audience for their proficiency in both languages as they presented poems and songs.

On December 18, the HMADS community gathered for their annual Christmas *hantess*. The show began with the national anthems and the school song. The program featured a potpourri of English and Armenian songs, Armenian recitations, and bilingual skits from

time on stage each year. The Kindergartners were next to take the stage with feature recitation *Snorhavor Nor Daree* and songs, *Up on the Housetop* and *Santa Claus Is Coming to Town*.

The first and second grades joined together to deliver the poem "Dear Santa." The remainder of the students presented short skits and joined the stage as one for the Armenian portion of the show.

The skits included "The Little Drummer Boy" and "Santa Claus for President," "Amanoree Kisher" and "Gaghantee Seghan." They also sang several Armenian Christmas songs.

Boghosian extended her appreciation to the School Board, members of the Friends of HMADS members and the hard-working HMADS faculty. At the conclusion of the program, all in attendance were invited to a reception.

The evening was a salute to the mission of HMADS; to honor Armenian culture and recognize the value of a bilingual education in the context of an English speaking society.

On Monday, December 21, all the students were escorted to the church to receive Holy Communion. Following the short service the graduating class of 2010 read the *Khosdovanank*. Very Rev. Vahan Hovhannesian praised the HMADS students and offered his prayers and blessings to all. The entire student body and faculty were



Santa treating Kindergartners

the children of nursery through sixth grades.

Principal Zarminé Boghosian offered welcoming remarks to all of those gathered in the auditorium, which was filled to capacity. Boghosian thanked all the parents, grandparents and guests who have shown their loyal support to this school. She acknowledged the presence of special guests. Among the guests were: Barbara Peters, Mr. and Mrs. Nubar Mahdessian, Dr. Haroutun Mekhjian, Grigor Gregorian and representatives of community organizations and schools.

The nursery students began their portion of the program with songs such as *Silent Night* and *Dzenoontee Dzar*. Their composure and sophistication warmed the audience who looks forward to witnessing their first

treated to a breakfast and surprised with the presence of a *Gaghant Baba* waiting for them in the Kalustyan Hall.

On the eve of the Armenian Christmas, (January 5) more than 20 HMADS students took part in reading the Holy Scriptures in Armenian and sang the Badarak along with the Holy Martyrs Youth Choir.

A fellowship hour sponsored by the HMADS followed the Christmas Eve Badarak. Hovhannesian was invited to cut the cake wishing him well in his new appointment in England.

The HMADS family wishes him all the best in his new parish.

For more information about the school, write to hmads@hmads.org.

Yahoo, Verizon: Our Spy Capabilities Would 'Shock,' 'Confuse' Consumers

NEW YORK (*Wired*) – Want to know how much phone companies and internet service providers charge to funnel your private communications or records to US law enforcement and spy agencies?

That's the question muckraker and Indiana University graduate student Christopher Soghoian asked all agencies within the Department of Justice, under a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request filed a few months ago. But before the agencies could provide the data, Verizon and Yahoo intervened and filed an objection on grounds that, among other things, they would be ridiculed and publicly shamed were their surveillance price sheets made public.

By Kim Zetter

Yahoo writes in its 12-page objection letter, that if its pricing information were disclosed to Soghoian, he would use it "to 'shame' Yahoo! and other companies – and to 'shock' their customers."

"Therefore, release of Yahoo!'s information is reasonably likely to lead to impairment of its reputation for protection of user privacy and security, which is a competitive disadvantage for technology companies," the company writes.

Verizon took a different stance. It objected to the release of its Law Enforcement Legal Compliance Guide because it might "confuse" customers and lead them to think that records and surveillance capabilities available only to law enforcement would be available to them as well – resulting in a flood of customer calls to the company asking for trap and trace orders.

"Customers may see a listing of records, information or assistance that is available only to law enforcement," Verizon writes in its letter, "but call in to Verizon and seek those same services. Such calls would stretch limited resources, especially those that are reserved only for law enforcement emergencies."

Other customers, upon seeing the types of surveillance law enforcement can do, might "become unnecessarily afraid that their lines have been tapped or call Verizon to ask if their lines are tapped (a question we cannot answer)."

Verizon does disclose a little tidbit in its letter, saying that the company receives "tens of thousands" of requests annually for customer records and information from law enforcement agencies.

Soghoian filed his records request to discover how much law enforcement agencies – and thus US taxpayers – are paying for spy documents and surveillance services with the aim of trying to deduce from this how often such requests are being made. Soghoian explained his theory on his blog, *Slight Paranoia*:

In the summer of 2009, I decided to try and follow the money trail in order to determine how often Internet firms were disclosing their customers' private information to the government. I theorized that if I could obtain the price lists of each ISP, detailing the price for each kind of service, and invoices paid by the various parts of the federal government, then I might be able to reverse engineer some approximate statistics. In order to obtain these documents, I filed Freedom of Information Act requests with every part of the Department of Justice that I could think of.

The first DoJ agency to respond to his request was the US Marshals Service (USMS), which indicated that it had price lists available for Cox Communications, Comcast, Yahoo and Verizon. But because the companies voluntarily provided the price lists to the government, the FOIA allows the companies an opportunity to object to the disclosure of their data under various exemptions. Comcast and Cox were fine with the disclosure, Soghoian reported.

He found that Cox Communications charges \$2,500 to fulfill a pen register/trap-and-trace order for 60 days, and \$2,000 for each additional 60-day-interval. It charges \$3,500 for the first 30 days of a wiretap, and \$2,500 for each additional 30 days. Thirty days worth of a customer's call detail records costs \$40.

Comcast's pricing list, which was already leaked to the Internet in 2007, indicated that it charges at least \$1,000 for the first month of a wiretap, and \$750 per month thereafter.

But Verizon and Yahoo took offense at the request.

Yahoo objected on grounds that its pricing constituted "confidential commercial information" and cited Exemption 4 of the Freedom of Information Act and the Trade Secrets Act.

Exemption 4 of the FOIA refers to the disclosure of commercial or financial information that could result in a competitive disadvantage to the company if it were publicly disclosed. The company claims its pricing is derived from labor rates for employees and overhead and, therefore, disclosing the information would provide clues to its operating costs – regardless of whether these same clues are already available in public records, such as those the company files with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The company also claims that since Soghoian is trying to determine the actual amounts the Marshals Service paid Yahoo for responding to requests, the price lists are irrelevant, since "there are no standard prices for these transactions."

But equally important to Yahoo's objections was the potential for "criticism" and ridicule. Yahoo quoted Soghoian on his blog writing that his aim was to "use this blog to shame the corporations that continue to do harm to user online privacy."

Yahoo also objected to the disclosure of its letter objecting to the disclosure of pricing information saying that "release of this letter would likely cause substantial competitive harm" to the company. The company added, in a veiled threat, that if the Marshals Service were to show anyone its letter objecting to the disclosure of pricing information, it could "impair the government's ability to obtain information necessary for making appropriate decisions with regard to future FOIA requests."

ARS Announces its Youth Connect Program

NEW YORK – The Armenian Relief Society Eastern Region recently revamped its Youth Connect Program (YCP), an educational seminar for college-age students. In an attempt to put Armenian students together from all geographic areas and various academic disciplines, ARS wants to provide an arena to have students come together to share ideas and information and learn about opportunities within the entire community to enhance

the Armenian experience. From internships, both in the US and Armenia, to humanitarian assistance, to cultural and educational opportunities, students will learn about programs available to them through different Armenian organizations.

The program will take place on Saturday, February 6, at New York University's Kimmel Center for Student Life, 60 Washington Square South. Opening introductions will

begin at 9:30 a.m. and will continue until 4:30 p.m. The program is designed and implemented by Dr. Asbed Kotchikian from Bentley University who, in the past, has had extensive experience in developing and directing youth related programs in the US, Armenia and Middle East. The program will include workshops and lectures to cover issues such as: the challenges that Armenian youth face today; the changing nature of Armenian world; internships and job opportunities in Armenia and in the US.

There are no applications fees and the program will cover lodging, food and local transportation for all participants in NYC.

YCP is open to any college-aged Armenian student from any location who would be interested in learning more about history and culture and its relevance in today's society. To learn more about the YCP and how to apply, contact the ARS Eastern USA office at arseastus@aol.com. Application deadline is January 25. Space is limited.



Arts & Living

Concert Tribute to Chomsky at MIT Features Armenian Composer

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Noted linguist and political activist Noam Chomsky is scheduled to attend a special concert in his honor, along with dozens of family, friends and colleagues, at MIT's Kresge Auditorium, on January 22.

There will be performances of music dedicated to Chomsky and speeches by noted scientists and speakers from MIT and Harvard. Chomsky, considered today to be one of the world's leading intellectuals, became prominent



Noam Chomsky

half a century ago for his theory of generative grammar, which transformed the study of linguistics and profoundly influenced other fields, such as psychology, computer science and philosophy. He is also known worldwide as a leading political dissident and

peace activist. Chomsky's honorary concert will feature music dedicated to Chomsky and songs written on Chomsky's words by composer Edward Manukyan.

Prominent linguists David Pesetsky of MIT and Gennaro Chierchia, the head of the Linguistics Department at Harvard, will take the stage with speeches about Chomsky's contribution to linguistics and world ideas. The program will also include music dedicated to Nobel laureates James D. Watson, Steven Weinberg and others. The performers include Sarita Uranovsky (violin), Molly Walker (clarinet), Lyndi Williams (soprano) and Hisako Hiratsuka (piano).

The concert will start at 7 p.m. Tickets are available from: <http://gsc.mit.edu/chomsky>.

The event is co-sponsored by MIT Graduate Student Council and MIT Lecture Series.

Edward Manukyan is an Armenian-born composer from Southern California. Hailed by conductor Loris Tjeknavorian as "the most brilliant Armenian composer of his generation," Manukyan has dedicated a considerable number of his works to eminent scientists. Recently, he has been promoting wider appreciation for sciences through his original Musical Tribute to Scientists project, which includes dedications to some of the greatest minds of our time. Manukyan is the author of a number of orchestral and chamber works, many of which have been performed on the international scene. For additional information about Manukyan and the Noam Chomsky Honorary Concert, visit www.EdwardManukyan.com.



Edward Manukyan



Nora Armani

Reconciliation Through The Arts: Armenia and Turkey

LOS ANGELES (*News Blaze*) – The following is a conversation between Barney Yates, an American journalist, and Nora Armani, an international actor, playwright and festival producer, about prospects for healing old wounds between Armenia and Turkey through the "soft diplomacy" of cultural exchange.

By Barney Yates

Q: There are ongoing negotiations toward protocols for opening the borders between Turkey and Armenia for the first time in a long time. Why has this peaceful development been so difficult to achieve?

A: Well, there are many unresolved issues between Armenians and Turks, the most important of which is the recognition of the Armenian Genocide. Opening borders is a wonderful thing, as it is important for all nations under the sun to live peacefully with their neighbors and have normal exchanges on the economic, social and human levels. However, opening up the borders under the conditions Turkey is pushing for would not create the sort of peaceful atmosphere that is so desirable between neighboring countries. It would result in resentment and further mistrust.

By pressuring Armenia to accept the protocols with conditions attached, and by sliding over the important issue of the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, Turkey is not engaging in a peaceful act but an act of denial. It is much like denying the Jewish Holocaust during World War II.

Let's ask ourselves why these centuries-old neighbors have not been on "talking terms." If the issue that caused the conflict is not resolved at its root, and amends are not made by Turkey as the perpetrator to its victims of the Genocide and their offspring, you can open as many borders as you want, but that will not create peaceful coexistence.

This is why the Armenian majority in the diaspora (yes, there are more Armenians in the diaspora than in Armenia today) is totally opposed to the protocols. They are not opposed to dialog with Turkey as such, but they are opposed to the way Turkey is approaching the round table of talks. This is not an egalitarian relationship and the gain is totally for Turkey here as Armenia presents a market for Turkish goods, excellent craftsmen/women for Turkish factories, a source of skilled artisans (as it has been in the past, throughout centuries) and more.

There may be individual gains for some Armenians engaged in this commerce, but as a nation the protocols do not do anything but harm to the Armenian nation and

see RECONCILIATION, page 16

Armenian Duduk Presentation and Live Performance at ALMA February 4

WATERTOWN, Mass.– On Thursday, February 4, the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) will feature "The Armenian Duduk and the Impact of Cultural Policy from Soviet Times to Present Day," by ALMA Research Fellow Dr. Jonathan McCollum. The event will begin at 7 p.m. in the museum's Contemporary Art Gallery on the third floor.

McCollum will examine the impact of folk music both during and after Soviet rule in Armenia by concentrating specifically on the duduk as mediator and marker of cultural heritage. Musician Martin Haroutunian will also give a live traditional duduk performance as part of the evening program.

McCollum's experiences and interests as an ALMA Research Fellow have spanned several fields such as ethnomusicology, historical musicology, archeomusicology, museum studies and art history. He is the co-author of *Armenian Music: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Discography* (Scarecrow Press, 2004), and is a contributor to *Identity, Pluralism, and Soviet Music* (Scarecrow Press, in press), *Defining Music: An Ethnomusicological and Philosophical Approach* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2007) and wrote the chapter on "Music of Central Asia and the Caucasus" in *OnMusic*



Dr. Jonathan McCollum

World Music Online textbook (2008).

Haroutunian, a highly regarded musician and a student of Armenian folk music, performs and teaches traditional Armenian wind and percussion instruments, including *dap*, *dhol (kopal)*, *duduk*, *parkapzuk*, *pku*, *shvi*, *sring (blul)* and *zurna*. He has studied at the Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan, Folk Instruments Department, under Khachatur Avetisian in the Wind Instruments Division under Jivan Gasparian and the University of Massachusetts, Boston. He has also received private instruction from Professors Ohannes Salibian, Georgi Minasov, Ararat Petrosian, Gevorg Dabaghian and Norayr Kartashian. His critiques and reviews have been published in the *Armenian Forum*, the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and the *Armenian Weekly*.

He has performed in Armenia, Canada, Cyprus, Holland, Italy, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. He was a guest artist with the Navasart Armenian Folk Ensemble of Paris, France during their United States tour with performances in Boston, New York, Fresno, San Francisco

see ALMA, page 13



ARTS & LIVING

Naregatsi Art Institute Winter Soiree Warms the Hearts

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – On the cold, snowy, starlit evening of December 12, more than 110 enthusiastic friends gathered at the spacious and elegant home of Andreas Roubian to support one of the most important and respected nonprofit organizations, the Naregatsi Art Institute (NAI). Appropriately, the event was held in a setting that houses one of the most extensive collections of art, including numerous priceless works by two legendary Armenian masters – Pushman and Aivazovsky.

The Naregatsi Art Institute, founded by Nareg Hartounian five years ago in Yerevan, and two years later in Karabagh (Artsakh), is about “nourishing the soul of a nation – through the arts,” said Hartounian who was described as a “romantic idealist and strong visionary” by the event’s Master of Ceremonies Mossik Makhouljian. “He knows how to make decisions and bring them to practical reality.”

A video with happy and smiling children, demonstrated the Naregatsi Art Institute’s daily events, all open to the public without charge. This center, a first for Armenia, encourages handicapped artists, offers free music lessons and is a virtual ongoing art exhibit. Seminars, forums and conferences take place almost daily.

One of the most moving moments of the video showed a choir of children who had lost their fathers in the Karabagh conflict. During the evening, a silent art auction with artwork and handmade Christmas cards donated by the Naregatsi art students took place. The proceeds would enable the children in Shushi’s NAI center to enroll in art classes of their choice and provide them with a safe haven.

“One man can start something but can’t finish it,” said Nareg Hartounian. “This fundraiser, our first, is a means to an end. It will make a huge difference in creating hope and inspiration. The institute has been created to serve our culture, and create opportunities for the youth – especially in Shushi where it helps the children to express their artistic talents. It’s a place where children feel safe, warm, loved, and cared for,” he said and introduced two individuals who have been invaluable and dedicated supporters for the preservation of NAI, his father, Garabed Haroutunian, and brother, Saro.

The Shushi center provides classes in music, theatre, dance, sculpture, painting, needlework, languages, etc. All classes are free of charge. It aspires to have a dormitory that could accommodate up to 40 to 50 volunteers who would come from around the world. They would have accommodations for free in their new home and in return would share their knowledge with the children.

There are also plans to build an artist’s retreat with workshops, and daily exhibitions. Currently, the Shushi center is still not completed. “We have to join our hands together and make this a reality,” declared Hartounian.



Guests at the Naregatsi Arts Institute

UNTIL MY LAST BREATH

“Why have we called it the Naregatsi Art Institute,” asked Hartounian. “It has to do with providence, with destiny. Krikor Naregatsi signifies blessings, and the responsibility to dedicate ourselves to this sacred mission and work with honor, integrity and trust. That’s why I’ve dedicated my life to it until my last breath,” he stated with emotion.

Composer Konstantin Petrosian, who two months ago introduced his new works at the Naregatsi Art Institute in Armenia to packed audiences, urged all to “go, see and participate” in the institute’s activities in both Yerevan and Shushi. “In just a few years, one person alone has established this center, receiving very little support from the Armenian government. We all have to work together to continue this valuable effort.” It was announced that both Hartounian and Petrosian would go to Los Angeles the next morning. Their CD, “Oberton,” produced by NAI, has been nominated in the Armenian Music Awards in the best classical music category.

A message from Armenia’s Ambassador to the United Nations Garen Nazarian, who was unable to be present, expressed appreciation to the Naregatsi Art Institute “for supporting young people who take pride in their Armenian heritage. Their artistic contribution is particularly important because they carry traditions of our nation and create new ones.” Congratulating the institute on its achievement, Nazarian expressed his hope “to see many events which will inspire young people, not only

in Armenia, but also in the Armenian communities abroad.”

Entertainment was provided by pianist Karina Azatian, the YY Sisters with selections from Komitas, and 11-year-old pianist David Antablian, who played compositions from

tables with lighted lanterns hung from fern tree branches. Hosted by Andreas Roubian, attendees were treated to a lavish buffet. Roubian has been instrumental in helping Artzagh for many years, and funding the renovation of the Ghazanchetsots Church of Shushi.



Naregatsi Arts Institute founder Nareg Haroutunian

Babajanian and Gurdjiev that he had learned in NAI Yerevan.

During the evening, the guests enjoyed a richly decorated Christmas tree, red lighted, tasseled balloons floating from the ceiling, and

Departing guests received Christmas artwork made by the Naregatsi Art Institute students of Shushi.

For more information about the Naregatsi Art Institute visit www.naregatsi.org.

Armenian Duduk Presentation and Live Performance at ALMA

ALMA, from page 12

and Los Angeles. He has also toured with the Ereboundi and Garni Armenian Folk Ensembles as principal soloist performing at various prestigious international festivals including the Festival of Nations in Albany, New York and the Wolf Trap International Children’s Festival in Vienna, Va. He has also has toured with Kurdish folk singer Jivan Perwer. Haroutunian arranged and performed the music for New Repertory Theater’s 1998 production of Richard Kalinoski’s “Beast on The Moon” as well as acted as a consultant and recorded for the play’s 2005 Off-Broadway production.

In 1989, Haroutunian founded and has since directed the Arev Armenian Folk Ensemble, performing extensively in the United States and Canada, including with the 2002 Christmas Revels. The ensemble’s first recording in 2003 received two nominations at the Armenian Music Awards. He is featured on var-

ious recordings including “An Anthology of Armenian Patriotic Songs,” “Portable Planet,” “Lullabies From The Cradle Of Civilization” and various film and television soundtracks, including the “Everything is Illuminated” original motion picture soundtrack. In 2007 he was invited to be recorded by Academy Award winning composer Gustavo Santaolalla for a film soundtrack. He is also featured on recordings by Raffi Adourian, Janette Khalarian, The Vardan Ovsepian Chamber Ensemble and The Komitas Project and Musaner, both directed by Ara Sarkissian. In 2006 Haroutunian founded the Lusin Armenian Experimental Improvisation Group. He developed and taught a music appreciation program at St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary School. Most recently he was invited by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra to play at a concert that will take place in April. He is currently involved in the production of Arev’s second

CD, “The Return,” and serves on the Executive Committee of the Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of Greater Boston.

The event is free and open to the public. Guests will also be granted free museum admission before the program from 6 to 7 p.m.

Currently on display in the museum’s Simourian Family Gallery is “The Armenian Musical Traditions,” an exhibit curated by McCollum. Visitors will learn about the various genres of traditional music in Armenia and the instruments that developed there. The exhibit examines a range of musical styles, including religious, folk, troubadour, contemporary and the American-Armenian style played at picnics in the United States.

The museum is located at 65 Main St. For directions and more information about the program and current exhibits on display, visit www.almainc.org.

839 Washington Street
Newtonville, MA 02160
(617) 964-3400



KAROUN
Restaurant

Armenian Mid-Eastern Cuisine

Entertainment Fridays
and Saturdays

Eurdolian Family



Quite the Gem Dandy

ONCE OVERLOOKED, NOW BREATHTAKING IN ITS BEAUTY, 733-CARAT SAPPHIRE HAS HISTORY WORTH ITS WEIGHT

By Victoria Kim

LOS ANGELES (*Los Angeles Times*) — The boy brought home a dull-colored half-pound stone he found on the hillside, and his father, Harry Spencer, thought of the perfect place for it. They would use it as a doorstop.

The year was 1938, and their home was a modest shack in a sparsely populated, dusty stretch of gem-mining territory in central Queensland, Australia. The stone sat at the backdoor for 10 years, until a jeweler recognized its potential and brought it across the Pacific. In Los Angeles, it was polished to reveal a six-pronged, mesmerizingly beautiful star — or so goes the story that is passed down about the largest-known star sapphire in the world.

The Black Star of Queensland would make its way around the world, weaving in and out of spotlight and obscurity, with stops in the Smithsonian in the '60s, on Cher's neck in the '70s, and at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto in 2007. It would capture the fantasy of a young boy, who would dream of one day owning it. It would be mounted on white gold and 35 diamonds added around its rim.

Some profess the stone has a certain magic, bringing luck to the fortunate few who have touched it. One owner said it brought on the darkest period of her life, leaving memories she never wanted to revisit.

Eventually, as many prized things do, it landed in LA County Superior Court, at the center of allegations of deception, unkept promises and a lover's betrayal.

Harry Kazanjian learned to polish stones because of an eye infection. About 1908, his family fled from Turkey to France to escape the persecutions that preceded the Armenian genocide. When they tried to board a ship bound for the United States, guards wouldn't let young Harry on because of his eye. As his family sailed across the Atlantic, Kazanjian stayed behind in Paris and apprenticed for his stonecutter uncle.

Kazanjian discovered he had a knack for envisioning a gemstone in the rough, the way sculptors see a finished work in a slab of marble. When he reunited with his family, he persuaded his brother James to go into the gem business with him.

The brothers traveled the world buying rare and valuable stones. The Spencer family had sold them many blue and yellow sapphires. One day in 1947, Harry Kazanjian saw a pile of black stones at the Spencers' home that they had thought worthless. He asked to inspect them, thinking they might be star sapphires. Spencer told his son to go get the doorstop.

In the fist-sized stone, Kazanjian spotted a copper-colored glimmer, a hint of the impurity that sometimes grows along a sapphire's crystals to create the star, an optical effect known as an asterism. He bought it, reportedly for \$18,000, and brought it to the shop he ran with his brother in downtown LA.

Amid the whirring of grinding wheels and hissing of polishing machines, Kazanjian studied the stone for weeks before cutting into it. Over months, he worked, bent over a copper wheel impregnated with diamond dust, gently carving away to create a dome.

"I could have ruined it a hundred times during the cutting," Kazanjian told a Times reporter at the time.

In 1948, the Black Star of Queensland debuted in New York. Actress Linda Darnell cradled the egg-sized stone in her fingers and held it up for the cameras. At 733 carats, it was far larger than the Star of India, a 563-carat blue star sapphire previously known to be the largest.

It was valued at \$300,000, but the Kazanjians "declared emphatically" that it wasn't for sale.

Michael Kazanjian, Harry's nephew, spent his summers and weekends as a child at the shop, trying to emulate his uncle's craft on less-valuable gems. He had watched in awe as his uncle polished the Black Star.

To him, the stone was like a member of the family. He would occasionally visit it at the family vault and talk to it, and it would talk back, he said.

"The stone had a lovely personality," said Michael, who took over the family business in the 1970s. "Very dramatic, very powerful."

One day, in 1971, he saw an opportunity to show it off when a Hollywood manager called him with an odd request: "Can you put a few million dollars of jewelry on Cher?" By then,

Sonny and Cher had seen their fame ebb. After a failed film venture and lackluster album sales, they were taking a stab at something new: a television variety show. In the premiere, they planned a sketch where Cher would be decked out in valuable gems, and security guards would keep Sonny away as he sang "Close to You."

Cher's first stop had been Tiffany's. But when the show's producers learned insurance would cost \$8,000, they looked for another option.

Instead of insurance, Michael hired half a dozen police officers to escort him and the Black Star to the studio. The stone was tied on by hand with a flimsy wire to a necklace with about 100 carats of diamonds.

A few hours into the taping, he panicked. Cher was dancing.



The Black Star of Queensland

Michael jumped up on stage and stopped the take, fearing the stone would drop and shatter.

After its brief television fame, the stone sat out of public view for the most part, making only occasional appearances at private charity functions. It has never been worn since.

Jack Armstrong says he was a 5-year-old living in Blair, Neb., when he first laid eyes on the Black Star. That summer, his father, an auditor, took him on a trip to Washington, where the Kazanjians had lent the stone to the Smithsonian for a display with the Hope Diamond. Armstrong said he breezed past the diamond but became fixated on the sapphire.

"It took my breath away," he said. "It's like you see your future in front of your eyes."

In 2002, he was introduced to the Kazanjians and was invited to see their collection. When he saw the Black Star, he couldn't believe he was looking at the stone from his childhood and immediately wanted to buy it.

Armstrong, a former model now in his 50s with no shortage of flamboyance, says he is an artist and a dealer of art and antiques. Attorneys have described him in court papers as a man with no discernible source of income who lived off a wealthy older girlfriend, a divorcee living in Switzerland.

"I've never met a personality like him," said Doug Kazanjian, Michael's son, who met with Armstrong about the sale. "He had this overwhelming passion to buy it."

After the sapphire had been in the family for more than 50 years, the Kazanjians decided to sell it to fund a scholarship at the Gemological Institute of America.

Armstrong arranged to buy the stone with his girlfriend. He was so in love with it, he said, that he slept with it under his pillow and drove around with it in his jacket.

But love or no love, he was quick to slap on a price tag and offer it for sale. A month after he bought it for an undisclosed amount, he issued a press release saying the sapphire was available — for \$50 million.

"The sale of the Black Star sapphire is a huge event in the gem stone market," Armstrong said in the press release in December 2002. "To have a stone like this come on the market is tantamount to having a Raphael painting suddenly emerge for sale; it happens maybe once, maybe twice in a lifetime."

Gabrielle Grohe had never heard of the Black Star, and in hindsight, she might wish it stayed that way.

In her 60s and wealthy from an earlier marriage to an industrialist, she was introduced to Armstrong in 2002.

Her version of the tale, as told in court papers by her attorney, is filled with scathing accusations against Armstrong, her onetime lover. (Armstrong, whose attorneys never responded to the allegations, declined to discuss the court case.)

Within days of their meeting, Armstrong told her about the stone and pressured her to buy it. She paid the bill, and he promised to pay part of it, Grohe contended.

The next year, Armstrong moved to Switzerland to live with Grohe. Armstrong said in an interview that he went to Europe to pursue his art; Grohe contended he refused to get a job and relied on her for his extravagant living expenses.

Soon, their relationship soured. He drank heavily, became physically abusive and got angry when she brought up his promise to pay for the stone, she alleged. In September 2007, Grohe called the police, bought him a plane ticket back to the US and kicked him out.

That marked the beginning of an international tussle for control of the stone.

The next month, Grohe met with a potential buyer in Canada, where the sapphire was on display at the Royal Ontario Museum, with its value then estimated at \$4.1 million. Armstrong foiled her efforts at a sale, "desperate at the thought that his gravy train would end," she alleged.

When the loan to the museum came to an end in 2008, Armstrong, who was listed as a co-owner in the museum's records, went behind Grohe's back and asked that it be shipped to him in Los Angeles, in care of the Harry Winston jewelry shop in Beverly Hills, according to court documents.

A few weeks later, Armstrong showed up at the shop with a woman he said was a buyer and asked for the stone. The salon director, Goli Parstabar, had learned of the dispute and refused.

Furious, Armstrong returned with police officers, but was rebuffed. Then he had an attorney send a demand letter. When that didn't work, he sued Harry Winston for \$25 million and issued press releases saying his stone was being held hostage.

In court, the allegations escalated. Armstrong alleged that Parstabar had cost him a lucrative deal and ruined his reputation by refusing to show the stone to his client. Grohe accused Armstrong of fraud and unlawfully trying to take control of the stone, for which she contended he never paid a dime.

Doug Kazanjian wears his grandfather's ring with a stone just like the Black Star — only 700 carats smaller.

"It's almost as if you're looking into space," he said of the stone. "It's like having the universe on your finger."

Last year, he was asked by an attorney in the case to identify his family heirloom.

He was ushered into a private room at a Beverly Hills bank, where attorneys, Parstabar, and Armstrong huddled around him. Before him was a tightly wrapped cardboard shipping box that had sat untouched since it arrived from Toronto. All eyes focused on him opening the box.

He sifted through bubble wrap and tissue paper until he found the velvet case holding the stone.

"It was like getting to see an old friend," he recalled.

He inspected the diamonds, and the mounting. He scanned the graining at the top of the stone. He shined a flashlight to create the six-point star.

This is the Black Star of Queensland, he wrote on a piece of paper, and signed it.

The legal dispute quietly settled out of court in a confidential agreement. According to a court document, Armstrong agreed to pay \$500,000 within three months to buy out Grohe.

At 5 p.m., on the last day that he could claim ownership, a personal check from Armstrong arrived at Grohe's attorney's office. The check bounced.

A few months later, a judge entered a final ruling: the stone was all hers.

The Black Star of Queensland once again sits in obscurity, with its owner in Switzerland. Grohe wants to put that period of her life behind her and would rather not talk about it, her attorney said. She hasn't decided what to do with the stone.

Armstrong, meanwhile, says it's enough for him that he once held the sapphire he fantasized about as a child. Though he lost the court battle, the gem brought him good fortune in his work and life, he said.

He wants to make a film about the stone, he says, for "every little kid who dreams." He says he is on the brink of a deal with a studio. He imagines it will be a tale of a princess trapped in an enchanted stone, and a boy who finds it by chance.

"It's a magical story," he said. "It should be told."



ARTS & LIVING

New Book On Painter Sumbat Released

SAN FRANCISCO — Armen Der Kiureghian, professor of engineering at the University of California, Berkeley, has published a book about the life and work of his father, Sumbat Der Kiureghian, a renowned Iranian-Armenian watercolorist known simply by his first name.

The Life and Art of Sumbat includes 120 pages of color reproductions of Sumbat's paintings, drawings and sketches, as well as Sumbat's biography, written by his son and full of personal anecdotes and letters.

Der Kiureghian compiled the material over a period of nine years, drawing on archival resources in Iran, Armenia and the United States, as well as interviews with Sumbat's friends and relatives across the globe. He describes his father's life through a series of intimate stories and quotations from other writers. The foreword is written by Armenian cultural anthropologist Levon Abrahamian. Haroutiun Samuelian, also of Armenia, designed the graphics and layout of the book. The book was published by ADK & Associates Publishers in San Francisco and printed by Printinfo JS LLC in Yerevan, Armenia.

Sumbat (1913-1999) was a highly-regarded Iranian-Armenian artist, who is particularly admired for his watercolor and gouache renditions of Iranian and Armenian village scenes and of landscapes. A descendant of 17th-century Armenian settlers in the New Julfa district of Isfahan, he embodied the artistic traditions of his people and his hometown. Through his art, he played the role of a mediator between East and West: he brought a European artistic style (lucid watercolor applied in loose brushwork) to Iran and he introduced Iranian

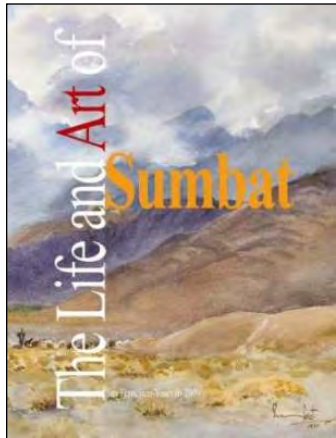


Sumbat Der Kiureghian (known simply as Sumbat) as a young man

lifestyle, folk traditions and landscapes to Western audiences.

Aside from their artistic value, the significance of Sumbat's paintings lies in their preservation of a way of life that has since been lost to modernization. Of particular note are his "Sumbastisms," created by turning his newspaper-palettes into abstract depictions of busy street scenes. These works capture the energy and diversity of Iranian society while also straddling the line between figurative and abstract painting. The common threads that unite all of Sumbat's works are his stunning, gentle colors, an inescapable sense of joy and tranquility in his subjects and a strong appreciation for the life of ordinary people.

The Life and Art of Sumbat, 176 pages in hardcover, is available for purchase at www.Sumbat.com and www.Amazon.com and in Abril Bookstore, Berj Bookstore, Borders and Sardarabad Bookstore in Glendale, Calif.; at Ketab Corp., in Los Angeles; the Armenian Prelacy Bookstore in New York and at the ALMA Bookstore, Watertown, Mass.



Book Tells of Armenian Struggle

By Chad Selweski

DETROIT (*Macomb Daily*) — A former newspaper editor who spent many late nights working a second shift pecking away at a manual typewriter in his basement has finally seen all those pages come to life.

Mitch Kehetian, a longtime *Macomb Daily* editor, is releasing his first book, *Giants of the Earth*, which tells of the struggles and persecution of the Armenian people. Kehetian said the project began more than three decades ago.

"Actually, the 13 chapters were written in the 1970s and early '80s. And then I just let it sit. I figured I'd present it some day to my grandchildren as a memoir," Kehetian said.

One of the book's highlights is a description of the first of Kehetian's five trips to his homeland, an eight-day journey in 1969 that ended with a prayer at his aunt's mountaintop gravesite overlooking the Euphrates River.

Family members had long encouraged Kehetian to complete the book. The finished product is dedicated to a cousin, Rev. Vartan Kassabian, a priest in the Armenian Church, who died suddenly 18 months ago and never saw the publication he had longed to read.

Giants of the Earth recounts Kehetian's discovery of his heritage in historical Turkish-held Armenia and his search for his father's sister, Parancim, who hadn't been seen since 1947. On this literary journey, the author shares antique snapshots of Armenia and explores the country's history from its early existence 2,000 years ago to the death and devastation it suffered during the genocide of 1915-23 at the hands of the Turkish-led Ottoman Empire.

"I want people to know there has been a race of people there for 2,000 years and the genocide was not based on religion. This was not a jihad by Muslims. This was a systematic plan to eradicate the Armenians and move them out of the interior area," said Kehetian, 79.

On Capitol Hill, efforts to recognize the genocide victims, estimated at more than 1 million, have been the subject of contention in numerous resolutions proposed by the House and Senate. Each time, the Armenian-American community was overpowered by political pressures from Turkey, which has consistently disputed the genocide label, and concerns expressed by the State Department, which views Islamic Turkey as a key, strategically located US ally.

In Washington, the tensions were so high between the Armenian and Turkish communi-

ties that Kehetian in 1969 stood little chance of gaining a passport and approval to travel deep into the interior of the barren, depopulated homeland of his ancestors in Turkish-held Armenia. The trip was made possible by the behind-the-scenes efforts of a powerful Polish-American congressman from Detroit's East Side, Lucien Nedzi, and Secretary of State William Rogers. A copy of an airgram from Rogers' office to the American Embassy in Ankara enlisting its assistance in helping Kehetian in his mission is included in the memoir. The "limited official use" airgram refers to "various cities in Eastern Turkey once heavily populated by Armenians" — and a FYI alert that Kehetian has discovered that "a relative survived Turkish massacres several decades ago."

The author said the Armenian-American community, consisting of 1.5 million people, was dismayed after they supported Barack Obama in 2008. On the observance of Armenian Memorial Day last April, Obama's presidential proclamation referred to the 1915-23 slaughter as a "great calamity," not genocide.

While campaigning for president Obama said he would be a president who recognizes the massacre of the Armenians as a genocide.

After his retirement in November 2005 after spending more than 50 years in journalism, Kehetian eventually returned to his transcript and added a prologue and epilogue.

Kehetian wrote the book newspaper style, not in scholarly prose. *Giants of the Earth* is not targeted at first-generation Armenian-Americans who know the homeland's history well, or the second generation who earned their heritage through word of mouth. The author's audience, he hopes, will be the third generation.

"I want that third generation to know what really happened," he said, "and I want them to understand why the Armenians still seek justice."

Kehetian, a native Detroiter, was president of the Detroit Press Club and Society of Professional Journalists. He served for 13 years as a governing board trustee at Central Michigan University. In 2006 Wayne State University's Journalism Department honored the former *Macomb Daily* editor with its coveted Lifetime Achievement Award for championing the public's right to know for more than 50 years.

Giants of the Earth is published by Publish America.

For information to order, log on to: <http://www.publishamerica.net/product88361.html>.

Reception Held for ALMA's Armenian Legionnaire Traveling Exhibit

PASADENA, Calif. — The Pasadena Central Library, which is host to the exhibit "Légion Arménienne: The Armenian Legion and Its Heroism in the Middle East," put together by the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA), hosted a reception on January 3 in honor of the exhibit, which will end on January 17.

"Légion Arménienne" offers a glimpse into the formation, training, military action and postwar activities of the Armenian Legion through photographs and narratives.

The standing-room-only January 3 program was co-sponsored by the Western Region of Armenian Rights Council of America and the Pasadena Chapter of the Armenian National Committee and supported by the Pasadena Armenian Youth Federation "Nigol Touman" Chapter.

Former Pasadena Mayor Bill Paparian presided over the afternoon program honoring the brave and selfless young legionnaires who, during World War I, went from the US, the Middle East and Europe to help the Allies, and later risked all in defense of Armenian human rights. Keynote speaker Ed Aghjayan, former Pasadena deputy city manager, shared stories about his father who was

an Armenian Legionnaire.

The program also featured Carl Bardakian speaking about his grandfather Jim Chankalian, whose life as an Armenian Legionnaire is highlighted in the exhibit. Dr. Zaven Arslanian spoke about his grandfather Caspar Menag's contributions to the Armenian Legion. Other guest speakers included Armenian Rights Council of America representative Dr. Raffi Balian and Armenian National Committee Chairman Raffi Hamparian speaking on behalf of his Pasadena chapter. Hamparian also presented awards to the Pasadena Central Library and the Armenian Library and Museum of America for bringing the exhibit to Pasadena.

In attendance was Grigor Hovhannisian, consul general of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles, who expressed great interest in bringing the exhibit to Armenia. Also in attendance were Armenian Library and Museum Trustees Laurel Karabian, Joan Agajanian Quinn and Caroline Tufenkian.

The traveling exhibit was made possible by a grant from K. George and Carolann S. Najarian, MD Foundation, with additional support provided by the Armenian-American Veterans of Milford, Mass., Inc. The exhibit's



Armenian Library and Museum of America Trustees Laurel Karabian, Joan Agajanian Quinn and Caroline Tufenkian with Pasadena AYF "Nigol Touman" chapter members, former Pasadena Mayor Bill Paparian and Pasadena ANC activist Raffi Hamparian

Pasadena appearance is sponsored by Ed Aghjayan and Bill Paparian.

Following the Pasadena display, "Légion Arménienne" will travel to the University of

Michigan-Dearborne in February.

For scheduling information or to learn about the exhibit, contact ALMA at Gamavor@almainc.org.



ARTS & LIVING

Reconciliation Through The Arts: Armenia and Turkey

RECONCILIATION. from page 12
the offspring of the survivors of the Genocide as well as to the memory of its victims.

Armenians cannot be blamed for being suspicious about Turkey's dealings coming from their experience of centuries of duplicity and intrigue in the way Turkey has treated Armenians.

Q: Do you think that the barriers to Turkish acceptance of the Armenian Genocide are more based on ethnic prejudice, or are they more based on financial concerns like reparations, payment of old insurance claims etc?

A: I sincerely believe that the issue here is much more based on economic concerns and the "can of worms" Turkey is afraid to open by accepting responsibility for the deeds of its ancestral government for the harm done to Armenians.

It is true that Armenians and Turks are racially different, but through habits, traditions and even cuisine, their daily lives have much in common. I am not talking about Armenians living in Switzerland compared to Anatolian Turks, but about Armenians living across the border from Turkey and Turks living on ancestral Armenian lands that are currently occupied by Turks. These peoples are more similar than they think. Like Arabs and Jews in Israel and Palestine, Armenians and Turks have shared the same part of the world, the same mountains, they have trod the same earth and have drunk from the same water for centuries. The conflict here is not on the personal human level I think, but on the larger political level.

Q: I know the memory of the 1915 massacre is most alive in Armenia. Is there a corresponding memory in Turkey, is there a myth?

A: Modern Turkey is the creation of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923. Atatürk was one of the Young Turks at the end of the First World War, when Ottoman Turkey was defeated and breaking up into its respective countries, much like it happened later in the century with the Soviet Union. Atatürk came to power and revolutionized Turkey by trying to modernize it and even went to the extent of changing the Turkish alphabet (Ottoman Turkish used Arabic script) to the Latin alphabet. This is really a huge change. His maxim was (and still is in Turkey today), "How lucky is the one who says I am Turkish." It is this nationalistic and elitist attitude that gave the defeated Turks a new identity to forge ahead with. Of course accepting the responsibility of the Armenian Genocide and the ethnic cleansing done to the Armenians (who were Ottoman citizens) would have marred this idealistic take on Turkish identity.

In the more recent years, as a form of self-defense, against the increasing acceptance and recognition of the Armenian Genocide by many governments of the world, Turkey began to react by spreading the rumor that Turks too were killed during the 1914-1918 war and that it was the Armenians who massacred the Turks and not the other way round. But how could this happen when it was a known fact that Armenians living under Ottoman rule were not allowed to bear arms, and at the onset of WW I, they were stripped of all ammunition and weapons and were left completely helpless and easy to prey on?

Q: Is the animosity between Turks and Armenians ancient or modern?

A: The animosity itself goes very far back with constant marauding crowds and raids on Armenian villages and farmers by Turkish and Kurdish tribes. However, it was not on the organized Government level until later in the 19th century going back to Sultan Hamid II, the Red Sultan, who in the late 1880s and '90s, started sanctioning the freedoms that Armenians had as citizens of the Ottoman Empire. Armenians up to that point were highly respected members of the community and had contributed in many positive ways to the development of Turkey. In fact, it is mentioned even in Turkish encyclopedias, that Armenians lay the foundations of Modern Turkish theatre, that Armenian actresses were the first to start an acting tradition for women (as Moslem women were not allowed on stage), in other areas, the famous Balian family of architects built many of the beautiful mosques and palaces of the Ottoman Sultans.

Another name that comes to mind is Sinan, whose Armenian identity is documented extensively, in the music department we have Dikran Tchouhadjian whose operettas were huge hits

who was the daughter of a priest in Kaiseri, was deported together with her three sisters and mother, after my great-grandfather was hanged.

Up until the point when Sultan Abdul Hamid

these situations it is often "legitimized" through orders by the powers that be. Suffice it for the threatened ruling elite to "give the order" legitimizing the act, that you have the spark needed to start a major Genocide. The examples are abundant in the ethnic cleansing that characterized Eastern Europe in more recent decades. The parallels here can be stretched further to cover the situation in Rwanda as well, where one group is victimized by the other and such victimization was somehow legitimized through orders coming from "above."

We have to remember that the Ottoman Empire was already deteriorating during the Hamidian Massacres, during the 1906 Adana Massacres and during the 1915-18 Genocide, and the only way the Turks could see a redemption for themselves and a preservation of their power, was the substitution of their multi-ethnic and culturally diverse Empire with one based on relative ethnic and cultural unity, therefore their Pan-Turanistic Ideals of a Turkic Empire Extending from the Bosphorus all the way to the Central Asian Turkic Republics was nourished.

Of course, there were many obstacles to such a plan, one such "minor" obstacle being the Armenians who were in the middle of it, and who in turn had begin to entertain ideas of independence.

Armenian ideals of independence did not exit during the Hamidian era. They were a much more recent culminating of reactions to the unbearable conditions of the Armenian peasants in the Eastern Turkish provinces and an inevitable necessity to securing better living conditions. But Turkey had a war to fight, a deteriorating Empire to patch up, and a new Pan-Turanistic dream to chase. In all respects Armenians were in the way.

And since fear breeds aggression as is widely postulated in the body of sociopsychological theories, the fear of defeat and loss caused the escalation of the inherent levels of conflict attaining the levels of violence characteristic of any Genocide.

Q: How can cultural exchange between Turkey and Armenia be facilitated?

A: Over the last few years, more than ever before, it has become common to see Armenian films, film makers and prizes at Turkish film festivals, and vice versa. The same is also happening in the fields of music and theatre. This is a natural process because, as I explained above, there is more in common between these peoples than not. One of the most well known figures of Turkish Operettas is Dikran Tchouhadjian Armenian composer (c. 1860) whose first opera, "Arsace II," had a world premiere 130 years after its composition, at the San Francisco Opera in 2001, to a great extent thanks to Gerald Papsian's efforts. Tchouhadjian's other operetta, "Leblebidji Hor Hor" (Hor Hor the chick pea vendor) was so successful that it has infiltrated the Turkish repertory and even today, you find older actors or artists who remember some of these tunes. Currently, Gerald is working on a French version of this operetta and collaboration with Turkish theatres around this project is not impossible.

I would love to take the theater piece I developed with Gerald Papsian, "Sojourn at Ararat," or my one-woman show, "On the Couch with Nora Armani," to Turkey in the near future. An Armenian colleague from France has already taken his one-man show to Diarbekir (predominantly Kurdish populated town in Turkey). Now this is possible even more than before.

I think the two countries should make an effort to facilitate this type of exchange before even thinking of the border issues or the protocols. It is only through mutual acquaintance that conflict issues may be resolved.

In another historical incident, Gerald Papsian's maternal great-grandfather was Mihran Damadian, who was the "one-day president" of the French Mandated Armenia in Cilicia (Southern Turkey) right after the First World War. The French had promised Armenians a homeland (much like the British

continued on next page



Nora Armani and Gerald Papsian

and are in the cultural tradition of Turkey even to this day. The most important interpreters and high officials in the Porte were Armenians for long centuries.

The beginning of the 20th century, and the deterioration of the Ottoman Empire and the loss of its power in the world through ethnic resurgences (Balkans, Egypt, etc.) and the separation of its many Vilayets (the Governorates), coincided with its changing politics towards the Armenians who were also at that time con-

II (the Red Sultan) started sanctioning their freedoms, Armenians were highly respected Ottoman subjects. They were the best craftsmen, architects, intellectuals, merchants, politicians and interpreters for the Sultans and the Sublime Porte (The Ottoman Empire).

The inherent conflict was always present, resulting from jealousies, economic and social inequalities, marauding Turkish and Kurdish tribes in the Eastern Provinces where the life of the local Armenian population had become more and more unbearable over the centuries.

Conflicting theories of sociology postulate that any society has an inherent degree of conflict even in the most peaceful of times. In fact, such conflict is even a healthy ingredient for the well being and functionality of any society.

In my master's thesis, using the conflict model of social theory that postulates that conflict is an inherent and even a necessary ingredient to any healthy social structure, I argue that there are certain conditions under which otherwise harmless conflict levels can escalate to potentially violent levels giving way to Genocide, civil war and other extreme forms of expression of conflict. Some of these conditions are economic inequality, some are political instability, and in the case of Ottoman Turkey and the Armenian Genocide, there is a certain degree of both.

In my thesis I draw the parallels between the Armenian Genocide and the Jewish Holocaust in the light of the conflict theories. In both cases the minority that was victimized was one of high visibility, success, a certain economic stability, even in the villages as in the case of the Armenians. This type of situation triggers jealousy, envy and frustration, which when released turns into anger and aggression. Add to that the wonderful opportunity of the backdrop of a war, and you have the perfect ingredients for conflict to escalate and turn into Genocidal violence, specially that in



Mihran Damadian, the "one day" president of Armenia, in Cilicia. Photo by Photo London, Cairo, Egypt.



ARTS & LIVING

Reconciliation Through The Arts

from previous page

did for Israel) so in 1919, many Armenians picked up and went to Adana to establish the new home rule under the French mandate. Gerald's grandmother was 17 at the time and accompanied her father. In her eyewitness account, she used to tell us how overnight the Turkish local merchants had learned Armenian sentences to cater for the newly returning Armenian population.

Q: When the soft diplomacy of cultural engagement is carried on in foreign capitals,

Q: Wallace Shawn writes "Artists who create works of art that inspire sympathy and good values do not change the life of the poor." Will political art be polarizing, neutral or healing in this context?

A: I do not know much about radical and militant political art, because that is not what I do. Militancy usually preaches to the converted and is marginalized by the mainstream. I am not interested in preaching to converts. Otherwise, I would perform in Armenian for Armenians. I am quite well known in Armenia, having done many films and plays there as well as TV appearances. It is so easy for me to spread a message there, but who would I be telling these things to? To people who already know it and are in agreement with me. The trick is to reach uninitiated people and change the way they think.

I think what Wallace Shawn is saying, if I am not mistaken (and taken out of context this sentence can be interpreted in many ways), is that the change comes not from sympathy but from actual knowledge and wanting to do something about a situation. Although, I must confess that sympathy and good values are a beginning. Because if we are not sympathet-

ic to a cause we are not even inclined to listen to it, let alone do anything about it.

Q: Your show "Sojourn At Ararat" seems to make great works of literature speak for themselves, but that raises another issue. Why would we expect Armenian literature to have credibility in Turkey or vice versa. Would you expect Turkish literature to have credibility in Armenia?

A: Yes, the credibility is very easy to establish once the two sides hear about their respective literatures because deep inside they are so similar! In another show called "Nannto Nannto" (the last line from a Japanese Haiku), I have used works from Nazim Hikmet, one of the (if not the) greatest Turkish poet of the 20th century, and juxtaposed it with Gevorg Emin's work. He is a poet from Soviet Armenia who died recently. The particular poems were called "Memleketim" (My country in the case of Hikmet) and "Yes Hay Em" (I am Armenian). In the case of Emin, and when you hear his descriptive passages, you would think either it is the continuation of a Hikmet poem, or at best that both poets were inspired and wrote about the same thing, place... their homeland! It was eerie!

Q: Don't events of today sort of "call the question" of this play?

A: Of course, now more than ever it is time to hear this play out. The play is an answer to the



Nora Armani and Gerald Papasian visit Armenian poet Gevorg Emin at his home in Yerevan 1987.

does it have any effect on the home countries of Armenia and Turkey?

A: Of course. In today's world, heavily governed by communications, it is inevitable that the effects of one rub off on the other. So the more there are efforts of rapprochement on the cultural and artistic levels, the more the effects of this are felt both in the two homelands and in the respective diasporas.



The Basmadjians re-starts a family in Cairo, Egypt after WW I Armenian Genocide. The little girl is Nora Armani's mother. Photo by: London Photo Studio, Cairo, Egypt.

negationists in Turkey and its allies (even here), those who would deny the very fact of the Armenian Genocide, just as there are those who would deny the World War II Holocaust against the Jews.

But the sad truth is that Armenians have not yet had their Nuremberg. Turkey owes Armenians an apology, in order for normal relations to be established and survive. Turkey needs to apologize for its own peace of mind and for the well being of the future generations. There are lots of young progressive Turks and slightly older progressive intellectuals in Turkey as I mentioned earlier who favor rapprochement on the human and intellectual level. These people are all severely persecuted in Turkey and even killed, as was the case with the Armenian journalist Hrant Dink a couple of years ago. He was gunned down in mid-day in front of his office. There is a whole generation in Turkey that is conscious of the burden of the Genocide and wants to get rid of it by coming out and accepting responsibility for it, by making amends and proceeding to a peaceful existence. It is the powers that be, and the dirty political considerations that are in the way of all this. Also, it is not easy to reverse decades of denial and suddenly say, "OK, OK we did it!" Although when you owe a person an apology, sometimes the simplest thing to do is just to say, "I am sorry."

Just as "Schindler's List" speaks eloquently against denial of the Jewish Holocaust, we hope that plays like ours can deflect denial of the Armenian Genocide now, at this crucial time, when normalization of relations between Turks and Armenians seems a real possibility. The more the world is educated, the more it is difficult to feed it lies and at some point or another the truth has to emerge.

(Nora Armani is an actor and playwright who has represented the Ministry of Culture of Armenia in Cinema (from 1991-93). She and Gerald Papasian are the authors and performers of "Sojourn to Ararat." In addition to previously-announced dates in New York, "Sojourn" will be performed in New York on January 21 at 8 p.m. at The Studio theater/Lehman Stages (lehmanstages.org), at Lehman College, City University New York, for students, faculty (and friends), 250 Bedford Park Blvd. West Bronx, NY and January 28, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Department of Armenian Studies. For further information, email: irjp@umich.edu)

CALENDAR

FLORIDA

JANUARY 16 — Shushi Armenian Dance Ensemble, of St. Vartan Cathedral New York, will have its Florida debut with an afternoon performance at Olympia High School. For tickets and information, call St. Garabed Armenian Church at (407) 876-2616, John at (407) 539-1845, or Aram at (407) 679-7231. In the evening, the ensemble will have the thrilling opportunity of performing in Disneyworld. For more information, visit www.shushidance.org.

MARCH 20, 2010 — "The Royal Armenian Divorce," by Ida Boodakian promises to be even more hilarious than the "The Royal Armenian Wedding." Sponsored by the Women's Guild of St. David Armenian Apostolic Church of Boca Raton, at St. David's. Further info., including ticket prices, will be forthcoming closer to the event.

NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 4 — Musician, writer and poet Alan Semerdjian will present his new collection of poems, *In the Architecture of Bone*, on Thursday, at 7 p.m. in G-Hall of the Armenian Diocese, 630 Second Ave. Question-and-answer session and wine-and-cheese reception to follow. This event is hosted by the Zohrab Center and the Armenian Students' Association. For more information, call (212) 686-0710 or e-mail Taleen Babayan at taleen@zohrabcenter.org.

Calendar Fees Starting January 9

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* is going to start charging for calendar entries, starting with the first issue of the New Year, that of Saturday, January 9. The fee will be \$5 per line, with the following discounts for multiple insertions: four times will receive a 10-percent discount; five times or more, a 20-percent discount and 10 or more, a 40-percent discount. Entries can be e-mailed to mirrorads@aol.com or to editor@mirrorspectator.com.



Musician, writer and poet Alan Semerdjian, pictured above, will present his new collection of poems, *In the Architecture of Bone*, on Thursday, February 4, at 7 p.m. in G-Hall of the Armenian Diocese, 630 Second Ave., in New York, NY. For more information, call (212) 686-0710 or e-mail Taleen Babayan at taleen@zohrabcenter.org.



COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN
Mirror-Spectator

Established 1932

An ADL Publication

EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

ART DIRECTOR

Marc Mgrditchian

PRODUCTION

Dilani Yogaratanam

CONTRIBUTORS:

Elizabeth Aprahamian, Dr. Haroutiune Arzoumanian, Edmond Azadian, Prof. Vahakn N. Dadrian, Diana Der Hovanessian, Philip Ketchian, Kevork Keushkerian, Arsen Noubar Mamourian, Moorad Mooradian, Sonia Kailian-Placido, Harut Sassounian, Mary Terzian, Hagop Vartivarian, Naomi Zeytoonian

CORRESPONDENTS:

Armenia - Hagop Avedikian
Boston - Nancy Kalajian
Philadelphia - Lisa Manookian

Contributing Photographers: Sarkis Bahar, George Bogosian, Jacob Demirdjian, Harry Koundakjian.

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July, by:

Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509

Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirror-spectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirror-spectator.com

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

New York/New Jersey Office

560 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632
(201) 800-1164

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

U.S.A.	2nd Class	\$75 a year
	1st Class	\$120 a year
Canada	Air Mail	\$125 a year
All Other Countries	Air Mail	\$190 a year
	Display advertising rate:	\$7 per column inch

© 2009 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, P.O. Box 302, Watertown, MA 02471-0302

Other than the editorial, views and opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the policies of the publisher.

Copying for other than personal use or internal reference is prohibited without express permission of the copyright owner. Address requests for reprints or back issues to:

Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509

COMMENTARY

Turkish Diplomacy's Gordian Knots

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has been trying to give a positive spin to his country's foreign policy with his academic semantics, but thus far, he has been only successful in providing a very transparent veneer to all the intractable problems that Turkey has created over the years, both domestically and internationally. Even his professorial tone has been sober and somber as he advocated an Ottoman-style hegemony in the Balkans, extolling the "harmony" which the Ottoman sultans had created over centuries.

It seems that Davutoglu's "zero-problem-with-the-neighbors" policy intends to solve all those problems in Turkey's favor and claim stability and harmony in the region. In promoting its brazen foreign policy, Ankara is counting on international support, which it has been garnering through a barter system.

Prime Minister Erdogan's arrogance and cynicism, after visiting the White House last December, says a lot about Turkish foreign policy's headway. Among other issues, Erdogan seems to have wrested from the Obama administration the blocking of the passage of the Armenian Genocide resolution in the Congress, in return for a pledge to normalize Ankara's relations with Israel.

Presently, Mr. Erdogan is visiting Moscow, while Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, heads to Yerevan to bring back a gift to Turkey's Azeri brothers, in the shape of a nod from Moscow to pressure Armenia to relinquish strategic regions captured by Armenians during the war with that country.

Although Turkey faces some stiff conditions in order to be admitted to the European Union, it has not met any of these conditions and continues to challenge the international community with impunity. Penal Code 301 is still on the books, 38 percent of Cypriot territory still remains under Turkish occupation, the Kurdish problem has been compounded by banning a pro-Kurdish political party and relations with Armenia and Greece are not in any better shape. All these problems have been created by Turkey, in direct violation of international law, to win concessions from respective parties.

The Protocols for establishing relations and opening the borders between Armenia and Turkey were signed last October in Zurich without any preconditions, yet, all the major figures in the Turkish government have been setting conditions in order to open the border. Opening the border is not worth the concessions, Turkey has been demanding from Armenia.

A recent public embarrassment for Turkey demonstrated to what extent the Turkish leaders have been sticking to their guns. A case in point was the statement made by the Greek Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who said that he feels "crucified" in Turkey with all the repression exerted on his church and his activities, especially with the closure of the Greek Orthodox Seminary in Heybelianda, in violation of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923. That has been an international issue for decades, yet the Turkish leaders blamed the patriarch for his courageous statement, rather than taking a positive action.

Bob Simon of CBS presented the interview with the patriarch on the program, "60 Minutes," not because anyone at CBS cares about the fate of the Greek Church in Turkey, but just to convey a message that denying support to Israel has a price.

Following the airing of the patriarch's interview, some mild

comments were heard in support of religious freedom, whereas Ankara's action is a flagrant breach of international law. Indeed, the Turkish daily Taraf has interviewed the director of religious affairs administration, Mourad Bardakoglu, and his deputy, Mehmet Gormez. They have both maintained that it is unacceptable to shut the seminary, when Turkey insists on the law that religious leaders must be Turkish citizens. They also make their point within the context of freedom of worship, which is advocated by the European Union.

But these voices have been countered by the harsh reaction of the Prime Minister Erdogan, who has set some Byzantine conditions in order to be able to open the seminary. In short, all hopes that the seminary may open its doors in the foreseeable future are dashed.

It is interesting to quote the prime minister's ludicrous arguments: "The opening of the seminary is a process involving multiple dimensions. This issue has to be studied well in its length and width within the context of our laws and within the application of our educational programs. Our ministers and institutions are continuing to study the issue, but on the other hand the Greek authorities have to address the religious problems of the Turkish minority in Greece." (It seems they have been "studying" the issue since 1971!)

As we see, Turkish leaders have counter proposals for correcting any problem, which is their own doing, very much like imposing on Armenia a third-party problem, namely the Karabagh issue, in order to lift the blockade against Armenia.

Repeated pleas of the patriarch have fallen on deaf ears, but at least for once Erdogan has given blunt answers, stating that there is not a single mosque in Greece. The moral of the story is that the Greek Patriarch has to wait until such time that the Greek government builds a mosque (to Mr. Erdogan's liking) in order to see a positive action with regard to the fate of the seminary in Turkey.

Armenians have been in the same situation in Turkey. The Holy Cross seminary was closed down by the authorities. Although there is a mosque in Yerevan, that did not help the situation. There are only 4,000 Greeks left in Turkey, whereas only in Istanbul the Armenian community is 70,000-strong. However, neither the Armenian patriarch (when he was able to fulfill the duties of his position) nor any other leader in the community was able to voice the problem courageously like the Greek patriarch. Instead, Patriarch Mutafian was used and abused for Ankara's political ends and was ignored when the Armenian community's problems were raised.

Not only was the Holy Cross seminary not opened (nor discussed), stifling regulations were imposed on the community schools to lead them to their demise. Armenian parents have to go through many regulations to enroll their children in Armenian schools, which desperately need those students. A new phenomenon has also been compounded on this educational problem: the migrant workers from Armenia are barred from sending their children to Armenian schools nor can they enroll them in Turkish schools.

All the problems, which Turkey has created for its neighbors and for itself, have become Gordian Knots, never to be solved.

The forthcoming meeting between US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the Armenian community representatives should address these topical issues.

She needs to be told that just as she twisted Eduard Nalbandian's arm to sign the protocols, she has to twist the arms of the Turkish leadership to live up to their commitments.

How Khoja Nazar Saved the Cathedral of Echmiadzin and Restored

The Relics of St. Gregory the Illuminator and St. Hripsime in Armenia

By George Bournoutian

Starting in 1604 and continuing for several years after, the great Persian king, Shah Abbas, ordered his commanders to forcibly remove some 200,000 Armenians from the regions of Van, Kars, Bayazid, Erevan and Nakhichevan and transport them to Iran. The immigrants formed the nucleus of the Persian-Armenian community for the next 400 years. A number of Armenian merchants, especially in

New Julfa, Isfahan, prospered and accumulated great wealth. They became known as khojas. The most important khoja of the time was Khoja Nazar, who was greatly trusted by Shah Abbas and who was appointed the chief of the Armenians by that monarch. Khoja Nazar was a close adviser to the shah, would accompany him on various royal trips and had free access to the royal court. The shah would often dine at Nazar's mansion and would spend the night there. The fact that the shah would eat at the home of a Christian, and remain for the night, alone, without royal guards, is an indication of the trust that the shah placed in Nazar.

When the shah was informed that some Armenians, despite what the shah perceived as his benevolence, were returning to their homeland, he demanded to know the reason. He

was told that the Armenians were attached to their religious center and the relics of their saints. According to Arakel of Tabriz, a contemporary Armenian historian, the shah then ordered Tahmasp-qoli Beg, the son of Amir Guna Khan, the then-governor of Erevan, to move the cathedral of Echmiadzin, stone by stone, and dispatch the stones to Isfahan. In the year 1613 Tahmasp-qoli began to remove the stones of Echmiadzin. Fifteen large stones were removed from the main altar and transported to Isfahan. They arrived in the year 1614 and still lie today in the Church of Khojents in New Julfa. Shah Abbas then told Khoja Nazar, "For your sake I shall build Echmiadzin here, so that your heart will not ache from yearning for the other Echmiadzin.

see RELICS, page 20



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Armenians, Just as Bulgarians, Should Demand Compensation From Turkey

Bojidar Dimitrov, Bulgaria's minister in charge of the Agency for Bulgarians Abroad, stirred a hornet's nest at the start of the new year by threatening to block Turkey's accession to the European Union (EU), unless it paid billions of dollars in compensation for Bulgarians who were forcefully displaced during the Ottoman era.

Dimitrov said Turkey owed Bulgaria \$20 billion for expelling hundreds of thousands of ethnic Bulgarians in 1913. The Republic of Turkey, which was founded in 1923, had assumed the obligations of the Ottoman Empire and agreed to make reparations in a 1925 treaty. However, thus far, Bulgaria has received no compensation from the Turkish government.

"Turkey is surely able to pay this sum, after all, it's the 16th largest economic power in the world," Dimitrov said, capitalizing on a statement that Turkish officials often make, bragging about their country's economic strength.

Dimitrov disclosed that the payment of compensation as required by the 1925 treaty is one of Bulgaria's three pre-conditions in order not to veto Turkey's admission to the EU. The other two pre-conditions involve energy and water

management issues.

Veselin Ninov, a Bulgarian government spokesman, confirmed to the EUobserver on January 4, that Dimitrov's announcement represented official state policy. He revealed that the dispute was being handled by a "Bulgarian-Turkish intergovernmental working group" and that Prime Minister Boyko Borissov would raise the compensation issue during his upcoming visit to Turkey.

Turkish officials reacted quickly and harshly. Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, repeating the same baseless accusations that Turkish leaders often make regarding the Armenian Genocide, alleged that the Turks suffered as much as the Bulgarians during that period. According to Zaman newspaper, Davutoglu warned that Bulgaria's demands for compensation might harm bilateral relations, although, he confirmed that the two countries have been discussing "issues relevant to the mass transfers of Turks and Bulgarians during the last days of the Ottoman Empire."

Bulgarian officials immediately backed down realizing that an open confrontation with Turkey on this issue may not be as beneficial to them as quiet, behind closed doors negotiations. Bulgaria's Deputy Foreign Minister Marin Raykov sought to downplay Dimitrov's demands by stating that his country did not make Turkey's EU bid conditional on the resolution of the compensation issue for displaced persons. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Borissov rebuked Dimitrov, threatening to fire him should he make a similar statement in the future without first consulting him.

Minister Dimitrov quickly apologized in order to retain his job. Press official Veselin Ninov, however, was not as fortunate. He was fired for endorsing Dimitrov's earlier statement.

For the time being, Bulgaria's leaders may find it premature to openly link their demands for compensation from Turkey to its bid for EU membership, even though many Bulgarians have persistently demanded such reparations for decades. Consequently, this issue is bound to remain on the agenda of the two countries, undermining Turkey's oft-stated claim that it has zero-problems or disputes with its neighbors.

Despite Prime Minister Borissov's disclaimer, Bulgaria has now added yet another wrinkle to Turkey's bid for EU membership, which is becoming increasingly elusive. Already several European countries such as France, Germany, Holland and Austria strongly oppose Turkey's EU membership bid. Greece and Cyprus would not allow Turkey to join the EU, unless its troops withdraw from Northern Cyprus. Furthermore, it would be impossible for Turkey to join the EU without fulfilling one of its key requirements — open borders with all neighboring states. Turkey, thus, cannot become an EU member, unless it opens its border with Armenia, independently of the fate of the Armenia-Turkey Protocols.

Beyond the obstacles in joining the EU, Turkey is swamped with a large number of lawsuits filed against it in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). Should it refuse to compensate Bulgaria for the 1913 refugees, it is likely to face more legal troubles.

However, Turkey's record on winning lawsuits in the ECHR is not very good. It has already lost several major court cases for its occupation of Northern Cyprus. Also, Greek and Armenian minority foundations in Turkey have successfully recovered through the ECHR some of their real estate assets that were confiscated decades ago.

Encouraged by these successful lawsuits, Armenians living in Turkey and throughout Europe should seek legal redress through the ECHR for their countless losses suffered during the Genocide. Claims could be filed for the loss of personal property, bank accounts, real estate, monuments and churches.

No peace without justice.

No reconciliation without restitution.

Suicide as Spectator Sport: What Does That Say about Us?

By Robert Fisk

He was 10 stories up an industrial crane, right on the seafront, leaning over the side with just one hand, no rope, no tin hat, quite unprotected, swaying and shouting and screaming, and at first the crowds on the Beirut Corniche ignored him.

Far to the north, Turkey lay across the pale blue sea, Israel 60 miles to the south, behind the Beirut peninsula upon which this young man had decided to demonstrate his fearlessness of death — or his anger — or his despair or, maybe, just his alcoholic illusions.

There was an unfinished 16-floor apartment block behind the crane, all concrete platforms and wire and Asian workers, some of whom yelled at the young man from above. It was just 7am, the beginning of the Beirut rush hour. I was walking from my home to the Nasser statue in Ain Mreisseh — oh heady memory of Egyptian socialism from the civil war — to buy a cheese manouche for breakfast and at first I thought the guy was joking, making fun of fellow workers. But they didn't know him. Some kept shaking their heads, unable to understand his words. He was a Palestinian, they said. It was political.

Then he yelled down to us. "I'm going to jump." Several Lebanese looked upwards, laughing. A woman turned up with a cup of coffee in her hand and leaned against the Corniche railings, back to the sea, shading her eyes as she looked to the top of the yellow crane. "What does he want?" she asked her friends. It was a strange question. People who climb cranes and say they are going to jump must "want" something. There were now 30 or more gathered on the pavement and the road. After all, it wasn't every day that your morning could be brightened up with a harmless suicide.

One guy was gabbling into his mobile. Then he bawled up at the man on the crane. "Come on! Jump! I haven't got all day!" Then a grinning youth joined in. "We've got to get to work! Don't waste time! Jump now if you're going to jump!" Of course, we were all complicit in this obscenity. I was also now standing beside a palm tree, unwilling to leave, anxious to watch the end of this little seaside drama. It was cinema, wide-screen, free of charge, reality TV.

One guy bawled at the man on the crane. 'Come on! Jump! I haven't got all day!'

Indeed, two camera crews had already turned up.

Only then did the cops arrive. Three of them, grey uniformed, grey berets, lighting cigarettes, staring up at the man on the crane, joking among themselves, joshing with the crowd, laughing, briefly the centre of attention. Drivers were now slowing to take pictures with their mobiles, the traffic backing up along the Corniche. A few foreign tourists were watching the police. Some hope. The cops worked their mobiles, laughed again — and drove off. More people were screaming, "Jump!"

I pulled out my own phone and called a relative of a police colonel. I explained briefly what was happening, the location, and added that it was a pretty shameless scene, the Lebanese jeering at this lost soul up the crane, the police losing interest, the foreigners appalled at the Lebanese behavior (there being no calls to "jump" when suicides pop up on London roofs, of course). The colonel took the call as he was driving up to the Chouf mountains for the weekend. Seven minutes later — the crane-man now dangling his legs off his perch and holding

his hands in the air — two brand new Volvo fire trucks arrived with a civil defense crew (black berets, camouflage uniform), hooting their way through the traffic, shouting at some newly arrived paramilitary police (camouflage clothes, but red berets this time) to clear the people off the road.

One young fire officer ordered the fire engine ladder extended against the crane — it was four stories short — but shinned up the rungs then climbed the outside of the crane. The crowd fell silent. After demanding that the young man commit suicide as quickly as possible, they were now enthralled in a Hollywood drama. Would the brave fireman rescue the youth in distress? Far from willing the crazed man to die, they now wanted to see him rescued. Or did they want to watch the fireman slip and fall? Waitresses from a nearby coffee shop turned up with mugs of coffee and sandwiches for the fire crews and police. Then the plainclothes guys began their infiltration.

They chatted to the crowd, to me. Know this man? What did he shout? Anything political? Two cops in jeans walked on to the building site

and I could see them questioning the workers in the unfinished apartments. They didn't care about the man. If he was demanding higher wages, so what? If he was drunk — and this was the line now being peddled on the Corniche — then he was of no interest to the security authorities. "Pi**ed out of his mind," one of the plainclothes men confided to me in flawless English — a good cop who's often given me information at the scene of bomb explosions — and the word went through the crowd, that the crane-man was drunk because Palestinians don't drink and are always political and the Lebanese like to enjoy themselves.

I didn't think the crane-man was enjoying himself and he fought viciously when his rescuer clambered on to his platform, kicking him on the legs and trying to break free and jump as we all held our breath; until the fireman threw a rope around crane-man and tied him up and called over to the driver of another crane to winch him up to safety on the roof of the apartments.

And that was the last we saw of crane-man. The fire crews packed up. An ambulance arrived. Yes, a hospital doctor told me later, the guy was "over the limit" (three daiquiris, an unknown number of Bloody Marys and far too many beers in a well-known Gemaizeh club) and, yes, he was Lebanese. And when the Lebanese fireman-hero eventually emerged from the gate below the crane, we all clapped and applauded our hero. Ghouls all, we made do with a happy ending.

(This column by Robert Fisk originally appeared in the *Independent* on January 6.)

Notice to Contributors

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* welcomes articles, commentaries and community news from our readers. In order to assure the accurate and timely publication of articles submitted, please note the following policies:

— All articles submitted should be typed, double (or triple) spaced and printed in a type size large enough to be clearly legible (10

point or larger). Submissions that do not conform to these specifications will be assigned lowest priority.

— Articles sent by fax are acceptable, and e-mail submissions are encouraged.

— All submissions should include the name of a contact person and a daytime telephone number.

— Deadline for submission of all articles and advertising is noon on the Monday of the week of publication.

— Photos will be published without charge at the discretion of the editors and art director.

Photos will be returned only if a self-addressed and stamped envelope is included.

— The *MS* will publish only one article about an upcoming organizational event. For major special events, exceptions may be made only by special arrangement with the editors.

— Telephone numbers, ticket prices and other details (at the discretion of the editors) will not be included in press releases, but should be reserved for calendar listings and advertisements.



Watching and Waiting for Teymourian

LONDON (*The Straits Times*) – After a great start in the English Premier League, Iran's Teymourian has become a forgotten man at Fulham Terrence Voon.

On a warm spring afternoon in Wigan three years ago, Andranik Teymourian thought he could do no wrong.

The Iranian midfielder, a new signing for Sam Allardyce's Bolton Wanderers, had just written himself into the club's folklore, scoring two goals as they beat their derby rivals 3-1 in a Premiership tie at the then-JJB Stadium.

Images of his goal celebrations, while being mobbed by ecstatic fans, were played over and over again on Iranian television.

From Teheran to the Reebok Stadium, Teymourian was hailed as a hero. Now, he is a forgotten name on the wage bill at Fulham, a bit-part player with his Premiership dream in tatters.

Last Wednesday, the 26-year-old orchestrated Iran's destruction of the Lions in their Asian Cup qualifier at Kallang.

He returns to Craven Cottage later this month, not knowing if he will ever put on his boots for the first team again.

"Most of the time I watch the games from

the stands," he said last week.

Fulham is currently ninth in the league, and with midfielders like Danny Murphy, Jonathan Greening and Chris Baird ahead of him in the pecking order, Teymourian knows his days in London are numbered.

A move to another club, possibly outside the Premiership, is certain in the summer.

"I'm 26 now, and I don't want to spend my time on the bench and watch other people play," he said.

The Teheran native's English adventure began in 2006, when he caught the eye of Allardyce with his all-action performances at the World Cup in Germany.

The skilful midfielder with an eye for goal was snapped up for 255,000 pounds (\$570,000) from the Iranian club FC Aboomoslem on a two-year contract.

In his two seasons at the Trotters, Teymourian made just 20 appearances, with his brace at Wigan the only goals to his name.

After Allardyce's departure for Newcastle in 2007, he fell out of favor with his replacement Sammy Lee, and subsequently, Gary Megson.

Teymourian was picked up on a free transfer by Fulham in 2008.

The introduction to English football, he recalled, was fast and furious.

"In the Premier League, you have to be stronger and faster," he said. "That's what they work on at every single training session."

Despite his lack of playing time, Teymourian enjoys the camaraderie he shares with the foreign legion at Fulham.

"The good point of Fulham is that all the players are foreigners," he said. "We have a couple of English players, people from Africa, Norway, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. All of them love to smile and laugh."

The ethnic Armenian's command of English has also improved in the time he has spent in England. Sadly, his chances in the first team do not look like improving.

His day in the sun three years ago, when he was voted Man of the Match, is now a distant memory.

But Teymourian – who is planning to marry his girlfriend Narineh Davitian at the end of this season – insists he does not regret his time in England.

"For me, it has been really amazing, because I was young when I arrived," he said. "I've learnt a lot and I've had a chance play against a lot of good players."

Court OKs Turkey Protocols

COURT, from page 1

keep up the pressure on Armenia's highest judicial body. Some of them were ethnic Armenians from the United States and other countries with sizable Armenian communities.

Vardges Hagopian, an elderly resident of New York, was particularly unhappy with a protocol clause that commits Armenia's to recognizing its existing border with Turkey and presumably precludes future Armenian territorial claims to its big neighbor, which are favored by Dashnaksutyun. "I can't forget Western Armenia," he said, referring to parts of eastern Turkey that were populated by many Armenians until 1915.

"We would lose our lands," said Hagopian. "We just couldn't have bigger losses. Shouldn't our grandchildren grow up in their ancestral lands?"

Secretary of State Clinton to Consult with Armenian-American Organizations Regarding Protocols

CLINTON, from page 1

important opportunity to discuss the Administration's efforts to hold Turkey accountable."

The Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Western), the Knights of Vartan, along with the Assembly issued a joint statement in support of President Serge Sargsian's initiative "in taking a positive approach to the process of normalizing relations..."

The joint statement also made it clear that those organizations will continue "to stand firmly with the Nagorno Karabagh Republic to ensure its freedom and security" and will also continue to lead the charge with respect to "all those working for universal affirmation of the

Armenian Genocide."

While Armenia has taken a constructive approach, in direct contradiction to the protocols signed in October of 2009, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan continues to link progress on the protocols to a resolution of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict. In addition, while in Washington, DC last month, Erdogan, when asked about the Armenian Genocide on the Charlie Rose television program, stated that, "I can say very clearly that we do not accept genocide. This is completely a lie."

"In the face of Turkey's ongoing campaign of denial, we must redouble our efforts to secure US reaffirmation of the Armenian Genocide and urge swift passage of the Armenian Genocide resolution in Congress," stated Ardouny.

How Khoja Nazar Saved the Cathedral of Echmiadzin and Restored

RELICS, from page 18

I have ordered a convoy of many camels, mules and carts to go demolish the other Echmiadzin, bring the stones and dirt here, and build an Echmiadzin here from the same stones and dirt, so that your hears will be attached, without question, to the new church." Khoja Nazar wisely deterred the shah's plan by replying, "May God grant you long life! If you wish to build a durable Echmiadzin, there is no need to expend so much labor for the sake of stones and dirt and such expense in transporting stones and dirt from afar. We have plenty of stones and dirt here. Build it here and we will help you do it." The shah, who trust Khoja Nazar's judgment and who needed his cooperation as leader of the Armenian community, ordered Tahmasp-qoli to stop the demolition of Echmiadzin.

In addition, the shah had also ordered that the relic of the right arm of St. Gregory the Illuminator, used to bless the meron, together with other holy items (such as an ancient bible and a venerated cross), be taken to Isfahan as well. Tahmasp-qoli entrusted an Armenian priest from Echmiadzin named Ter-Hovhannes, with the transport of the relics of the right arm and other sacred items to Isfahan. The items were taken to the mansion of Khoja Safar, the brother of Khoja Nazar, in New Julfa, where they remained under guard for some two decades, until 1638, when the son of Khoja Nazar, Khoja Safraz, gave them to Catholicos Piliptos who, in turn, took them back to Echmiadzin.

This was not the first time that Khoja Nazar

had played a primary role in the preservation of Armenian holy relics. A few years earlier, Catholic missionaries had stolen the relics of St. Hripsime from the Church of St. Hripsime and had transported them, first to the Armenian Catholic community in Nakhichevan, and then to Isfahan, en route to taking them to their mission in Goa, India. Khoja Nazar and his brother were informed of the theft and asked Sah Abbas to punish the perpetrators and to return the relics to them. The shah fulfilled his friend's request right away. The relics were recovered and placed in the mansion of Khoja Safar for safekeeping, from whence they were later returned to Armenia as well.

Khoja Nazar's influence remained strong during the reign of the next shah, Safi. Through Nazar's intercession, the huge tax levied on Echmiadzin by Shah Abbas was abolished and the funds used by the Catholicos to restore the cathedral of Echmiadzin and the churches of Gayane and Hripsime. He also influenced the election of Catholicos Movses of Tat'ew, who ended the disasterous practice of having co-Catholicos, which had created problems for the Church. Nazar's grandsons continued to lead the Armenians of Iran and, after their move to Russia, the family, now known as the Lazarevs, gained a great deal of influence in the Russian court and became leaders of the Armenian community in Russia.

– George Bournoutian

(The above is abridged from the soon-to-be published *Book of History* by Arakel of Tabriz by George Bournoutian.)

ԲԱՐԵԿԵՆԴԱՆ

Tekeyan Cultural Association & ADL
of Detroit invite you to a

Valentine's Masquerade Ball

Arthur Apkarian Ensemble
featuring International Vocalist from Armenia
Zara
to benefit
Sponsor a Teacher Program in Armenia &
Armenian Orphans' Higher Education Fund

gala dinner dance
come masked or unmasked
grand march costume contest with prizes
coffee cup readings • photo booth
face painting • complimentary valet

7:30 pm Saturday
February 13, 2010
\$80 dinner • \$35 after 10 pm
premium open bar

St. John's Cultural Hall
22001 Northwestern Hwy
Southfield, MI 48075

reservations:
Pam Coullis (248)646-7847
Diana Alexanian (248)334-3636

Your Tekeyan contributions at work 2009

These photos were
taken in 2009
at the Tekeyan
Karabagh School
Thanks for your support

Thank you Detroit!
Teachers accepting a donation from
Detroit (shown at right Maro Bedrosian)