Prof. Mahé Offers Three Lectures

Dr. Jean-Pierre Mahé, Professor of Classical and Modern Armenian at the University of Paris [Sorbonne] and visiting professor at Harvard University for the fall 1987 term, is presenting three lectures in English on Armenian subjects this winter under NAASR auspices.

The lectures, which are open to the public free of charge, are:

"Napoleon and the Armenians," the story of Napoleon’s acquaintance with Armenians in Italy and Egypt as well as in France, his interest in Armenian studies and culture, and the impact of his foreign policy in the Middle East on Armenia and Armenians. Wednesday, November 18, at 7:30 p.m. at the St. James Armenian Church Hall, 467 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, Mass.

"The True Meaning of Narekatsi," an analysis of the writings of this tenth century mystic poet as revealed in his Book of Lamentations, a collection of elegies which, after the Bible, has been the most sacred and valued book in every Armenian home through the centuries. Sunday, December 6, at 7:30 p.m. at the First Armenian Church, Nahigian Hall, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont, Mass.

"Armenian Village Life," a study of the themes of modernity and resurrection in Khachadour Abovian’s novel The Wounds of Armenia, in which the noted Armenian literary figure deals with the condition and life of Armenians in the villages. Sunday, January 10, at 7:30 p.m. at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church, ShahÊ Hall, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, Mass.

Editor of the Revue des Etudes Armêniennes, Dr. Mahé has authored numerous articles and books and has visited Yerevan and Tbilisi to lecture and conduct research.

Assembly Hears Plan for Teachers’ Institute

At the 33rd Annual Assembly of NAASR members, meeting at the Graduate Center of Bentley College in Waltham, Mass., on Saturday, November 7, Board Chairman Manooq S. Young made several important announcements about the Association’s programs for the advancement of Armenian studies.

Chief among them was the announcement that the Rev. Dr. Krikor H. Maksoudian has been appointed Director of Studies and Research at NAASR. The appointment is on a limited part-time basis at present but will expand to full time during the course of the next year or two.

Chairman Young also made the following announcements:

• An innovative Social Studies Institute for secondary school teachers on “The Armenian Experience” will be held next summer at the University of Massachusetts (Boston). The eight-day intensive workshop is being planned by Dr. Michael Ménosian, coordinator of the Armenian program at the University.

• Another Heritage Tour to Armenia and the Soviet Union will be offered next summer, in late June or early July, in view of the success of last summer’s tour.

• A series of three lectures by Prof. Jean-Pierre Mahé, visiting professor of Armenian at Harvard University this fall, dealing with various aspects of Armenian history and literature will be sponsored this winter in the Greater Boston area.

• A new publication, Zoroastrianism in Armenia, by Prof. James R. Russell of Columbia University, has just been released. The book was published jointly by NAASR and the Harvard University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

• A celebration of the 20th anniversary of the acquisition of the NAASR Headquarters building near Harvard Square, Cambridge, is being planned for next Spring.

Importance of Medieval Studies

At the Annual Luncheon preceding the meeting, NAASR members and their guests heard a brief address by Prof. Mahé about the importance of the study of medieval Armenian literature. Continued on page 3

Dr. Maksoudian Named Director of Studies

The Rev. Dr. Krikor H. Maksoudian has been appointed Director of Studies and Research at NAASR, according to an announcement made at the Association’s Annual Meeting.

In this new position, Dr. Maksoudian will oversee research activities within NAASR; coordinate studies and research activities with outside educational institutions; be responsible for the NAASR library’s further organization and development; plan seminar series, scholarly conferences, and congresses; review manuscripts for publication; and assist students and scholars utilizing NAASR resources.

A former Assistant Professor of Armenian at Columbia University, Dr. Maksoudian is the author of several studies in classical and medieval Armenian literature. His most recent publication is a translation and commentary of the History of Armenia by the tenth century catholicos and historian Yovhannes Draşanakertci.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, the son of Rev. and Mrs. Papken Maksoudian, Dr. Maksoudian is a graduate of Harvard College (with an AB in classics and ancient history), Boston College (with an MA in classics), and Columbia University (PhD in Armenian Studies and Byzantine History).

Dr. Maksoudian has taught at Harvard Summer School, Rutgers University, Hunter College, and Tufts University, as well as Columbia for ten years and has been a Consultant for the Armenian Architectural Photographic Archives Project. An ordained clergyman in the Armenian Apostolic Church, he is editor of the Diocesan publication The Armenian Church.

BOOK ON ZOROASTRIANISM

A book by James R. Russell on Zoroastrianism in Armenia, has just been released by NAASR and the Harvard University Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations.

More information about this new publication may be found on page 8.
Armenian Studies

Thirty-two years ago we started as a single program of Armenian Studies and Development - a single program of learning and research in Armenian studies at Brandeis University, and today we are one of the most important and influential centers for Armenian studies and research in the world. NAASR is a pioneer in the field of Armenian Studies and has played a vital role in the advancement of Armenian studies in colleges and universities, the majority of which are still in existence; and altogether which have been created at Armenian colleges and universities.

The study of the history and the role of the Armenian people as well as their contributions to the world is therefore important to the understanding of the course of history, the background of the present, and the shaping of future history and the course of mankind, especially in the Middle East, the region which we should be heading in the future.

NAASR accepts the challenge of rededicating (reinvesting) a portion of the endowment funds in order to assure the progress and development of Armenian studies in the future.

Programs Are Expanded

Recent Donations to NAASR Library


Ronald Kolligian — Collection of 22 books in Armenian on history, geography, and literature, donated to the library.

Sidney Holtman, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins — $25.

Mrs. Alice Muggerditchian, Phoenix, Ariz. — $100.

To NAASR National Advisory Board, and as abroad during the past three decades, NAASR has succeeded in making an important contribution to the understanding and appreciation of Armenian history and culture.

In 1986, NAASR Accepts the Challenge to carry out this vital and urgent program.

To enhance the Association’s programs and increase our annual support to NAASR, we need to raise at least $1.5 million, which will be matched on a 1 to 1 basis by Erivan Hagopian, NAASR President.

Therefore, what can you do to help? You can, first and foremost, maintain your membership support. If, and only if, you increase your annual support by $10, $50, $250, $500, or any other amount, you will be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Armenian people.

Today we are pleased to announce that the vital and urgent program will be responsive to the needs of the Armenian people.

Recent Donations to NAASR Library


Ronald Kolligian — Collection of 22 books in Armenian on history, geography, and literature, donated to the library.

Sidney Holtman, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins — $25.

Mrs. Alice Muggerditchian, Phoenix, Ariz. — $100.

To NAASR National Advisory Board, and as abroad during the past three decades, NAASR has succeeded in making an important contribution to the understanding and appreciation of Armenian history and culture.

In 1986, NAASR Accepts the Challenge to carry out this vital and urgent program.

To enhance the Association’s programs and increase our annual support to NAASR, we need to raise at least $1.5 million, which will be matched on a 1 to 1 basis by Erivan Hagopian, NAASR President.

Therefore, what can you do to help? You can, first and foremost, maintain your membership support. If, and only if, you increase your annual support by $10, $50, $250, $500, or any other amount, you will be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Armenian people.

Today we are pleased to announce that the vital and urgent program will be responsive to the needs of the Armenian people.

Recent Donations to NAASR Library


Ronald Kolligian — Collection of 22 books in Armenian on history, geography, and literature, donated to the library.

Sidney Holtman, Colorado State University, Ft. Collins — $25.

Mrs. Alice Muggerditchian, Phoenix, Ariz. — $100.

To NAASR National Advisory Board, and as abroad during the past three decades, NAASR has succeeded in making an important contribution to the understanding and appreciation of Armenian history and culture.

In 1986, NAASR Accepts the Challenge to carry out this vital and urgent program.

To enhance the Association’s programs and increase our annual support to NAASR, we need to raise at least $1.5 million, which will be matched on a 1 to 1 basis by Erivan Hagopian, NAASR President.

Therefore, what can you do to help? You can, first and foremost, maintain your membership support. If, and only if, you increase your annual support by $10, $50, $250, $500, or any other amount, you will be responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Armenian people.

Today we are pleased to announce that the vital and urgent program will be responsive to the needs of the Armenian people.
Cynthia Blackwell: Friend of the Armenians

Alice Stone Blackwell, 1879-1950
Portrait painted by K. Rihetson

Comparative Diasporas
Queens College

An international conference on the Armenian Diaspora with a focus on the Jewish, Greek, and Armenian Diasporas, was held at Queens College, City University of New York, on October 21 to 23, 1984. A panel on “Armenians in Turkey and Iran,” sponsored by the Society for Armenian Studies, was held on November 15. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora in these two countries in place in Tel Aviv during the same period.

Literary Criticism - UCLA
An international conference on Armenian Literary Criticism was held on November 22 and 23, 1984 at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Diaspora Communities
An international conference on “Armenians in the West and Third World Countries,” held in Yerevan October 13-14, 1984 was sponsored by the Armenian National Association of Students of Russian and Eastern Europe (NAASR). From all parts of the world, comprising scholars from the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Armenia, hundreds of participants attended the conference, sponsored by the NAASR's Edward H. Chubarian Fund. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora, and the conference opened with a speech by Dr. Levon Sargsyan, NAASR's Chairman.

Recent Conferences and Meetings

Diaspora Communities
An international conference on “Armenian Communities in the West and Third World Countries,” held in Yerevan October 13-14, 1984 was sponsored by the Armenian National Association of Students of Russian and Eastern Europe (NAASR). From all parts of the world, comprising scholars from the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Armenia, hundreds of participants attended the conference, sponsored by the NAASR's Edward H. Chubarian Fund. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora, and the conference opened with a speech by Dr. Levon Sargsyan, NAASR's Chairman.

NSAR Newsletter

Page 4

Recent Conferences and Meetings

Comparative Diasporas
Queens College

An international conference on the Armenian Diaspora with a focus on the Jewish, Greek, and Armenian Diasporas, was held at Queens College, City University of New York, on October 21 to 23, 1984. A panel on “Armenians in Turkey and Iran,” sponsored by the Society for Armenian Studies, was held on November 15. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora in these two countries in place in Tel Aviv during the same period.

Literary Criticism - UCLA
An international conference on Armenian Literary Criticism was held on November 22 and 23, 1984 at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Diaspora Communities
An international conference on “Armenians in the West and Third World Countries,” held in Yerevan October 13-14, 1984 was sponsored by the Armenian National Association of Students of Russian and Eastern Europe (NAASR). From all parts of the world, comprising scholars from the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Armenia, hundreds of participants attended the conference, sponsored by the NAASR's Edward H. Chubarian Fund. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora, and the conference opened with a speech by Dr. Levon Sargsyan, NAASR's Chairman.

Recent Conferences and Meetings

Diaspora Communities
An international conference on “Armenian Communities in the West and Third World Countries,” held in Yerevan October 13-14, 1984 was sponsored by the Armenian National Association of Students of Russian and Eastern Europe (NAASR). From all parts of the world, comprising scholars from the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Armenia, hundreds of participants attended the conference, sponsored by the NAASR's Edward H. Chubarian Fund. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora, and the conference opened with a speech by Dr. Levon Sargsyan, NAASR's Chairman.

Recent Conferences and Meetings

Diaspora Communities
An international conference on “Armenian Communities in the West and Third World Countries,” held in Yerevan October 13-14, 1984 was sponsored by the Armenian National Association of Students of Russian and Eastern Europe (NAASR). From all parts of the world, comprising scholars from the United States, Canada, France, Germany, and Armenia, hundreds of participants attended the conference, sponsored by the NAASR's Edward H. Chubarian Fund. The papers dealt with the Armenian diaspora, and the conference opened with a speech by Dr. Levon Sargsyan, NAASR's Chairman.
Columbia Holds Lectures On Armenia's Neighbors

A series of three lectures on the im-
mediate neighbors of Armenia has been scheduled by the Armenian Center at Co-
tact, to begin December 17.
The first lecture, on the eastern
neighbors of the Armenian Common-
A wealth of information about a little-studied topic, pre-Christian culture and religion in Armenia, can be found in James R. Russell's newly released book entitled *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*. It appears as Volume Five of the Harvard Iranian Series edited by Richard N. Frye and was published jointly by the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard and by NAASR.

A revision of a thesis submitted for the PhD degree in Religious Studies at the School of Oriental Studies, University of London, the book presents extensive linguistic, literary, archaeological, iconographic, theological, and ethnographic evidence about the practice of Zoroastrianism in pre-Christian Armenia. In dealing with the difficult issues of cultural influence, Dr. Russell, who is Assistant Professor of Middle East Languages and Cultures at Columbia University, rejects the extreme position that pre-Christian Armenia was totally immersed in Iranian culture as well as the opposite view that Armenian culture developed completely independently as the miraculous child of cultural parthenogenesis.

From the time of the conquest of Assyria and Urartu by the Medes to the fall of the Sasanian Empire thirteen centuries later, Armenian cultural development was under the linguistic, political, and religious influence of a succession of Iranian empires, Dr. Russell points out. For most of this period, the dominant religion in Iran was Zoroastrianism.

While the practice of Zoroastrianism waned in Armenia with the conversion of the Armenian court to Christianity in the fourth century, Dr. Russell describes several aspects of Armenian Christianity which preserve Zoroastrian vocabulary, ritual, and imagery. For example, the Armenian celebration of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple, held on the evening of February 13, has retained Zoroastrian elements.

Dr. Russell has had to piece together his picture of pre-Christian Armenia from scattered evidence in sometimes conflicting sources, including Christian texts of the fifth century which were hostile to Zoroastrianism, classical writers, and some pre-Islamic Iranian texts. Information from these sources was augmented by archaeological evidence and oral interviews.

The book begins with a survey of the development of Armenian religious beliefs and institutions, continues with an investigation of the Zoroastrian cults in Armenia, and then looks at the survival of Zoroastrian elements into the Christian era in Armenia even into modern times.

Although the book is a scholarly and academic study, Dr. Russell is not insensitive to the uneasiness experienced by many Armenians today over the recognition of pagan elements in their culture which has been so strongly defined by the conversion to Christianity in the fourth century. He writes in the preface that his hope has been "to enrich, not to diminish, the cultural heritage of the Armenians by describing their ancient faith in a great and venerable prophetic revelation and their adherence to a highly moral, uplifting religious code."

He continues: "Cannot a residue of such a proud heritage have given them the courage, centuries later, to withstand the pressures of Islam to which so many of their neighbors succumbed?"

Dr. Russell's book presents a scholarly, well-documented study of early religious practices in Armenia, while at the same time providing thoughtful Armenians with new information to ponder as they probe the roots of their cultural heritage.

Other New Publications

**Important Tenth Century History**

*History of Armenia*, Yovhannes Dras-axonneri, Translation and Commentary by Rev. Dr. Krikor H. Maksoudian [Scholars Press, Atlanta, Ga.]. A translation of this important primary source written by the tenth century Armenian catholicos who played a major political and intellectual role in efforts to liberate Armenia from foreign overlordship.

The pontificate of Yovhannes Drasaxonneri coincided with the period when the Bagratid kings were making supreme efforts to end the Arab domination. The Byzantine court considered Yovhannes as a most useful diplomatic channel through whose intervention the Caucassian princes, constantly at war with one another, could be reconciled in order to protect themselves against the onslaught of the Arabs.

With an introduction, biography, indices, and bibliography. H316c, cloth, $39.95 ($33.95) and H316p, paper, $29.95 ($25.50).

**History of Early Armenian Printing**


Following a general section on the history of Armenian printing and some of the technical aspects of early book production, the book describes each of the early printing establishments that issued Armenian books and lists the Armenian titles of each press, with a translation into French and a description of each title.

A long Preface, by Jean-Pierre Mahe, in both French and English, gives a summary of the development, evolution, and cultural significance of early Armenian printing. There are many black and white reproductions of printer's marks, title pages, and illustrations used in these early books. H310. $87.50 ($75.00).

NAASR Newsletter

National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Inc.

175 Mt. Auburn Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138
Telephone: (617) 876-7630

Barbara J. Merguerian
Director of Information and Publications