Minister of Culture Opens Lecture Series

A near-capacity audience was present at the NAASR Center for Armenian Studies and Research on Sunday evening, October 13, to hear a presentation by Berj Zeytountsian, Armenia's Minister of Culture and a leading playwright.

Speaking on the topic "Current Cultural Developments in Armenia," Mr. Zeytountsian expressed great satisfaction over the overwhelming vote of confidence registered by the September 21, 1991, referendum for independence in Armenia and suggested that the new political atmosphere in the homeland will facilitate the development of warmer relations among Armenians worldwide.

"Our greatest treasure is our culture," Mr. Zeytountsian declared, suggesting that the Armenian Republic might find culture among its most valuable exports.

Mr. Zeytountsian had been invited to the United States for a two-month visit partly in order to participate in an International Writing Program at the University of Iowa and also to help celebrate the installation of the new international telephone system linking the United States and Armenia. Official commemoration of the linkage took place later in the month.

In his remarks, given partly in Western Armenian (translated by NAASR vice-chairman Rafi Yeghiayan) and partly in English, Mr. Zeytountsian did not minimize the tremendous economic, psychological, and political difficulties faced by the Republic of Armenia as it emerges from seven decades of Communist rule. But he expressed optimism that the Armenian people would be able to rebuild the nation.

"I believe my people will find the strength to rise from the ruins," Zeytountsian declared, as he quoted the words of the French writer Anato France in referring to the Armenians in 1916: "A nation that doesn't want to die will never die."

A native of Alexandria, Egypt, before repatriating with his family to Armenia in the late 1940s, Mr. Zeytountsian is the author of eleven books and eight plays. He is also a poet.

NAASR Board Chairman Manoog S. Young chaired the program and also served as host during the four-day stay in the Boston area by Mr. Zeytountsian and his wife Liliana.

The program was the first in NAASR's fall series of events on timely subjects of interest to the Armenian community.

Library Receives Large Collections

The holdings of NAASR's Armenian Reference and Research Library have been considerably enhanced by the donation of several major collections as well as a large number of smaller gifts.

The collections of books, memoirs, periodicals, music, microfilm, and tapes now approach 15,000 volumes and items.

Major collections received recently include those of Varikses Arakamian, son of Avedis Arakamian (author and former president of the Armenian Republic); of M. Vartan Malcom (the lawyer and early historian of Armenians in America) from the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Yeprem Moura­achtian (bound copies of Erriass La­gavian for 1915 and 1918); and of Vahé Tashjian (works on Armenian history and literature published at the turn of the century, mostly in Armenian).

Other major recent gifts include the collection of Manoog Der Hovanessian, donated by his son Charles Johnson; a microfiche series on Armenian Architecture, donated by the Michael Kalajian Fund; books and painting from the Estate of Harout and Baizer Aroian; the collection of Charles and Zevart Kazaross by their son, Hrand Charles Kazaross; and the music tapes of Simon Opolan, donated by Mark Raphaelian.

The original collection of books is now in place in the new building and available for use on the premises by researchers. The donations received since the move to the new building are now in the process of being listed, classified, and cataloged.

A listing of donations is on page 5.

Harvard Professor Reports To Annual Assembly

Prof. John Huehnergard, chairman of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University, was the featured luncheon speaker at NAASR's 37th Annual Assembly of Members on Saturday, November 23, at the First Armenian Church in Belmont.

Earlier in the program, Prof. Hrachik Simonian, president of the Yerevan-based Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad, brought greetings and spoke about the situation in Armenia.

Dr. Huehnergard reported on "The Status and Future of Armenian Studies at Harvard University." He headed the search committee charged with filling the Mesrob Mashtots Professorship of Armenian Studies at Harvard being vacated by Dr. Robert W. Thomson, who will be leaving in June 1992 to accept appointment to the Gulbenkian Chair in Armenian Studies at Oxford University in England.

Following presentations to 25-year members, the business session got under way with reports by the Board of Directors and the Assembly committees. Eight Directors were re-elected, and newly elected was Berjooma Halkazian, formerly Associate Dean of Students, Rutgers University, Camden, N.J., campus.

(Comments about the Annual Assembly will appear in the next issue of this Newsletter.)

Drive Reaches $622,000

The Building Fund drive for the NAASR Center for Armenian Studies and Research has now passed $622,000 with 462 members and friends having participated in the campaign to date as of November 20, 1991.

Since June 1, also, over $52,000 in pledge payments have been received. These additional funds have made it possible to retire the mortgage on the building and to consolidate and refinance the outstanding loans at lower interest rates.

The fund drive goal is $1.5 million, a sum which will enable NAASR to continue its ambitious but vital programs to advance Armenian Studies.
What is the Future of the Armenian Chairs?

By Margo S. Young

The following article by the Chairman of the Armenian Chairs is based on a number of several Armenian-American publications. It has been rewritten.

Recently there appeared a letter to the editor of one of the Armenian-American 20,000, discussing concern about the fact that the Armenian-American Chairs at American universities -- including those at the University of California at Los Angeles and at Columbia University -- will be in jeopardy of being discontinued. This is because of the economic crisis in Armenia, and the need to divert funds to other areas. However, the letter contains itself, saying that the Armenian-American Chairs, whether at American or non-American universities, must be maintained. The letter suggests that the Armenian-American Chairs must be maintained for several reasons. First, they are the only Chairs in the world that are specifically dedicated to the study of Armenian Studies. Second, they are the only Chairs in the world that have a distinguished list of scholars who have served as Chairs. Third, they are the only Chairs in the world that have a strong and active program of research and publication. The letter concludes by saying that the Armenian-American Chairs must be maintained, regardless of the economic crisis in Armenia.

Members in the News

Hai H. Agababian of Winchester has been appointed "Honorary Director" of the Retracing the Steps of the Armenian Genocide Program in New England. As a former vice president and chief executive officer of the Harvard Law School, he has been serving on the Adjunct Faculty of Suffolk University Law School in Boston, Massachusetts. He is a member of the American Bar Association and the American Society for Armenian Studies.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mardigan of Blackstone, Massachusetts, have been named "Honorary Board Members" of the Retracing the Steps of the Armenian Genocide Program in New England. They have been involved in the Armenian community for many years and have made a significant contribution to the work of the program.

The Armenian-American Chairs are a unique and important institution in the Armenian-American community. They are the only Chairs in the world that are specifically dedicated to the study of Armenian Studies. They have a distinguished list of scholars who have served as Chairs, and they have a strong and active program of research and publication. The Armenian-American Chairs must be maintained, regardless of the economic crisis in Armenia.
Cultural Artifact Attracts Large Public

Several Authors Attend Hartford Book Fair For

The following members and friends have made donations to NAASR for Armenian Reference and Rare Book Housing last listing (additional donation: major contribution: -

Some of the authors present at the Hartford Book Fair are shown from left, Berndine Sullivan, Edward Alexander, and George Bubalo, NAASR Board Chairman Hradge J. Arzoumanian of Omar, Arkville, NY. Members of the Book Fair Committee were, from the Najat Oyay, Dona Gara- balian, Zor Hex BIT, and Shadrin Manoogian, and from this association with the Knights of Vartan Gamaragian Lodge and the Daughters of Vartan Natir Oyay.

Hundreds of books in English, maps, and posters were on display and sale. They covered topics in history, art and architecture, politics, genomic studies, folklore, church history, literature, biography, children’s books, language tapes, and cookbooks. It was the largest and most diverse collection of Armenian reference materials ever brought together in one location.

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Cultural Artifact Attracts Large Public

Several authors were on hand to discuss their publications and autograph their books at the Fourth Armenian Book Festival. The festival was held in Hartford, Connecticut, on October 26, 1991. "Armenia: A Nation in Transition" was the theme of the first event, which was sponsored and promoted by NAASR in association with the Knights of Vartan Gamaragian Lodge and the Daughters of Vartan Natir Oyay.

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Necrology

Armin Dinikyan of Brooklyn, N. Y., librarian and journalist, on August 18. A native of Chicago, he was a graduate of the University of Illinois and a student at the University of California. He was a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S., a Charter Member of the American National Academy of Sciences, and a member of the American Library Association. He was a prolific writer, contributing articles to various periodicals and newspapers. He was honored posthumously for his contributions to the Armenian cultural and literary community.

Anna Engibaryan of Jackson Heights, N.Y., was a writer and poet who contributed to various Armenian publications in the U.S. and abroad. She was a Charter Member of the American National Academy of Sciences. She was also a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S. and was active in promoting Armenian culture and literature. She was known for her contributions to the field of Armenian literature and was highly regarded for her poetry and writing skills.

John W. Wingate, Jr., of New York City, was a professor of Business Administration at City College and was actively involved in community service. He was a Charter Member of the American National Academy of Sciences and a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S. He was known for his contributions to the field of business administration and for his dedication to community service.

Kazan Mooradian, the sister of the artist, and an advocate for Armenian causes, died on July 24. She was a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S. and was known for her advocacy work. She was a Charter Member of the American National Academy of Sciences and a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S. She was known for her contributions to the field of Armenian culture and her advocacy for Armenian causes.

Ari Siremian, a noted writer and journalist, died on July 10. He was a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S. and was known for his contributions to the field of Armenian literature and journalism. He was a Charter Member of the American National Academy of Sciences and a member of the Armenian National Association of the U.S. He was known for his advocacy work and for his contributions to the field of Armenian culture.
Recent Titles

Continued from page 7

Bank Ottoman: Memoirs of Armen Garo, the Armenian Ambassador to America from the Independent Republic of Armenia, translated by Halg T. Partizian, edited, with an introduction by Simon Vratsian (Armen Topouzian, Detroit). An English translation of these reminiscences by a leading Armenian patriot who participated in the momentous events of the Armenian nation between 1895 and his death in 1923. $20.00 (192). X301, $19.95 ($17.95).


Dictionary of Armenian Names (Bilingual), by Ohannes Hannessian (Shirak Publishing, Los Angeles). A compilation of 1,500 Armenian first names, with a brief description of their origins and meanings, nicknames and variations, a pronunciation guide, and statistics of the most common names. X283p, $20.00 ($17.95).

The Habibian of Sivas: A Chronicle of Love and Faith, by Edwin W. Martin (Fihjian Press, Santa Barbara). The experiences of an American missionary couple serving the Armenian population in Sivas (Sebastia) during the last decades of the 19th century, based largely on their journals and correspondence. X307p, $11.95 ($10.25).


Moscow and Beyond: 1886-1989, by Andrei Sakharov, translated by Antonina Bouis, foreword by Edward Kline (Alfred A. Knopf, New York). Sakharov describes the political and human rights struggles of his last three years, including efforts for a just and peaceful solution to the Karabagh crisis. X298, $19.95 ($16.95).


Petrosian’s Legacy, by Tigran Petrosian, preface by Garry Kasparov (Editions Erebouni, Los Angeles). The former Armenian world chess champion provides his philosophy of the game and revealing insights about his famous match with Bobby Fischer. X280, $11.95 ($10.25).

A Poet’s Bazaar: A Journey to Greece, Turkey, and Up the Danube, by Hans Christian Andersen, translated from the Danish and with an introduction by Grace Thornton (Michael Kessend Publishing, New York). A travel account that takes this fairy-tale writer to Italy, Malta, Greece, Constantinople, the northern shores of the Black Sea, and Vienna in the 1830s. Cloth, X287c, $21.95 ($18.50); paper, X287p, $13.95 ($11.95).

On a Spaceship with Beelzebub: By a Grandson of Gurdjieff, by David Khérian (Globe Press, New York). The Armenian-American author describes his personal quest for spiritual self-awakening through the teachings and disciples of the controversial philosopher Gurdjieff, himself half-Armenian and born in the Caucasus. Cloth, X294c, $24.95 ($21.50); paper, X294p, $12.95 ($10.95).

Unlimited Challenge: An Autobiography of Garry Kasparov, with Donald Treford (Grove Weidenfeld, NY). The story of the charismatic half-Jewish, half-Armenian "boy from Baku" who became in 1985, at age 22, the youngest world champion in the history of the game. The author also expresses his strong support for democracy in the Soviet Union. X277, $19.95 ($16.95).

PERIODICALS

AIM (Armenian International Magazine). X304 series. Back issues available at $5.00; current issues, $3.90 ($3.50) for each month.


Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies. Edited and with an article by Khachig Barsamian, translated and edited by Harut Barsamian (Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America, Irvine, CA). From the Congress held in Los Angeles in August 1989. X296, $50.00 ($47.50).


NEW CATALOG AVAILABLE

A more recent updated Complete Catalog of Books on Armenia and the Armenians available through NAASR’s Armenian Book Clearing House has been issued. Over 1,000 titles in the fields of History, Politics, Geography, Art and Architecture, Language and Literature, Folk Tales, Church History and Doctrines, Biographies, and other topics are listed.

The catalog is available for $2.50 to cover postage and handling ($3.50 for foreign requests).


Please see the Table: The Russian Cookbook by Anya von Bremzen and John Welchman (Workman Publishing, New York). With “400 glorious recipes from the Baltics to Uzbekistan,” many of them Armenian. Cloth, X295c, $27.95 ($23.95); paper, X295p, $18.95 ($16.50).

Proceedings of the First World Congress of Armenian Engineers, Scientists and Industrialists, edited by Harut Barsamian (Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America, Irvine, CA). From the Congress held in Los Angeles in August 1989. X296, $50.00 ($47.50).


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