

NAASR Newsletter

Summer 2004

National Association for Armenian Studies and Research

NAASR Hosts East Coast Premiere of *Germany and the Secret Genocide*



Director J. Michael Hagopian

One of the highlights of the past year was the East Coast premiere of acclaimed and award-winning filmmaker Dr. J. Michael Hagopian's documentary, *Germany and the Secret Genocide*, presented by NAASR on April 23, 2004, at Belmont High School.

The evening, which also included a panel discussion, was attended by over 400 people who were treated to an

eye-opening film and insightful and thought-provoking discussion afterwards. The panel discussion featured the film's Executive Producer, Barbara Gillmore; Prof. Sharon Rivo, Director, National Center for Jewish Film, Brandeis University; Dr. Suzanne Moranian, historian and author; John Shattuck, former Assistant Secretary of State and current Chief Executive Officer, John F. Kennedy Library Foundation; and Paul Boghosian, independent film producer (J. Michael Hagopian and Prof. James R. Russell of Harvard University were scheduled to participate in the panel but were unable to appear due to illnesses.).

Germany and the Secret Genocide follows the final footsteps of Armenians who were led to their deaths in Turkey during the Armenian Genocide beginning in April 1915. Hagopian weaves together filmed interviews and letters written by American and European survivors of the Armenian Genocide with the testimony of witnesses and experts in the field to examine Germany's involvement in the mass killings of Armenians.

Hagopian shows in the film that Germany had the power to stop the Armenian Genocide but opted to do nothing and became complicit in what the Allied governments proclaimed a "crime against humanity" by assisting in the covering up of the Turkish government's actions. In addition,

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NAASR Collaborates on Historic Lecture by Dr. Taner Akçam at Harvard

Turkish-born scholar Dr. Taner Akçam gave his first Boston-area lecture at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government on May 20, 2004, under the combined auspices of NAASR, the Zoryan Institute for Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation, the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard, and the Harvard Armenian Society.

The lecture, entitled "From Empire to Republic: Turkish Nationalism and the Armenian Genocide," based on his recently published book of the same name, examined the relationship between Turkey's transition from Ottoman Empire to Turkish Republic in the opening decades of the 20th century, the Armenian Genocide of 1915, and the process of democratization in Turkey today. An audience of more than 200 people packed into the Kennedy

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Dr. Taner Akçam speaking on May 20, 2004, at the Kennedy School of Government.

A First Visit to Armenia for a Historic Conference: Personal Reflections

by Marc A. Mamigonian

Like most Armenians growing up in the United States, I often dreamed of the day when I would travel to Armenia. It took me nearly thirty-six years before I got there, but in September 2004 I finally made it.

The principle reason for going was to represent NAASR at the First International Congress of Armenian Studies, which was to be attended by members of the worldwide Armenian Studies community. The conference organizers, including Prof. Albert Stepanyan, who

entirely clear, but it was clear enough to give a sense of its majesty.

The opening plenary session of the conference was at the Armenian Academy of Arts and Sciences, across the street from the Parliament. His Holiness Karekin II was on hand and there were numerous speeches in Armenian (unfortunately offered without translation). Prof. Richard Hovannisian spoke in Armenian and in English. He covered the growth of Armenian Studies in the West and especially in America – including the role of NAASR.

The first conference session I attended was the History session chaired by Prof. Dennis Papazian, who also presented a paper – the only one in English during that session. Dr. Karen Yuzbashian of St. Petersburg, Russia, who spoke at NAASR a couple of years ago, gave me occasional translation. Although there had been the intention of offering simultaneous translation into English for people like me whose Armenian is limited or non-existent, this never materialized.

The second day of the conference I was scheduled to present my paper. This proved to be not as straightforward as it could have been; the conference organizers had me down to give the wrong paper. On top of that, I had come down with a stomach ailment that would last the remainder of my visit – seriously interfering with my enjoyment of the local cuisine!

I was taken by bus over to Yerevan State University to give my paper. They got me to the session late, of course, but as I was to speak last it made no difference. I slipped a note to Dr. Uwe Blaesing, the English-language chair of the session, explaining to him my paper topic mix-up predicament. He seemed amused and entirely unfazed. There was a small but seemingly interested group of people present to hear the paper, including some university students who at least seemed to know English well.

After the session I was interviewed by Anna, a woman I had met the previous day at the plenary session, for Armenian TV. She is also a student in international relations. She seemed pretty well clued in to Armenian Studies in America – she wanted to know about NAASR, cooperation in the U. S. between the Armenian and Jewish lobbies (!), and Genocide recognition. Several people approached me afterwards to discuss my paper, which was gratifying.

In the evening we were taken to a concert at the Academy of Sciences. The first half was choral, the second half was a folk ensemble in native costume. It was a very pleasant evening.

The rest of the week was divided between attending conference sessions, sightseeing in and around Yerevan, visiting with old and new friends in the Armenian Studies community, and excursions into the countryside.



Republic Square under construction.

had spoken at NAASR's 2002 "Rethinking Armenian Studies" conference, and Prof. Levon Chookaszian, a frequent speaker at NAASR through the years, were kind enough to invite me; and the NAASR Board of Directors was generous enough to grant me the time and resources to attend.

The conference itself, entitled "Armenian Studies Today and Development Perspectives," ran from September 15 through 19 and covered topics in history, language and philology, religion, art, sociology, and a wealth of other topics. For complicated reasons, my talk was scheduled as part of one of the philology sessions – even though the subject was Nietzsche and the Armenian Genocide.

I quickly realized on my first morning in Yerevan how true the cliché is about the sight of Mt. Ararat: It really is an awesome sight to behold. The first thing I did upon going outside was to walk up Mashdots Avenue, where I was staying, to the Matenadaran to get a good view of the mountain. It was not



The 13th century monastery Saghmosavank.

The first of the countryside excursions offered by the conference organizers took us to Hovanavank and Saghmosavank. They are similar sites, both perched on the edge of a canyon, but separated by several miles (the one is visible from the other). Hovanavank is still being restored; Saghmosavank has undergone substantial work. They are both beautiful works of architecture, and the natural settings are breathtaking. We also stopped in Oshagan at

Visit to Armenia (*continued*)

the resting place of St. Mesrob Mashdots.

The second excursion was to Noravank and Khor Virab. It was raining hard when we left Yerevan, but by the time we reached Noravank, which seemed incalculably far from Yerevan, the rain had stopped and the sun started to come out. The surrounding country is remarkably bleak. At Noravank itself the terrain is like that of Arizona or New Mexico – rocky and red-hued. But Noravank itself, greatly restored in recent years, is beyond description. The placement of the church in the setting is incredible, and the church (actually churches, as there are several in the complex) is exceptional. I felt like taking pictures of every inch of it – and I probably did. Perhaps the most extraordinary features are the carved stone panels over the doors to two of the churches. It is hard to describe them – one of them is so strikingly modern looking (it dates to the 13th century) it is astonishing. We spent a long time there – too long, unfortunately. By the time we arrived at Khor Virab it was almost 9:00 p.m., and dark. Well, it was dark for St. Gregory, too, before he saw the light.



The author at Noravank – a dream fulfilled.

News from the NAASR Headquarters

The ongoing, massive reorganization effort in the NAASR Armenian Reference and Research Library has been continuing, due to the hard work of numerous volunteers. Throughout late 2003, NAASR Board Member Van Aroian and his wife Mary of Worcester and volunteer Jay Hovenesian of Brookline put in many hours sorting through donated collections of books and applying labels identifying the donor of each of thousands of books. This time-consuming process will allow the books to be integrated into the library's collection and eventually computer-catalogued. It cannot be overemphasized how important volunteers are to NAASR's work – if you have the time and the desire to help us, please let us know!

NAASR wishes to express its appreciation, too, of the work done on a weekly basis by longtime volunteers Lucy Bedirian of Watertown and Gladys Medzorian of Belmont. Thanks are due also to Edna Hovagimian, Paul Jurigian, Anna Medzorian, Mae Takoushian, Shushan Teager, and Vartouhie Garoian Yonge for their valuable assistance in many different capacities. We are especially grateful to Gregor Rohda for his assistance with various computer crises.

Cataloguing of Derounian Archives

One of the most exciting recent developments at NAASR has been the addition of Ruby Chorbajian to the list of volunteers. Chorbajian is a recent graduate of Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina, with a degree in Sociology and Anthropology. She is fluent in Armenian and has con-

ducted research in Yerevan.

In addition to assisting with various editorial tasks at NAASR, Chorbajian has begun the substantial task of cataloguing the Avedis Derounian/John Roy Carlson archives held by NAASR since Derounian's death in 1991. Derounian, who wrote under the name of John Roy Carlson, was one of the most fascinating and controversial Armenian Americans of the middle part of the twentieth century, whose books *Under Cover*, *The Plotters*, and *From Cairo to Damascus* sold hundreds of thousands of copies. A mixture of investigative journalism, old-fashioned muckraking, and sensationalism, these books probed the hot topics of Fascism and anti-semitism in America, Communist threats to democracy, and Muslim extremism in a changing Middle East.

More than a half century after the publication of his last book, Derounian is still seen as a heroic figure by some and reviled by others. Unfortunately, neither of these two extreme perceptions is conducive to a serious consideration of the role played by this man.

It is hoped that the detailed listing and cataloguing of the thousands of books, pamphlets, clippings, letters, photographs, and manuscripts, will allow future researchers to undertake study of the man Derounian and his work. Ultimately, for better or for worse, no account of twentieth century Armenian-American life is complete without an understanding of Derounian and the forces that shaped his work. As the partisan squabbles that marked his career recede into history, a dispassionate look seems long overdue.

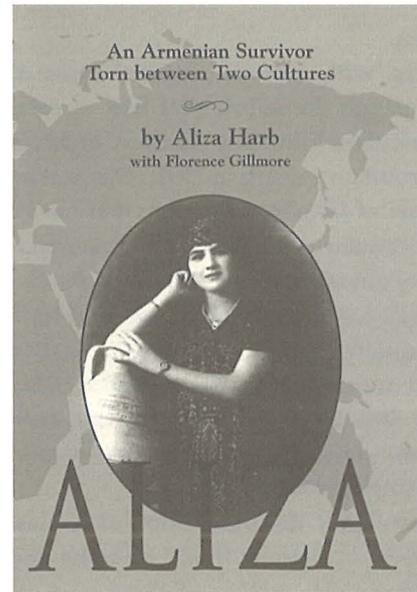
New Publications from NAASR's Armenian Heritage Press

NAASR's Armenian Heritage Press issued three new titles in 2003 and early 2004, with several more planned for Summer and Fall 2004.

The first of these titles is the memoir *Aliza: An Armenian Survivor Torn Between Two Cultures* by Aliza Harb, with Florence Gillmore.

Aliza is the story of Aliza Harb, who was born into the Arabic-speaking Catholic Armenian community near the city of Mardin in southeastern Turkey. A return visit decades after the Armenian Genocide of 1915 to her village brings forth a flood of conflicting emotions of her carefree youth before the Genocide, her loving family and community, and the atrocities that befell them in 1915.

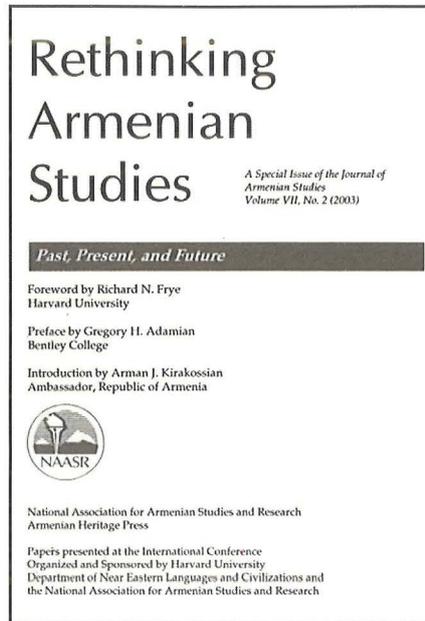
Thanks to the ingenuity of her grandmother and the fortitude of her mother, Aliza and her remaining family members had rebuilt their lives in Aleppo, Syria. Relocating to the United



States as a young woman, Aliza experiences many difficulties and challenges in adjusting to life in a new country after the trauma of the Genocide.

Despite the security she achieves in her new life, Aliza remains haunted by the memory of the innocent Armenians who died such needless and horrible deaths during the Genocide. The book concludes with a testimonial to those victims and a plea to the international community for justice and recognition.

The second title is *Rethinking Armenian Studies*, published as a special issue



(Vol. VII, No. 2) of the *Journal of Armenian Studies*. It presents twenty-five papers given at the October 2002 conference of the same name co-sponsored by NAASR and Harvard University's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. It includes a special Foreword by Bentley College Chancellor Gregory H. Adamian and a Preface by Prof. Richard N. Frye, Aga Khan Professor (emeritus) of Iranian at Harvard University. The Introduction is by Armenian Ambassador to the United States Dr. Arman J. Kirakossian.

A who's who from the Armenian Studies community, including scholars and representatives of organizations from across the United States and overseas, gathered for the conference on October 4-6 at Harvard University and at the NAASR Center.

Over the course of the conference's three days, five sessions were held in which numerous important aspects of the field of Armenian Studies were analyzed, discussed, and occasionally debated. It was the largest scholarly gathering ever to devote itself to an analysis of the discipline and was the first time in memory that all of the active chairholders in Armenian Studies in America were gathered in one place. Conference sessions were attended by the conferees as well as other members of the Armenian scholarly community and many members of the Armenian community at large, some of whom had

traveled cross-country to attend the sessions.

The subjects covered in the conference and its published proceedings are "The Role of the University Chairs," "The Role of Organizations, Institutions, and Research Centers," "Relations Between Armenian Studies in the U.S. and Armenia," "Integrating Armenia Studies with Other Disciplines," and "The Future of Armenian Studies."

The volume includes papers by Aram Arkun, Kevork Bardakjian, George Bournoutian, David Calonne, S. Peter Cowe, Lucy Der Manuelian, Barlow Der Mugrdchian, Robert Hewsen, Richard Hovannisian, Dickran Kouymjian, Gerard Libaridian, Ina Baghdiantz McCabe, Moorad Mooradian, Dennis Papazian, James R. Russell, Albert Stepanyan, Michael Stone, Ruth Thomsian, Robert Thomson, and Theo Maarten Van Lint. The proceedings were edited by Marc A. Mamigonian.



The third new title, *The Book of Flowers*, by Derenik Demirjian, translated and with commentary by James R. Russell, Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies at Harvard University, was officially launched at a NAASR Open House on December 11, 2003.

The Book of Flowers (Girk Dzaghkants), a long short story or novella, was written in 1935, a dark period in Soviet Armenian history. Of this story, Prof. Kevork Bardakjian has written that it is "a synthesis of Demirjian's

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Seminars on Modern Armenia and Impact of U.S. Policy in Armenia

In the Fall of 2003 and Winter of 2004 NAASR offered two seminars/series that provided audiences with in-depth treatments of two vital and fascinating topics presented by experts in their respective fields.

On Saturday, October 18, 2003, Prof. Gerard J. Libaridian gave an all-day seminar entitled "Making Sense of the New Armenian Republic."

Libaridian is the Alex Manoogian Visiting Professor of Modern Armenian History at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He also served as an advi-



Prof. Gerard J. Libaridian.

sor to President Levon Ter Petrossian of Armenia from 1991 to September 1997. He is the author of *Armenia at the Crossroads: Democracy and Nationhood in the Post-Soviet Era*, *The Challenge of Statehood: Armenian Political Thinking Since Independence*, and *Modern Armenia: People, Nation, State*. Libaridian is also a co-founder and former director of the Zoryan Institute.

The seminar was structured around several fundamental questions commonly asked by Armenians and non-Armenians alike regarding the situation in Armenia since its independence in 1991. Who governs Armenia and how are decisions made? What have been the priorities for successive administrations, given the multitude of problems facing the young Republic? Where does Armenia stand today in terms of economic development, democratization, and issues such as corruption and clan politics? How have these administrations perceived their role in the region, in the Armenian world, and within the international community? What are the roles of Russia, Turkey,

and the United States in Armenia's foreign policy? What standards can the diaspora use to assess the successes and failures of Armenia?

Throughout the day, Libaridian smoothly mixed lectures and discussions as he probed these difficult questions. Working from notes but mostly speaking extemporaneously, with frequent enlightening digressions that drew on his vast experience in the young Armenian Republic's political and diplomatic history, Libaridian instructed and entertained at the same time.

Applying a critical and analytic eye to Armenia, past and present, Libaridian was clearly determined both to puncture the audience's preconceptions and to raise as many thought-provoking questions as possible.

For example, he posed the question "How is information produced in Armenia and who produces it," with the necessary – though unspoken – added question, "How do we know what we hear about Armenia is accurate?" Libaridian is of the opinion that Armenia has not yet shown itself able to produce the kind of journalism and discourse that can distinguish fact from rumor. Consequently, speculation and conspiracy theories thrive, and Armenians in the diaspora are left to try to sort things out.

One of the more startling topics Libaridian touched upon was the increasing power of Russia over Armenian affairs – not through military domination, as once was the case, but rather through growing Russian control of vital Armenian industries and consequently, the Armenian economy.

All in all, at the end of the afternoon session, it was clear that Libaridian had only begun to scratch the surface of the information he could have presented on the designated topic. It was equally clear that the audience would have been content to listen to him and dis-

cuss points with him well into the evening. As a result, NAASR plans to have him back for a second all-day seminar in October 2004.

In February and March, 2004, Dr. Barbara J. Merguerian and Dr. Suzanne Moranian offered a three-week minicourse on the vital impact of American missionaries and U.S. foreign policy on the fate of the Armenian people in the 19th and early 20th centuries entitled "American Power and Armenian Destiny: A Fateful Century, 1819-1927."

Dr. Merguerian and Dr. Moranian are two of the leading figures in the study of Armenian-American interaction in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and each of them has written and spoken extensively on the subject. Moranian currently serves on the NAASR Board of Directors and Merguerian is the former NAASR Di-



Dr. Barbara J. Merguerian (left) and Dr. Suzanne E. Moranian.

rector of Publications. Each session featured lectures by both Merguerian and Moranian.

The first week's lecture was "Shaping Two Cultures: The Impact of Missionary Imperialism on the Armenians and on the American Homebase," which explained how American missionaries shaped U.S. public opinion and foreign policy in Turkey. It also outlined the origins of the American Protestant missionary movement, the circumstances of its focus on the Armenians in the Middle East, the development of its overseas institutions, and their impact on the rise of Armenian

Lecture by Dr. Taner Akçam (*continued*)

School's Starr Auditorium for this much-anticipated event.

Introduced by Zoryan Academic Board Chairman Dr. Levon Chorbajian as a man of unusual courage for his work opposing the quasi-fascist Turkish government in the 1970s, Akçam has been lauded by many for being the first Turkish scholar to speak and write openly about the Armenian Genocide.

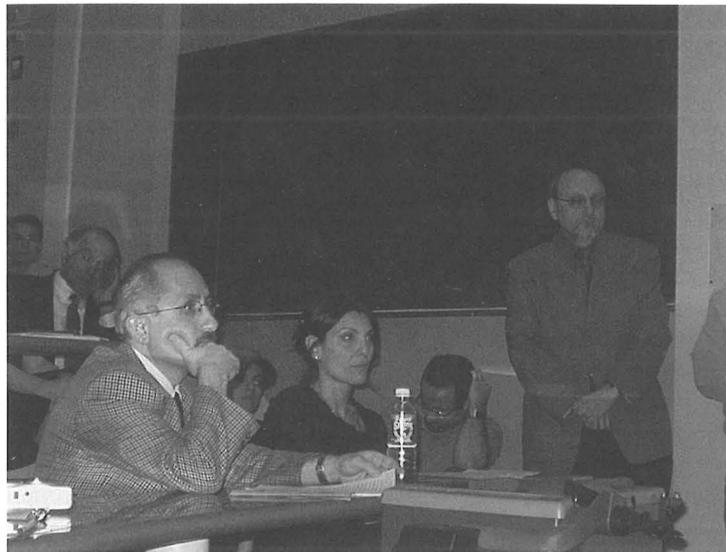
Observing that most analysis of the Genocide has been from the point of view of the victim group, Akçam stated that it is important for him to approach the issue as a part of the perpetrator group, where the Genocide can be seen "as an explainable product of a cultural process."

Unfortunately, up to this point, the two perspectives have been mutually exclusive. "A balanced perspective must incorporate both views," Akçam asserted.

Similarly, Akçam pointed out the disjunction between the Turkish government's official policy of denial and the views of much of Turkish society. Discussion of the Armenian Genocide is no longer taboo, and he feels that the time is coming when an open discussion and acknowledgment will take place.

Even with discussion, however, Akçam explains that to a large extent "it is the same [ruling] elite who founded the Turkish republic, and it is not easy for these people to call the founders murderers and thieves."

Akçam was optimistic, though, that Turkey is moving



Dr. Taner Akçam, left, and George Shirinian, Director of the Zoryan Institute, right.

towards acknowledgment as it moves towards acceptance in the European Union – or, at least, tries to move in that direction. "The Genocide remains taboo because of this ruling elite," he said, "but Turkey wishes to be democratic, it wants to join the European Union, and knows that there must be a change in the ruling elite. Only a democratic country can discuss the past truthfully. And only if Turkey discusses the past can it become democratic."

Germany and the Secret Genocide (continued)

the film explored the involvement of Germans who were among the early members of Hitler's Nazi party.

The panel discussion examined such issues as whether German involvement was somehow a necessary component of the Genocide or whether it would have occurred regardless of the Germans. Dr. Suzanne Moranian contended that, while the Germans certainly contributed to the campaign of genocide, it would have occurred without them. John Shattuck, drawing on his experience during the Clinton administration dealing with the crises in Kosovo and Rwanda, shared his insights into the role of public opinion both in nations where genocide is occurring and in nations that have the ability to intervene.

Prof. Sharon Rivo praised the film as a stirring documentary that needs to reach a wider, non-Armenian audience, and Barbara Gillmore discussed the extremely positive reaction the film had recently received at the Prague Film Festival just before the Belmont showing. Paul Boghosian compared the film to the pioneering work of television journalist and commentator Fred Friendly at CBS in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s.

Following the panel discussion, a number of audience members and panel participants returned to the NAASR Center for a reception.

The one regret of everyone involved in the evening was that Dr. Hagopian, who had been honored at the Massachusetts State House earlier in the day, could not be on hand to see the reception the film received. Fortunately, Hagopian, who continues his film work at age 90, has recovered and returned to California to resume work on his next film.



***Germany and the Secret Genocide* panelists. Left to right: Sharon Rivo, Barbara Gillmore, Suzanne Moranian, Paul Boghosian, John Shattuck.**

If you or someone you know has books in Armenian, English, or other languages on Armenian or related subjects, please donate them to NAASR's Armenian Reference and Research Library.

The core of the library's collection has come from donors like you who have helped make it one of the best and largest of its kind in America.

No collection is too big or too small – contact NAASR if you have any questions.

All gifts to NAASR are tax deductible. Keep the Armenian heritage alive – give to NAASR.

Members, Directors, Friends Remembered

Next year we will begin observing fifty years of NAASR's existence and its pioneering achievements in furthering Armenian studies, research, and publication and giving impetus to the worldwide Armenian Studies movement.

The anniversary will be an opportunity to honor all those who made this possible. Unfortunately, we will not be able to honor in person those who have passed on and who played critical roles in NAASR's successes. In addition to those remembered in previous issues of the *NAASR Newsletter*, during the past nine years 240 members have departed, and we shall attempt to remember now some of those who were dedicated members and supporters, however belated it may be.

Of this number three were Founders: **Agop Atamian**, Watertown, MA, author and director of the New England District office of the AGBU; **Prof. Elisha B. Chrakian** of Northeastern University; and **John Mirak**, Arlington, MA, founder and president of Mirak Chevrolet and philanthropist. They together with fifty-seven others laid the foundation for NAASR in the year prior to the formal announcement of its founding in March 1955. Of this original group of far-sighted Founders there are now only thirteen of us around and still generally active.

In addition, there were twelve members of the Board of Directors who have passed on. Serving as officers were **Armen Dohanian**, Belmont, MA, President of Bon Ton Rug Cleaners, former Vice President and Board member for over 25 years of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, NAASR Charter Member, Benefactor, and Board Member, 1976-85 and 1988-99, and Treasurer, 1988-98; **Peter Sarmanian**, Winchester, MA, President of Printed Circuit Corp., former President of Council of Armenian Executives, NAASR Board Member, 1965-71, and Treasurer, 1968-71; **Beatrice Harpootlian**, Miami Shores, FL, formerly of Arlington, MA, Paralegal later Trust Officer for State Street Bank, and NAASR Board member 1964-66 and Secretary, 1965-66.

NECROLOGY by Manoog S. Young Chairman Emeritus

Members-at-large of the Board of Directors were **Haig Agababian**, Winchester, MA, Executive Vice-President, Harvard Cooperative Society, 44-year NAASR member and Board member, 1980-83; **Dr. Vartan Artinian**, Prof. of Armenian Studies at University of Massachusetts, Amherst, NAASR Board member, 1970-75; **Anahid Avakian**, Arlington, MA, Principal Tax Examiner, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 39-year NAASR member, Benefactor, Board member, 1996-2001; **Haig Haroutunian**, Belmont, Executive of Star Market Co., 38-year NAASR member, Board member, 1965-67; **Gregory Scott Kolligian**, Lincoln, MA, Managing Director, Selame Design Group, NAASR Board member, 1983-95; **Mrs. Marie Nahigian**, Belmont, MA, former Board member and Recording Secretary, Armenian Missionary Association of America, 35-year NAASR member, Benefactor, Board member, 1989-90; **Prof. Vazken Parsegian**, Dean of Engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, NY, 40-year NAASR member, Board member, 1962-68; **Dr. Arthur S. Petoyan**, Northridge, CA, Assistant Prof. of Obstetrics and Gynecology, UCLA, NAASR Charter member, Benefactor, Board member, 1983-87; **Dr. Pergrouhi Svajian**, Prof. of Educational Psychology, Brooklyn College, NY, former Dean of Faculty of Beirut College for Women, member of the AGBU Central Board of Directors, 41-year NAASR member, Board member, 1983-88.

Among those who passed on during this period were Honorary Life Members **Alex Manoogian**, Grosse Pointe, MI, AGBU Life President and NAASR Benefactor and **McGeorge Bundy**, Dean of Harvard College, later Special Assistant on National Security Affairs under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson and President of the Ford Foundation. Also, there were four Life Members

who died: **Esther Agabian**, Watertown, MA, 46-year member whose collection of paintings and photographs are being donated to NAASR; **Everett H. Berberian**, San Francisco and Reedley, CA, 48-year member, National Advisory Board member, and Benefactor, and past member of the Grand Council of the Knights of Vartan; **Mrs. Madeline O. Kolligian**, Belmont, MA, 49-year member and Benefactor; and **Dr. Garo S. Matossian**, Bethesda, MD, 38-year member.

In addition to the above, there were eighteen other members who maintained their membership continuously for forty or more years (eleven of them at the Supporting level or higher). They were: **Dr. John J. Bandeian**, Holyoke, MA, 41 years; **Nevart Boghosian**, (Regional Representative) Manlius, NY, 45 years; **Mrs. Gloria Gregory Burney**, Bedford, NH, 43 years; **Bergina Cherkezian**, Chicago, IL, 40 years; **Paul Der Ohannesian**, Albany, NY, 44 years; **Diran S. Dinjian**, Belmont, MA, 46 years; **J. Harry Gray**, Cranston, RI, 41 years; **Jacob J. Hagopian**, (Benefactor) San Jose, CA, 42 years; **Harry D. Hagopian**, Arlington, MA, 47 years; **Mrs. Helen C. Halabian**, Watertown MA, 42 years; **Mrs. Ardameas Janoyan**, Minneapolis, MN, 44 years; **Leila Karagheusian**, (Benefactor) New York, NY, 40 years; **Gertrude Nahigian**, Belmont, MA and Mission Viejo, CA, 48 years; **Michael G. Tashjian**, Buffalo, NY, 44 years; **Col. Roger H. Terzian**, Fairborn, OH, 41 years; **Nora Vartanian**, (Benefactor) Long Branch, NY, 46 years; **Mrs. Flora B. Zakarian**, Watertown, MA, 45 years; **Peter C. Zakarian**, Watertown, MA, 44 years.

Without these devoted long-standing members, many of whom played active leadership roles in NAASR and the Armenian-American community and were as well most generous contributors, NAASR would not have been able to continue for half a century, forge unprecedented accomplishments, and look forward to another half century of pioneering achievements.

(To be continued in next issue.)

Publications (continued)

views of the intellectual and artistic creativity of his people, a hymn to those often anonymous monks, creators of the tradition, and to the touching ways in which such treasures were fostered and handed down to posterity."

In Demirjian's story, an Armenian boy named Zvart from the Van area sees wonderful beings in things and nature, and the villagers, thinking him possessed, pressure his parents to consign him to the care of a monastery. But the abbot, who was once a famous architect, perceives in the boy a kindred creative spirit and cares for him. Soon, Zvart has a vision of a sunlike youth who opens up to him the poetic talent that enables him to express his vision, and he recites a poem about love pervading and inhabiting all the universe and its movements. For all its particular flavor and undoubted focus on the Armenian experience, *The Book of Flowers* would probably not be so powerful a literary work if it did not address at the same time issues of general human concern — the mystery of creativity, the predicament of the artist, and the survival of art over the ages — to name a few.

James R. Russell is the author of *Zoroastrianism in Armenia*, *Hovhannes Tilkurantsi and the Medieval Armenian Lyric Tradition*, and *The Heroes of Kasht: An Armenian Epic*, as well as many scholarly articles, lectures, and book chapters. He has held the Mashtots Chair at Harvard for the past decade. In addition to translating *The Book of Flowers*, Russell provided the cover artwork. In Summer 2004 the Armenian Heritage Press, in conjunction with Harvard University Press, will publish a two-volume collection of his articles, *Armenian and Iranian Studies*.

Each of these titles is available through NAASR's Armenian Book Clearing House. Please visit the bookstore or www.naasr.org for more information.

NAASR's 50th Anniversary

Message from Nancy R. Kolligian,
Chairman, NAASR Board of Directors

Dear Friends:

As many of you are surely aware, in the year 2005 NAASR will celebrate its 50th anniversary. Incredibly, a half century will have passed since the visionary men and women who established NAASR, and with it the Armenian Studies movement in the United States, formulated a plan to put Armenian Studies on the map in higher education in the United States.

In recent months, I have attended meetings with members of the NAASR Board of Directors, the NAASR staff, and friends of the organization. Plans are being made to commemorate 50 years of NAASR in ways that are consistent with its history, its mission, and its vision of the future.

The celebratory events will take place in Fall 2006 at times and places to be announced as soon as possible. There will be both a gala celebration and an academic conference that we are confident will include a wide range of scholars from the field of Armenian Studies and which will endeavor to break new ground.

We will be asking you, our loyal and deeply valued members and supporters, to take part in these celebratory events through your active interest, attendance, and financial support.

NAASR has flourished for half a century and accomplished things above and beyond even what its founders could have envisioned because of the extraordinary support of its members. Please be with us as we look towards the next half century and further.

Sincerely,

Nancy R. Kolligian

Nancy R. Kolligian
Chairman, Board of Directors

Seminars (continued)

nationalism in the 19th century.

The second lecture analyzed "The Turkish Assault on the Armenian Nation: American Witness, Diplomacy, and Response," tracing the significant role of the Armenian Question in the development of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey and the U.S. response to Turkey during the First World War.

The final lecture, "Recovery and Reconciliation: The Politics of Relief and a Failed Peace," examined the role of the U.S. in establishing a postwar reconciliation with Turkey while abandoning the Armenians and summarized the effects of American relief efforts on Armenian communities in Western Armenia, the Caucasus, and elsewhere in the region.

Throughout the series of lectures there was extensive discussion between the lecturers and the members of the audience. There was particular interest in and a certain amount of disagreement over the perception of the mainly American Protestant missionaries and whether they were, ultimately, a force for good or bad for the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire. Unquestionably, the mini-course gave everyone ample food for thought.

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