

## NAASR Holds 51st Annual Assembly of Members



William S. Parsons addresses the 51st NAASR Annual Assembly of Members

NAASR Board Chairman Nancy R. Kolligian convened the 51st Annual Assembly of NAASR Members on Saturday, November 19, 2005. The Assembly was highlighted by a luncheon program lecture by William S. Parsons, Chief of Staff of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., whose talk was entitled "Genocide: Remembering Is Not Enough."

Before Parsons became Chief of Staff, he served as the Museum's Director of Education and was responsible for developing educational programs both in Washington and throughout the nation. For the past thirty years, he has been involved in writing, speaking, and creating programs to advance public awareness and knowledge about the Holocaust and genocide and the implications of this history for the world we live in today. He is also a co-founder of the Brookline-based Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc.

Noting that his visit to NAASR was a kind of "homecoming," as he and his wife had lived in the Boston area before relocating to Washington, D.C., when he was hired by the Holocaust Museum, Parsons also paid tribute to the formative influence of NAASR in his own experience. Thirty years ago, he said, NAASR's Chairman Emeritus Manoog Young "was the person who got me involved in this." Although Parsons holds a degree in history from Cornell and a Masters from the University of Wisconsin, he nonetheless had almost no knowledge of the Armenian Genocide. Young helped facilitate Parsons' education on the subject through NAASR's library, bookstore, and contacts in the academic world.

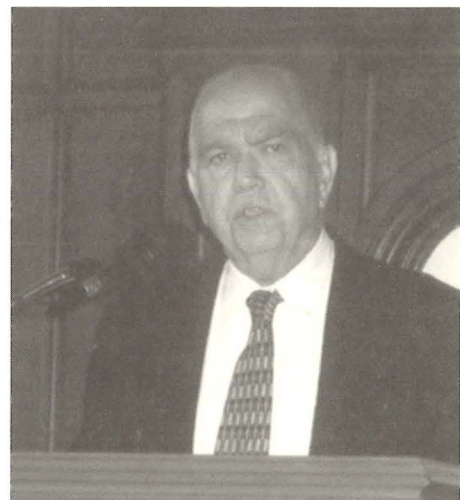
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## NAASR Co-Sponsors Forum on Genocide Education in Public Schools

NAASR, the Armenian Assembly of America, and Facing History and Ourselves presented a panel discussion on "Armenian Genocide Education: Reaching Into the School Curriculum" on September 30 at the Belmont High School auditorium. Taking part in the panel were renowned scholar Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian of the University of California, Los Angeles; Adam Strom, Director of Research and Development, Facing History and Ourselves; Margot Stern Strom, Executive Director, Facing History and Ourselves; and Dr. Henry Theriault, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Coordinator for the Center on Human Rights at Worcester State College.

Although there has been tremendous progress in Armenian Genocide studies over the past several decades, the level of knowledge of even the basic facts of the catastrophe are still not well known outside of the Armenian community and some academic circles. A major step toward expanding awareness of the Genocide has been the publication by Brookline-based Facing History and Ourselves of the textbook *Crimes Against Humanity and Civilization: The Genocide of*

— continued on page 2



Prof. Richard Hovannisian



**Education Forum (from p. 1)**

*the Armenians*. Since its publication, scholars of the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and Human Rights as well as middle and high school educators have enthusiastically received the book. The panel discussion served as the introduction of the text to the Boston-area Armenian community and provided a forum to consider vital issues involved in getting the Armenian Genocide



**Margot Stern Strom**

taught in public schools in Massachusetts and around the nation.

Armenian Assembly Chairman Anthony Barsamian opened the evening by declaring 2005 to be a “benchmark year” in the campaign to advance the understanding of the Armenian Genocide, thanks in part to the Facing History textbook. He praised the textbook as “a wonderful piece” that will greatly facilitate the teaching of the Armenian Genocide in schools in Massachusetts and elsewhere.

Barsamian turned over the lectern to NAASR Director of Programs and Publications Marc Mamigonian, who introduced the panelists and served as moderator for the evening. Each member of the panel spoke for 10-15 minutes before moving on to a discussion period among themselves and ultimately with the audience.

Picking up on Barsamian’s comments, Prof. Hovannisian declared that “we are in very exciting times” and that a number of things in recent years have given him hope, most particularly that Turks “are talking to themselves about the issues [surrounding the Armenian Genocide] in Turkey,” and that “they will themselves come to know themselves as they need to do. They need to face their own history for their own benefit.” This will lead, among other



**Adam Strom**

things, to the recognition of the many good Turks who helped Armenians to survive the Genocide.

Hovannisian is “pleased that growing numbers of non-Armenians” recognize the Armenian Genocide as “a watershed event” in modern history. He noted that his “aspiration for [the Armenian community] is not to forget the past ... but to move forward.” He continued, “in recent years my point has



**Dr. Henry Theriault**

been that the Armenian Genocide will be forgotten and buried in history ... unless it can be integrated into collective human memory.” “We have made tremendous strides in this area” in the past decade, he said, and “that’s what



**Marc A. Mamigonian**

the Facing History book is intended to do.”

Margot Stern Strom, one of the founders of Facing History and Ourselves, said that in her view “Facing History is

a bridge between the past and the scholars of the future” – the high school students who benefit from Facing History’s educational programs. She honored NAASR Chairman Emeritus and long-time Facing History Board member Manoog Young, who “for thirty years has been a friend of Facing History, quiet, humble, but determined that the Armenian Genocide story find its place in Facing History.” Young served as “a conduit” for Strom to the Armenians’ history.

Like Hovannisian, Strom empha-



**Anthony Barsamian**

sized the need to bring the Armenian Genocide “into the human narrative” and “preserve the particularity” of the history while intertwining it with the Holocaust and other genocides.

Adam Strom, the son of Margot Stern Strom and the driving force behind the creation of the *Crimes Against Humanity and Civilization* textbook, carried on with the idea that “there is a lot of change going on” and “people are starting to put [the Armenian Genocide] into a larger narrative.” Strom stated that while it is significant that the Armenian Genocide is part of the Massachusetts curriculum, “it’s not the mandates for the most part that drive the curriculum, it’s what is tested.” Consequently, extra efforts are required to get the subject taught, because mandates are “often seen as an imposition” by educators.

In fact, he emphasized, neither mandates nor the existence of the textbook are in themselves enough: teachers must learn to use the material and incorporate it into their lessons. This can be done through Facing History’s workshops and professional development.

For Strom, the issues raised by the Armenian Genocide are part of Facing History’s mission to get students to think deeply about larger questions of decision making and choices in history.

– continued on p. 3



### Panel (cont. from p. 2)

Teaching about genocide inculcates the idea that "I'm responsible for people beyond my borders," he said, and can lead to a shift towards prevention of future genocides.

Prof. Theriault began by paying fitting tribute to his fellow panelists, and especially to Prof. Hovannisian, who is both "a historian of modern Armenian history and an incredibly important part of shaping that history." He also praised Facing History and Ourselves as the "model of what a great human rights organization is" with a commitment to universal human rights and valuing individual stories.

Theriault stressed that "if you want to understand contemporary Turkey you have to understand the Armenian Genocide." As for teaching it in American schools, he acknowledged that "there's only so much time" to teach the Armenian Genocide. It is important for Armenians to see what the Armenian Genocide looks like from outside the Armenian community, and to understand the role of denial, because it is "easy for a human being to look directly at evidence of the destruction of a million people and not see it, to see something else."

Following the discussion and question and answer period, NAASR Board Chairman Nancy Kolligian offered closing remarks and invited audience and participants to the NAASR Center for post-event refreshments and conversation.

## Armenian Heritage Press Reissues Classic Novel *The Well of Ararat*

The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research proudly announces the re-publication by the Armenian Heritage Press of *The Well of Ararat* by Emmanuel P. Varandyan, originally published to great acclaim in 1938 by Doubleday, Doran & Co. Varandyan's novel is considered to be one of the masterpieces of twentieth century Armenian diaspora literature and was awarded first prize in the University of Michigan's Avery Hopwood competition in 1938.

*The Well of Ararat* was praised by *Story* magazine upon its publication as "A mature, rich, and colorful study ... lyrical, peopled with characters and observation; a beautiful picture." Margaret Bedrosian, in her study of Armenian-American literature, *The Magical Pine Ring*, writes that *The Well of Ararat* "was as severe a critique of the Old World as *The Grapes of Wrath* has been of America."

The new edition of *The Well of Ararat* features an introduction by Dr. Eden Naby, a scholar of the modern Middle East and a specialist on the Assyrians who is also a native of the region of Iran near Lake Urmia where the book is set. Dr. Naby highlights "the finely documented detail that emerges about the essential customs associated with the rites of passage among Armenians," further adding that "Varandyan's novel could very well stand as the singular work documenting this particular vanished lifestyle, a lifestyle that has commonalities with ethnic groups around the Armenians in this northwest corner of Iran."

In addition to Dr. Naby's introduction, Dr. Richard N. Frye, Aga Khan Professor (emeritus) of Iranian at Harvard University, provides a biographical sketch and personal recollections of Emmanuel Varandyan. The two met in the 1950s at the opening banquet of NAASR and both were active in the organization in its early years.

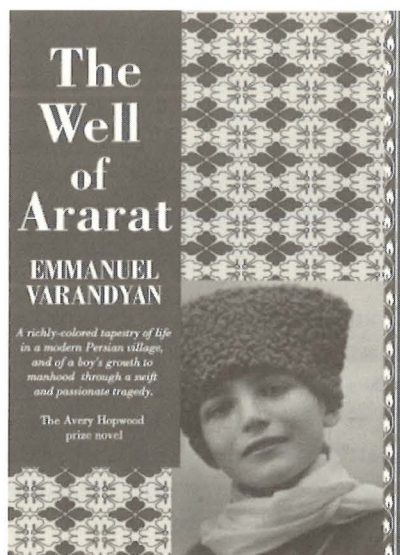
The novel tells the story of a boy named Sassoon in a Persian Armenian village in the ominous years preceding World War I and the Armenian Genocide. Sassoon becomes entangled in a

web of adult passions which he cannot fully comprehend, and the story is told from his perspective as an adult looking back on a time and a way of life long since past.

Emmanuel Paul Varandyan (originally Emmanuel Bogos Menatzaganian) was born in 1902 in one of the villages radiating from the Iranian town of Urumia (also called Rizaieh for much of the twentieth century). During World War I he joined the fighters defending their families against the invading Turkish army by pretending to be sixteen years old instead of the fourteen years that he was. He was among the cavalry of Armenian and Assyrian men who led the refugees through the Zagros foothills southward toward Hamadan and away from the tragedy that befell the many who could not flee. After the war subsided, Varandyan settled with his family in the city of Tabriz. Here he attended the American Memorial School, a Presbyterian missionary institution.

Following graduation he worked as a bookkeeper until an opportunity to apply to attend school in Detroit presented itself. He won a scholarship to matriculate at the Ford School of Technology after which he enrolled at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor to pursue a liberal arts education. There he earned his BA as well as MA degrees. It was in this period during which he wrote *The Well of Ararat*. The outbreak of World War II brought him back to the Middle East as cultural advisor and liaison officer with the American forces. His knowledge of eight languages including Turkish, Persian, Assyrian, and Russian made him extremely valuable.

After the war, he received his Ph.D. from the State University of Iowa and began a long career of teaching English and Comparative Literature at Ohio State University. He is also the author of the novel *The Moon Sails* and numerous short stories and translations. He was killed in an automobile accident in 1988.





## 51st Annual Assembly *(continued from page 1)*

Parsons recounted that the Holocaust Museum has held a number of Armenian Genocide-themed events over the past dozen years, and that he is committed to "using the stature" of the museum to advance knowledge of the Genocide, despite intense pressure from the Turkish lobby not to do so. "The histories [of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust] are very connected," he said. "I don't want things separated and isolated," he added, "I want things integrated. That is when you get something with staying power." He observed that it is not only his own awareness of the Armenian Genocide that has increased over the past three decades. "Wherever we go, the Armenian Genocide is something that most people know about," he said.

In keeping with the theme that "remembering is not enough," Parsons emphasized that when it comes to genocide prevention "we are still in the Stone Age." Stressing that "the perpetrators learn from each other" – and thus that there is a line of continuity that runs from Eastern Anatolia in 1915 to Sudan in 2005 – he complained that the repeated lesson to perpetrators is that "you can get away with it."

Parsons believes that "governments to not stop genocide" because "there is always a reason not to do anything." Nonetheless, he pointed out that the Sudan crisis marked the first time that a major government – that of the United States – called a genocide a genocide while it was taking place. This, in his opinion, was a significant step forward and may have led directly to lives being saved.

Turning to the case of the Armenian Genocide, Parsons stated that organizations such as NAASR have a vital role to play in keeping the history alive and preserving resources for future generations of scholars. He took time during his visit to tour NAASR's library and was impressed with the extent of the resources on hand.

Parsons dismissed as unwarranted the idea that the recognition of the Armenian Genocide is hindered by the Jewish community. "The Armenian Genocide has had more momentum, more solidity, more grounding in this country from the national museum all the way to the local level from the Jewish community" than from any other. He entreated the audience not to be deceived by the actions of certain individuals or groups: "They're just as diverse a community as you are," he said, but the support, especially from Jewish scholars, is overwhelming.

There was a lively period of Q&A following the lecture during which Parsons received several expressions of gratitude for his work and for his lecture. He addressed a number of topics, including the proposed Armenian Genocide Museum in Washington, D.C., which he feels is an opportunity that should not be let drop; and the issue of genocide denial, which he stressed should not be allowed to drain the energy and resources of scholars.

After Parsons' lecture the business portion of the Assembly commenced, which included reports and election of

board members.

Chairman of the Board of Directors Nancy Kolligian presented a report on organizational, informational, and academic matters, and Treasurer Robert Bejoian offered a detailed account of NAASR's financial reorganization which has been going on under his leadership throughout the past year. Director of Programs and Publications Marc A. Marmigonian offered an overview of the year's activities in those areas and looked ahead to plans for 2006.

In addition, there were reports by the Assembly's special committees on Nominations, Constitution and Rules, New Business and Resolutions, and Auditing.

The chairmen of the special committees were Edna Hovagimian of Stoughton, Nominating; Yervant Chekijian of Boston, Constitution and Rules; Lucy Bedirian of Watertown, New Business and Resolutions; and Edward Der Kazarian of Watertown, Auditing.

### Results of Elections

Newly elected to three-year terms as Directors were Roxanne Etmekjian of West Newton and Leon Janikian of Watertown. Shushan Teager of Belmont was elected to a two-year term. Leaving the Board were Joan Bamberger of Watertown, Anton Boghossian of Belmont, and Karen Kazarian of Watertown. Chairman Kolligian expressed the organization's deep appreciation for their service.

The NAASR Board of Directors consists of 27 members who serve 3-year terms. There are Directors from the following states: California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, and Virginia.

The continuing Directors are Daniel G. Adamian of New York City; Dr. Gregory H. Adamian of Medford; Gregory Aftandilian of Vienna, VA; Van M. Aroian of Worcester; Marta T. Batmasian of Boca Raton, FL; Robert D. Bejoian of Watertown; Yervant Chekijian of Boston; James M. Kalustian of Arlington; Dr. Aram S. Karakashian of Waltham; Dr. Seda E. Keshishian of Lincoln; Michael Kilijian of Fresno, CA; Nancy R. Kolligian of Watertown; Stephen A. Kurkjian of Manomet; Jack M. Medzorian of Winchester; Armand K. Mirijanian of Morton Grove, IL; Dr. Suzanne E. Moranian of Winchester; Bertha Mugurdichian of Providence, RI; Anna Marie Norehad of Glenview, IL; Dr. Simon J. Simonian of Potomac, MD; Charles J. Tateosian of Walnut Creek, CA; Dr. Jonathan Varjabedian of West Hollywood, CA; Raffi P. Yeghiayan of Lexington; and Manoog S. Young of Belmont.

The new Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, elected at its meeting in January 2006, consists of Nancy R. Kolligian, Chairman; Raffi P. Yeghiayan, First Vice Chairman; Jack M. Medzorian, Second Vice Chairman; Van M. Aroian, Secretary; Robert D. Bejoian, Treasurer; Leon Janikian, Assistant Secretary; Roxanne Etmekjian, Assistant Treasurer.



## An Active and Varied Fall Lectures Series

### Dr. Moorad Mooradian: Lecture and Seminar

On Thursday, September 8, Dr. Moorad Mooradian of Yerevan State University delivered a lecture entitled "A New Look at TARC (Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission)," based on his new booklet of the same name, to a packed house at the NAASR Center. The following Saturday, September 10th, Mooradian offered an all-day seminar at NAASR entitled "Hurting Stalemate or Mediation: The Conflict Over Nagorno-Karabakh," dealing with violence in Karabakh and subsequent Armeno-Azeri negotiations.

In the recently published *A New Look at TARC*, Mooradian examines the hotly-debated issue in terms of conflict resolution theory, discussing TARC's stated goals, performance, quality, and competence of its members as reconcilers, and the course that chairman David Phillips allowed the commission to travel. Mooradian maintains that while the idea of TARC was positive, it was funded by the wrong parties, thus diminishing its legitimacy.

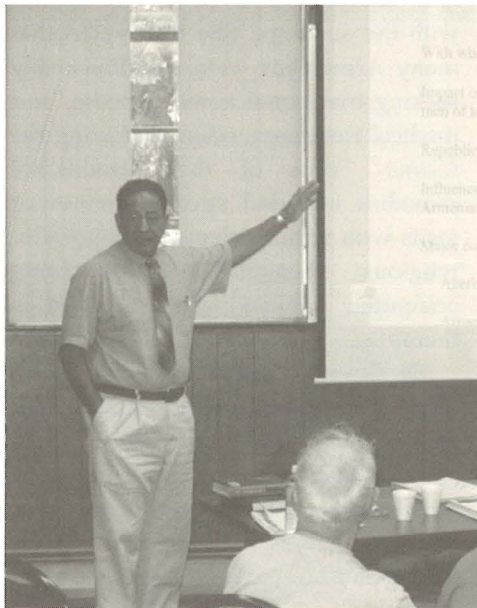
### Critical of TARC Chairman and Methods

At the Thursday evening lecture, Mooradian took the notion of governmental influence a step further when he explained that "Track-Two unofficial diplomacy can be no more than a complement to official decision [making]. A complement is completely different than being subservient to official diplomacy ... and David Phillips, in particular, took marching orders from the United States government."

According to Mooradian, TARC chose the wrong issue upon which to attempt to build a bridge between the Armenian and the Turkish governments and societies—the Armenian Genocide. Mooradian explained that conflict resolution theory does not suggest beginning discussions by

attempting to build bridges over the most divisive issues between groups. It is his view that in this oversight TARC violated basic conflict resolution theory and practice and thus was destined to be minimally, if at all, successful.

Although generous in his praise of TARC member Van Krikorian, who Mooradian feels has been unfairly vilified as a "traitor" to the Armenian community, Mooradian identified the composition of the commission as a central problem. All of TARC's members, except for the chairman,



Dr. Moorad Mooradian

were activists for their respective sides, he stated, which is not acceptable practice in building a successful Track Two effort.

"The reason I supported TARC is because I thought, from looking at their terms of reference, that they were going to approach a resolution [by] trying to bridge the gap between Armenians and Turks using practical issues," Mooradian explained. For Mooradian, these practical issues included using cultural exchanges, economic issues such as border discussions, student exchanges, and the like. "I had absolutely no idea that on the first day that TARC was announced they were going to start talking about the Armenian Genocide,"

Mooradian said, although David Phillips has written and stated that they did no such thing.

### "Ripeness" at Issue

Mooradian's main argument against reconciliation is that at this stage neither side is "ripe" for discussion. His estimation is that it will take another fifty years for ripeness to permit the discussion, meaning that it will take about that long for the major, divisive issues to take on practical and less theoretical meanings. The evening concluded with a lengthy and informative question and answer period, followed by the author's signing of his newly published book.

Mooradian's Saturday seminar on September 10 examined the various aspects of mediation, its goals and various processes, in comparison with theory and with what actually transpired in mediation efforts following the Karabakh war. He discussed the intensified warfare that commenced with the Kelbajar offensive in 1993. He drew comparisons between the several mediation efforts in an attempt to determine whether it was the mediations themselves or the increased violence and destruction (a hurting stalemate) that caused the opposing sides to seek an end to the organized violence resulting in the present-day ceasefire.

### Lively Discussion at Seminar

Dr. Moorad Mooradian presented his ideas in an informal discussion-style atmosphere, to about twenty individuals. The seminar format and genuine interest of participants brought out well-rounded discussions with plenty of opportunities for clarification and deeper interaction between the speaker and audience.

Mooradian examined the CSCE (OSCE) effort closely, focusing the factors bringing the Armenian and Azerbaijani sides to the negotiating table that led to the ceasefire.

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Mooradian also addressed the question—if a hurting stalemate brought an end to massive violence in the form of set-to military battles, why did/has it not led to a peace treaty? The audience's participation contributed an introspective element to the discussion, nicely balancing academic points of view with spirited optimism.

**Dr. Carolann Najarian: Healers, Holy Books, Mountains, and Gardens: Armenian Folk Medical Beliefs**

Every culture has a belief system regarding healthcare, and, notwithstanding the variations within the society, Armenians are no different—so began Dr. Carolann Najarian in her lecture presented jointly by NAASR and the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA). Dr. Najarian used photographs and a lively interaction with the audience to present some of the familiar and not-so-familiar Armenian healing techniques at her lecture on September 22, 2005.

As Armenian society undergoes tremendous social and political changes, Najarian wanted to investigate the effects on healthcare. Large-scale privatization of resources, minimal government regulation and funding of hospitals, and a rise in corruption, combined with low salaries have contributed to a renewed reliance on traditional practices. Many of these practices are rooted in Armenia's history and geography and are supported by aspects of what we might call its "national character."

Najarian explained that as all these social and economic changes are taking place, doctors and patients, villagers and city folk alike are turning back to these alternative practices. In fact, doctors prescribe traditional remedies, family networks endorse these suggestions, and doctors themselves seek alternative healers.

Dr. Najarian, stepping out of her role as a medical doctor, has sought to understand this phenomenon through the eyes of a medical anthropologist. (Medical anthropology is the study of

healthcare beliefs and practices.) Desiring to understand why so many of her Armenian patients would not follow medical instructions, would not take medications regularly, and why they would self-medicate by taking each other's medication, Dr. Najarian ran into some of the popular views held in Armenia about western medicine. These included the belief that science and technology are limited and that stronger doses do not necessarily benefit the ill. It is also thought that nothing is wrong if the patient does not feel sick. She also discovered that locals hold strongly to beliefs in miracle cures, and she shared several such stories with the audience. She discovered that many Armenians were simultaneously seeking traditional home remedies and medical treatment, often preferring the former. Some of these traditional remedies included specific recipes or visits with various shamans, psychic or religious healers, or adopting computer, magnet, pulse, or leech therapies.

Dr. Najarian delivered her talk to a large and enthusiastic crowd, and enjoyed a triumphant reaction when she demonstrated to audience that even they continue to rely on the tried and true concoctions of garlic and onions, lemon and honey, mint, berries, herbal teas and plenty of greens – all traditional remedies.

**Van Aroian: Armenian Photographers in the Getty Research Institute**

Van Aroian delivered a colorful talk entitled "Armenian Photographs in the Getty Museum Collection" on October 13, 2005. The Getty Research Library, housed in the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, has an impressive collection of Ottoman photographs, which is an invaluable resource for Ottoman scholars, ethnographers, historians of

photography, and students of Armenian Ottoman life.

Aroian, longtime member and current Secretary of the NAASR Board of Directors, opened his lecture by asking the audience to take a ride with him, metaphorically, down Sunset Boulevard toward the Getty Museum. It was along this relaxing, symbolic ride on the beautiful coast of California, that Aroian presented a sampling of the Ottoman photo collection at the Institute, focusing on contributions of Armenians in the Empire.

Aided by his wife Mary, Aroian moved through a series of slides split into three categories: photographs of or directly connected to Armenians, images of commonalities with other Ottoman subjects, and images of depicting changes in Ottoman life that had an impact on Armenians and Armenian culture.

Speaking to a large crowd, Aroian opened with a photograph of a woman entitled "Turkish Lady in Repose." Pausing to examine the image closely, Aroian discussed Orientalism. (Orientalism, popularized by Edward Said, is, in simple terms, the idea that the West is captivated by the East yet looks at its people and culture as lazy and inferior, and lacking moral integrity.)

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**"Turkish Lady in Repose," a photo from the Getty Research Library collection**



Aroian argued the image was in fact of an Armenian woman, because social and religious customs would not have allowed a Moslem or Jewish woman of that era to be photographed reclined and unveiled. Aroian posits the woman was not only Armenian, but was also aware of her participation in a lucrative tourist industry thriving off Orientalism in which similar photos were sold to tourists who would use them of proof of their exotic travels.

Photographs became a means of explaining, recording, and promoting the reforms of the late 19th century, and Armenians played a critical role in shaping this history. Aroian discussed the background of the photographic industry in the Empire, which was established mostly by Armenians and Greeks.

He showed an image entitled "Armenian Wrestlers," photographed by Abdullah Frères, three of the first Ottoman photographers. Aroian explained that these Abdullah Brothers, who became the photographers to the Sultan, were actually Armenian Christians. Aroian's discussion of each image drew the audience deep into the photograph, probing and provoking, then answering many questions about each and skillfully tying together more and lesser known aspects of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. These meandering and insightful explanations seemed to nicely parallel the drive south on Sunset Boulevard, conjured by Aroian at the outset of the talk. With each picture the audience came to expect a mystery and a solution, and Aroian offered both effectively.

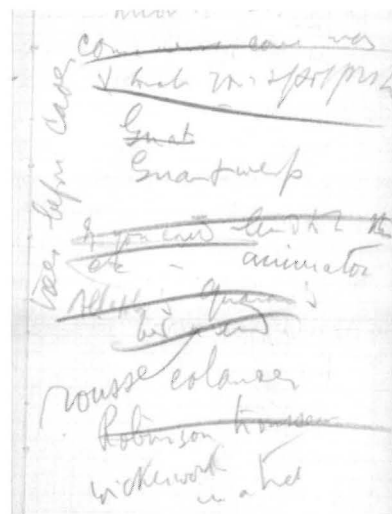
Aroian spent some six weeks in 1999-2001 looking through the Getty's Ottoman photograph collection of over 6000 photographs. He earned a BA at Boston University and MA in Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University. He was a fellow in Urban Geography at Clark University and an Urban Planner and Deputy Director of the Worcester Redevelopment Authority.

### Marc A. Mamigonian: All Abunk for Tararat! The Use of Armenian in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*

Marc Mamigonian spoke to a crowd of about 75 on October 26 about the Armenian influences found in Irish novelist James Joyce's last work, *Finnegans Wake*, at the NAASR Headquarters.

The lecture dealt with the ways in which Joyce used the Armenian language and the Armenian Genocide to bolster his novel's themes of death and rebirth and the cyclical nature of history. At the start of the lecture, Mamigonian joked that "it would be awkward for me to introduce tonight's speaker" since that has been his usual role as Director of Programs and Publications for the last eight years.

He began the lecture by giving a brief summary of Joyce's life and career and the complexities of *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce (1882-1941) wrote specifically about the Irish in works like *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and



A page from James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* notebooks.

*Ulysses* (1922). He was an expatriate who spent most of his adulthood outside Ireland but nevertheless drew on his background as the source for all of his fictional works. *Finnegans Wake* was a departure from his other books because it drew other cultures into his novel and was intended to be universal.

Mamigonian agreed with the novel's accessibility. "It's as confusing to the English reader as it is to any other reader," he said, which drew laughs. The novel deals with a father, the "hero" of the novel, a mother, twin sons and a daughter. The father has done something wrong and seeks restitution, but it is not straightforward; rather, Joyce retells the story repeatedly in different contexts.

In addition, to unusual storytelling, Joyce came up with an invented language. Mamigonian described it as a type of dream language. With *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce had said, "I am finished with English." In the title alone, he purposely leaves out the apostrophe. Another example is the word "Tararat," used in the title of the lecture and also found in the book which combines references to the Hill of Tara in Ireland and Mount Ararat. The following is a passage from the book: "Somehows this sounds like the purest **kidooleyoon** wherein our **madernacerution** of **lour** lore is rich." There are three Armenian references, in bold type. But even when one extracts the meaning of these individual words, Mamigonian said, Joyce's intention is not entirely clear.

Mamigonian said that this lecture was not intended to be a mini course on *Finnegans Wake* and joked that "we'd all need our sleeping bags if it were." Instead, his focus was on the Armenian influence in the novel which was written in 1939. Said Mamigonian, "People who read the book were perplexed and angry. People who pick up the book today are perplexed and angered by the book. It's a maddening book," he said. "You either plunge into it and hope not to drown or you don't bother." The audience laughed.

He said this book was not one that was taught on the undergraduate level and that people have dedicated their entire careers to understanding this novel. Mamigonian said his lecture built on some of the work by previous scholars who have already published research on Armenian references in *Finnegans Wake*.

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He handed out small packets to the audience at the beginning of his lecture which included passages from *Finnegans Wake* with Armenian references. Joyce also borrowed from many other languages in his book, sometimes combining references to a few languages in one word.

Joyce packs multiple meanings into a single term and that is why it takes so long to read the book, Mamigonian explained. But his references add depth and meaning, he added. For example, throughout the book he draws on and alludes to characters in the biblical story of Noah's Ark. "Joyce was skillful at using Armenian archetypes in his works but he was not an Armenian scholar," Mamigonian said.

Mamigonian, prior to his career at NAASR, spent two years writing annotations for a multi-media edition of Joyce's *Ulysses* at Boston University. He is the co-author of a full-length commentary on Joyce's *Stephen Hero*, published in 2004 by the *James Joyce Quarterly*, as well as other articles on Joyce, the Armenians, and other topics. He holds an MA in English from Tufts University.

(By Dilani Yogaratnam; reprinted courtesy of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*)

**Stephen Kurkjian: Kiss My Children's Eyes: A Search for Answers to the Armenian Genocide Through One Remarkable Photograph**

Stephen Kurkjian, Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter for the *Boston Globe* and the son of a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, as well as a member of NAASR's Board of Directors, presented the results of a year of research in the lecture "Kiss My Children's Eyes: A Search for Answers to the Armenian Genocide Through One Remarkable Photograph" on Thursday, November 10 at the NAASR Center, to an overflow crowd.

"More than a year ago, I received a phone call from Ed Patapanian, a now retired successful Armenian businessman who lives in Belmont, who told me about a photograph that he had come

upon which showed his wife's grandfather and numerous other Armenian men standing in front of a prison in Kayseri, Turkey, in the days leading up to the onslaught of the Armenian Genocide," Kurkjian began. This set in motion an investigation into the origins and significance of the photograph that ended up taking more of his time and energy than he could have anticipated.

The photograph identified many of the men and said it was taken an hour before they were all hanged. Over the next few days, Kurkjian looked closely at the photograph and names attached to them, and found it eerily evocative. "The more people I showed it to, Marc Mamigonian of NAASR, Ruth Thomsian of Project Save, Samantha Power of Harvard's Kennedy School, Vahakn Dadrian, and Richard Hovannisian, the more intrigued I got," Kurkjian said.

The only unfortunate part about the photograph, which everyone agreed was one of the very few that, if authenticated, showed Armenian men shortly under arrest and perhaps shortly before their execution, was that "it had no story to go along with it." Kurkjian was able to use his skills as a reporter to find that story.

"I decided to look further into this photograph and hope to answer some basic questions—who were these men, why had they been rounded up, who took this photograph and why and

had a certain amount of information that led me to some conclusions that I needed to explore and confirm."

One necessary step was "to learn more about how the Genocide had come to Gesaria (Kayseri) —a city of about 75,000 in central Turkey. To accomplish this, Kurkjian "reached out to an 80-year old man who needs to live for a long long time, forever maybe, if we are ever to get justice for the harm done to our ancestors—Vahakn Dadrian." Dadrian is, of course, one of the foremost scholars of the Armenian Genocide.

Dadrian drafted a 30-page report on how the Genocide had come to Gesaria, "the events that took place, the dates, names of the Armenians and the Turkish officials that were involved," drawing from a multitude of sources. Unfortunately, however, "information about the photograph proved elusive to him." It became clear, however, that "it had not been taken an hour before all the men were hanged," as was claimed in one book that reprinted the photograph. Kurkjian explained, "the hangings in Kayseri began on June 2, 1915—twelve men were hanged that day—and here these men were bundled up." In addition, while 55 men were hanged in Kayseri during the summer of 1915, some of the men were known to have died elsewhere.

He had "practically given up" on



**The photograph of the doomed men of Gesaria investigated by Kurkjian**

what did the photograph tell us about the circumstances of the Genocide overall?" Kurkjian continued, "I approached the project just as I would any investigative story that I have done during my past 35 years at the *Globe*. I

finding the origin of the photograph when he heard some good news from Arpie Davis of Project SAVE, who was translating part a memoir of a Gesaria resident. "The book referred to the

— continued on next page



Turks summoning a local Armenian photographer named Gulbenk Chichekian to photograph the hanging of Mr. Vishabian at the prison." In addition, Arpie herself remembered Gulbenk, who had survived the Genocide and migrated to Beirut where he had become an established photographer – she even had her photo taken by him.

Through various connections, Kurkjian was able to learn more about Gulbenk and to determine that his grandson, Arthur, was living in Connecticut. Kurkjian is now virtually certain that Gulbenk took the mysterious Gesaria photograph. His grandson told Kurkjian "that when he was growing up in Beirut his grandfather had recounted to him the events of what had happened in Kayseri during these days of madness."

Gulbenk was taken captive by the Turkish authorities and put into a jail inside the military fortress in Gesaria in the spring of 1915. By late spring, the prison would hold as many as 900 Armenian men.

"At various points when there were events taken place inside the jail," his grandson told Kurkjian, "Gulbenk was summoned, his cameras and other equipment would be brought to him, and he was ordered to take photos of whatever event the authorities wanted shot. They included the dozens of hangings that began in the gallows outside of the jail. The hangings began on June 2, 1915."

Kurkjian proceeded to detail the unfolding of the Genocide in the Gesaria region and to touch on the stories of several of the men in the photograph about who he was able to learn some details.

He concluded with the hope that when the day comes that Turkey recognizes the Genocide they will "allow the Catholicos to consecrate that courtyard [in Gesaria] where so many of these men were hanged and then perhaps ... at St. Gregory the Illuminator, which still stands, [hold] a funeral mass for these men."



NAASR's Ruby Chorbajian, Sandra Jurigian, and Marc Mamigonian with Prof. Fatma Muge Gocek of the Univ. of Michigan, during her visit to NAASR in November 2005.

## NAASR Awards Research Grant

NAASR has awarded a grant of \$1,000 to Tigran Martirosyan, a PhD candidate at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., to support research for his dissertation, entitled "The Southern Caucasus in Modern History: Nationalism, Politics, and State Building – The Case of Armenia."

Martirosyan, who is fluent in Armenian, Russian, Arabic, and English, is the co-author of *Scholars' Guide To Washington, D.C. for Central Asian and Caucasus Studies: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan* (2004). He is also the author of numerous articles and reviews.

Martirosyan did undergraduate work in Middle Eastern Studies at Yerevan State University, and went on to complete a Masters in International Relations at Johns Hopkins University. He has worked as Program Director at the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins and served in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Armenia, the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the

UN, and the Armenian Embassy to the U.S.

The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) considers applications for grants for research within the field of Armenian Studies. Prospective candidates should direct their inquiries to NAASR and request an application form at least 3-6 months before the grant request date.



Tigran Martirosyan of George Washington University



## Belmont High Volunteers Aid in Library

By Ruby Chorbajian

As has been reported in previous issues of the *Newsletter*, the Armenian Reference and Research Library cataloging project has taken off and great strides are being made towards complete accessibility.

The project, begun in the spring of 2005, follows cataloging methods used by other libraries in the area, with the goal of aiding researchers and interested individuals in searching for books, and ultimately making the li-

Thomas Galvin, a Belmont High School junior recently accepted into the National Honor Society, comes in regularly on Friday afternoons for three hours. Galvin's knowledge of the library shelving system is exceptional, his work is meticulous, and he enjoys exploring his budding views of the world and sharing anecdotes from his numerous volunteer contributions as he works.

Together, the volunteers have helped catalogue and shelve over 1,000 books, a tremendous contribution, and



Ruby Chorbajian working with volunteer Oleg Ogarkov.

brary catalogue available on the internet.

In recent months I have had the great pleasure of working with a number of volunteers from Belmont High School. High school senior Colm Griffin and juniors Oleg Ogarkov and Thomas Galvin have offered some seventy-five hours of assistance with the cataloging process. Griffin, who is currently looking at colleges for next year, and friend Ogarkov, a Russian-speaking student who helped with translations, worked as a team twice a week after school. Nearly inseparable, they worked on a number of projects together, including book placement and shelving arrangements. They completed their time here in mid-November.

have moved the cataloging project ahead in an invaluable way. The project itself took a recent turn toward conclusion with the development of a Project Plan for completion of the cataloging process. The plan stipulates completion by mid-summer 2006 and outlines a number of steps to be taken towards making the library more accessible in general. In keeping with this plan, NAASR would like to extend volunteer opportunities to the general public; so if you or someone you know would like to assist in the cataloging process, please contact Ruby Chorbajian via e-mail at the NAASR Headquarters ([ruby@naasr.org](mailto:ruby@naasr.org)).

## Recent Donations To NAASR Library

The following members and friends have donated valuable materials to NAASR's library during the past year. Such donations are vital to our library and we urge you to help preserve the Armenian heritage by donating to the Mardigian Armenian Reference and Research Library at NAASR.

**American Bar Association**, Washington, D.C.

**Armenian Assembly**, Washington, D.C.

**Armenian General Benevolent Union**, Egypt

**Armenian National Committee**, Washington, D.C.

**Armenian Research Center**, Dearborn, MI

**Araz Artinian**, Montreal, Canada

**Dr. Vahe Baladouni**, New Orleans, LA

**Harry Barba**, Ballston Spa, NY

**Anna & Lucy Bedirian**, Watertown

**Richard Bezjian**, Belmont

**Dr. Andrew Bostom**, Chepachet, RI

**Dr. George Bournoutian**, Haworth, NJ

**Dr. Aghop Der-Karabetian**, La Verne, CA

**Leon & Tamar Der-Ohannessian**, Bryn Mawr, PA

**Alice Najarian Foley**, Worcester

**Rev. Garen Gdanian**, Latham, NY

**Arshag Gechijian**, Belmont

**Gary Goshgarian**, Arlington

**Mrs. Zarm Keljik Geisenhoff**, St. Paul, MN

**Jack Manuelian**, Paramus, NJ

**Melissa Merwin**, Miami, FL

**Newton Free Library**, Newton

**Gaytzag Palandjian**, Delray Beach, FL

**Dr. Aram Simonyan**, Yerevan, Armenia

**Art Sahagian**, Skokie, IL

**Dr. Verjine Svazlian**, Yerevan

**Richard H. Tashjian**, Santa Fe, NM

**Dr. Grace Yeni-Komshian**, Bethesda, MD

**Zoryan Institute**, Toronto, Canada



## A Valuable Donation to the Library of Yerevan State University

By Prof. Albert Stepanyan, Yerevan State University

A valuable donation was made by NAASR to the Yerevan State University Library during a summer 2005 visit by Board Chairman Nancy Kolligian. This donation is indicative of the importance that the new generation of leaders of NAASR attaches to its relationship with the National Academy of Science and Yerevan State University. They are doing their best to activate this relationship through new areas of cooperation: conferences, lectures, and other events with the participation of scholars from Armenia will become more frequent.

The Yerevan State University Library is one of the most important departments of the university. It was started in the first days of the university in 1919 and during the last eighty and more years it has successfully contributed to education and research activities at YSU.

The library contains about 2.5 million items: dictionaries, textbooks, journals, newspapers, researches, monographs, manuscripts, etc., in fifty languages. Since the 1990s a group of enthusiasts under the leadership of Prof. T. Zargaryan have brought about the computerization of the holdings. Now completed, this makes connections (particularly book exchanges) with other university and public libraries more effective. These have included the Sorbonne, Oxford, Cambridge,

Moscow, St. Petersburg, California, and San Francisco libraries.

One of the most important methods of enlarging and enriching the library's holdings has been (and continues to be) donations. The earliest fellows of the university donated their book collections to the library, and this tradition has continued. Today there are numerous personal collections from such eminent names as Manuk Abeghian, Hrachya Acherian, Garegin Hovsepian, Grigor Ghapantsian, and many others.

Returning to the NAASR donation, more than sixty books were donated to the library on July 2, 2005, when Nancy Kolligian met with Yerevan State University vice-rector Prof. Aram Simonian and the director of the library, H. Aslanian. Many of these important English-language books are devoted to the crucial problems of modern Armenian history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: social and demographic conditions, political parties, cultural develop-

ment, etc.

The main focus is on various aspects of the Armenian Genocide: from concrete episodes of massacres to theoretical and judicial problems, from economic issues to international law. Included were such fundamental works as Marderos Deranian's *Hussenig: The Origin, History, and Destruction of an Armenian Town*, Yves Teron's *The Armenian Cause, The Armenian Genocide: History, Politics, Ethics* (ed. by Richard Hovannisian), *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective* (ed. by R. Hovannisian), Robert E. Melson's *Revolution and Genocide*, and many more. Other books are devoted to contemporary interpretations of Genocide and Turkish denial, and personal stories of survivors of the Genocide.

These books and other works shed new light on the tragic aspects of Armenian history and national identity. I

believe they will contribute greatly to the richness of the library. They will be helpful for the young generation of scholars and students to familiarize themselves with contemporary ideas and concepts not only of Armenian but also general world history and civilization.



NAASR Board Member Yervant Chekijian with Prof. Albert Stepanyan, July 2005

**Coming Soon From  
NAASR's Armenian  
Heritage Press:**

*Bosphorus Nights:  
The Complete Lyric Poems of  
Bedros Tourian*

Translated with extensive  
commentary by  
Prof. James R. Russell

Advance Praise for *Bosphorus Nights*:

"James R. Russell has fashioned a brilliant homage to the poet Bedros Tourian, using all the articles of the bookmaker's craft, the scholar's devotion, and the historian's dedication to detail. Here at last, the pith and mire and blood of this poet's transcendent artistry, in a masterly volume of translation, reverence, and prayer."

—David Kherdian

"James Russell has given us a lovingly meticulous bilingual edition of Bedros Tourian's poems. With a scholarly introduction that places the poet in his time and culture and annotative comments on the individual poems, this edition brings to a wider world the romantic lyricism of Tourian's poems and allows us to understand the breadth of Tourian's concerns during his full but short life. James Russell's edition of *Bosphorus Nights* is a great achievement."

—Peter Balakian



## Giving To NAASR

There are many ways to support NAASR, and we hope you will consider one or more of the following:

- Increase your membership level and give gift memberships to friends and family. Membership dues are our lifeblood.
- This may also be a good time to review your estate giving plans and remember NAASR in your will. This is a wonderful way of making sure that your favorite charitable organizations receive the consideration you intended. You may learn more by contacting Nancy Kolligian or Bob Bejoian at 617-489-1610
- Support NAASR's annual appeal with as substantial a donation as you can manage
- Donate materials or supplies. If you have something you think we need or can assist in our getting it – we ask you to call us.
- Buy books from the NAASR bookstore for your local library – support NAASR and enrich your community

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

## NAASR Newsletter

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## Thank You! NAASR Has a New Sound System

In the past year we put out the call for help to allow us to purchase a new sound system for our lecture hall—a much-needed improvement that we are happy to announce has been installed.

Thanks to the generosity of NAASR members Ara and Mary Ann Gelenian, Samuel Salibian, Gloria Tatarian, Daniel Hagopian, and an anonymous longtime friend, as well as the kindness and hard work of Armen Meguerditchian of Cameras, Inc., and Fred Root, of Root Systems, both of Arlington, who selected and installed the system, NAASR's lecture series will be a more pleasant experience for everyone.

The new system includes a mixing board that allows for multiple inputs from up to six microphones, CD player, DVD player, and other media. Eight speakers inconspicuously hidden in the ceiling deliver sound to the full length and breadth of the lecture hall, while two satellite speakers bring audio to the back "refreshment" area and the coat room, where standing room crowds sometimes gather.

This dramatic improvement in one of NAASR's vital areas would not have been possible without the generosity of the donors. *Thank you!*

In addition to the major upgrade in the sound system, beginning in 2006 all NAASR lectures will be archived in digital video and audio. (Thanks again go to Armen Meguerditchian and Cameras, Inc., for facilitating this transition.) We are currently investigating the best way to use this technology to bring NAASR's programs to larger audiences than those who can attend at the NAASR Center or other venues.

We have also begun the long process of converting the scores of audiotapes of NAASR lectures and events, going back several decades, to the far more accessible and permanent digital format. These lectures are part of NAASR's heritage and that of the Armenian community, and we want to insure that they are available for future generations.

## Join Us for NAASR's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Banquet

In celebration of its landmark 50th anniversary, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) will hold an academic symposium and gala banquet on **Saturday, September 30, 2006**, at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Cambridge, MA.

The events of September 30, 2006, will culminate a year of observances of a half century of pioneering programs in Armenian studies, research, and publication. The organization began the formal observance of this significant date at its 50th Annual Assembly in November 2004.

The academic symposium will address the subject of "Armenian-Turkish Dialogue and the Direction of Armenian Studies." Hardly any subject has occasioned as much discussion in recent years as that of Armenian-Turkish reconciliation and the prospect of opening up of Turkey to an honest assessment of 1915. Some of the implications for Turkey were discussed at the landmark conference in Istanbul in September 2005. The political repercussions for Armenians are still the subject of great controversy. But what are the implications for Armenian Studies as a whole?

Possible topics to be addressed include access to Turkish archives (Ottoman Archives and others), increased collaboration with Turkish scholars and institutions, restoration of Armenian monuments in Turkey, and archaeological projects in Armenian sites within Turkey's borders.

Further details on the banquet and symposium will be forthcoming in subsequent press releases, issues of the *Newsletter*, and on the NAASR website.