



**FROM THE NAASR
CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

*Dear Friends and NAASR
Community,*

We are thrilled to share with you the many accomplishments of NAASR throughout 2023. Whatever we achieve is only possible through your generous support and positive encouragement. NAASR is fortunate and grateful to be part of a community with such dedicated members and supporters.

As a community, we witnessed the pain and trauma experienced by the over 100,000 Armenians forced off their ancestral homeland in Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh this past September and we will continue to promote the fact-based telling of Armenian past and present through our scholarly work.

We hope you will enjoy reading the summary of our programs, events, news, and achievements.

Thank you again for your generous support!

ARA ARAZ, CHAIR

SILVA SEDRAKIAN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NAASR Celebrates and Honors Christina Maranci as Harvard Mashtots Chair

By Jaxon Washburn

Photos by Ken Martin

On May 6, 2023, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) celebrated the appointment of Dr. Christina Maranci to Harvard University's prestigious Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at a special gala held at The Charles Hotel in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The third scholar to hold the chair, Maranci has the dual distinction of being both the first woman and the first Armenian appointed to oversee Armenian Studies at Harvard. Hundreds of friends, members, and supporters of NAASR and the Mashots Chair gathered in high spirits in honor of this momentous occasion.

Prior to her Harvard appointment, Christina Maranci served as the Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Professor of Armenian Art and Architecture at Tufts University. Her research and publications have focused on Armenian art and architecture, with an emphasis on the late antique and medieval periods. She is the author of four books and over 100 essays and articles, with her most recent volume being *The Art of Armenia* (Oxford, 2018). Additionally, her writings have been featured in



Christina Maranci with students past and present



Former NAASR Board Chairman Yervant Chekijian and guest of honor Christina Maranci

The Wall Street Journal, Apollo, The Conversation, and Hyperallergic. She also currently serves as President of the Society of Armenian Studies (SAS).

As the gala began, a hum of enthused chatter, the clinking of glasses and silverware, and the formal attire of the guests attested to the excitement of the event. Prior to the main banquet, the gathered guests mingled and socialized during a special cocktail hour, reconnecting with familiar faces and enjoying complimentary drinks and hors d'oeuvres. Upon the opening of the banquet hall's main doors, the excited crowd gradually found their seats and readied themselves for the start of the program while enjoying various appetizers.

see MARANCI, page 4

Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian (1932-2023)

NAASR, with sadness and in solidarity with the worldwide community of scholars, friends, family members, and indeed the entirety of the Armenian people, mourns the loss of Richard G. Hovannisian and offers thanks for the gift of his long and incredibly productive life.

A Giant of Armenian Studies

true pioneer in Armenian Studies and a great friend of NAASR. His contributions to the field are invaluable."

see HOVANNISIAN, page 26

"We deeply mourn the passing of Prof. Richard Hovannisian," stated NAASR Chairperson Judith Saryan. "He was a



Speaking at NAASR's 60th Anniversary Gala, 2016

NAASR Holds Hybrid 69th Annual Assembly

Ara Araz Selected as New Board Chair

NAASR held its 69th Annual Assembly of Members on Saturday, November 4, 2023, at its Vartan Gregorian Building in Belmont, MA. The event was a hybrid meeting with both in-person attendees and online participation of NAASR members around the U.S. as well as abroad.

Board Chairperson Judith Saryan noted the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order, remarking on the pain of the past year for Armenians in the Republic and in Artsakh, in particular, and observing that “preserving our cultural and historical heritage is even more crucial and we should be proud of having an organization such as NAASR dedicated to this cause which has become stronger and stronger.”

Saryan’s report as chairperson gave an overview of an exceptionally active year for the organization, including sponsoring or co-sponsoring more than 65 scholarly programs, supporting scholars through research grants, hosting events for young people, providing space for a number of Armenian sister organizations to hold their events, as well as the ongoing valuable work of NAASR’s Mardigian Library and Bookstore, and more. She thanked the full- and part-time staff as well as volunteers for their efforts and expressed special gratitude to several individuals who have honored NAASR with generous bequests.

Recognition of Long-Serving Board Members

Of special significance was Saryan’s recognition of three outstanding and long-serving NAASR Board members who were retiring this year for their leadership, vision, and dedicated service: Yervant Chekijian of Watertown, MA, a NAASR member since 1963, Board member since 1998, and Board Chairman from 2016 to 2022, making a profound impact on NAASR’s growth and leading the ambitious and highly successful campaign for our new headquarters; Raffi Yeghiayan of Bedford, MA, a NAASR member since 1960, Board member since 1968, and Board Chairman from 2010 to 2016, devoting his many talents to leading the organization; and Roxanne Etmekjian of West Newton, MA, a NAASR member since 1986 and a Board member since 2006, including many years as Treasurer.

Saryan concluded by stating that she has “felt privileged to serve as NAASR’s Chair this past year and honored to work with all of you,” but had made the decision to step down as Chair while remaining “as committed as ever to NAASR” and continuing to serve on the Board of Directors.

Following Saryan’s report, NAASR Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian in-

roduced the featured speaker, Dr. Henry Theriault, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs at Worcester State University and Past President (2017-2021) of the International Association of Genocide Scholars, whose talk was entitled “The Artsakh Crisis: Scholarly Ethics, Activism, and Genocide.”

Insightful and Timely Talk by Dr. Henry Theriault

Theriault provided a succinct overview of the historical background for the current Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh crisis, going back to the post-World War I period and the Sovietization of the South Caucasus, noting that the creation of the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave, as well as the Nakhichevan exclave and other such territories within the new Soviet republics, fostered a “perpetual tension” between ethnicities and a reliance on Moscow to resolve problems that inevitably arose.

He discussed the long-term outcomes of the first war over Nagorno-Karabakh that resulted in 1994 in a stalemate that left Armenians in control of the region as well as additional territories around it. He noted that the years since then resulted in the development of a legitimate democracy, albeit within a self-declared state

tainly components specific to Azerbaijan and the immediate context, the anti-Armenian ideology and eliminationist project would not have formed or been pursued absent the history of genocide against Armenians.” Furthermore, “Azerbaijan has imported a ready-made, fully genocidal ideology from Turkey.”

Azerbaijan’s stance, Theriault made clear, is harmful not only to Armenians but also “genocidal anti-Armenianism is destructive for Azeris as well,” since “Heydar, then Ilham, Aliyev used this ideology as a tool of manipulation to dupe their subjects into willing subjugation in an authoritarian then totalitarian system of political control.” Connecting the current heads of state of Turkey and Azerbaijan, he stated that “both Aliyev and Erdogan have stated repeatedly and in no uncertain terms that their goal is the elimination of the Armenian presence in the Caucasus, that is, they show the special intent to destroy Caucasus Armenians because they are Armenian,” and that, therefore, there is a clear case for genocide as defined by the UN Genocide Convention.

Theriault then turned to the role of scholars in the contemporary crisis, faced with dilemmas regarding their perceived—albeit mythical—status as “disinterested” authorities who risk overstepping their roles by weighing in on political issues within Armenia. Rather, he argued, “the right kind of interest can drive deeply committed and effective scholarly work; it needs a moral component that militates against tainting of results.” That is to say, “is a scholar’s concern about Armenian issues based on an honest appraisal of the facts and generalized concern for all human rights or a narrower ethnocentrism



Judith Saryan presenting Yervant Chekijian with 60-year membership certificate



Featured speaker Dr. Henry Theriault

that was unrecognized by other nations, while at the same time within Azerbaijan a strong ultra-nationalist identity centered on anti-Armenian sentiment and avenging the defeat while the government became increasingly oppressive and intolerant of any dissent.

Turning to the question of the relationship between the current conflict and the Armenian Genocide carried out by Ottoman Turkey, Theriault observed that “while there are cer-

that affects the scholar's perceptions?" The former is entirely appropriate; the latter is not.

After highlighting that neither a preoccupation with past cultural achievement nor an exclusive focus on the future without awareness of the past is a productive approach for Armenian Studies scholars, Theriault concluded that "what is necessary is a model of a community of scholars engaging in both kinds of work in a complementary and dynamically interactive ways." He added that "in every aspect of its mission and actual activity, NAASR provides the space and lines of connection that allow, encourage, and indeed are the very condition for this scholarly community. In the same way that specific territory—think of Artsakh, Ani, the Dakotas, or any other indigenous land where every hill and river, every constructed edifice and marker, every plant and animal, contributes to a unique medium through which social relations among those attached to this land are bound together—is the essential conduit and binder of interconnection and shared identity, so does NAASR provide that for the community of Armenian scholars."

Reports from NAASR Staff and Committees

After Theriault's presentation and discussion, the business session of the Assembly commenced, which included reports by Treasurer Bruce Roat, Executive Director Silva Sedrakian, and Academic Director Marc Mamigonian, as well as the presentation of the co-chairs of the Nominating Committee, Nancy R. Kolligian and Ara Araz, prior to the election of members of the Board of Directors.

Sedrakian reflected on positive developments such as the addition of many new members around the United States as well as in other countries and encouraged all "who care about keeping our Armenian heritage, culture, and history alive" to become members and to urge others to do likewise. She cited as highlights of the year two very successful outreach events: in Los Angeles, to mark the hiring of Dr. Tamer Akçam as the inaugural director of the Armenian Genocide Research Program of the Promise Armenian Institute at UCLA, and in Cambridge honoring Prof. Christina Maranci's appointment to the Mashtots Chair in Armenian

Studies at Harvard. She also presented a special gift to Judith Saryan to recognize her time as NAASR Chairperson.

Mamigonian emphasized the quality as well as the quantity of NAASR's academic programming, which in 2023 included the co-sponsorship of several major international conferences and vital partnerships with a wide range of academic colleges and universities as well as com-



Executive Director Silva Sedrakian and Chairperson Judith Saryan

munity organizations, noting that "there is no possibility of doing all of these programs on our own, nor would it be desirable to try to. ... our strength lies in our ability to work with others towards our goals—namely, advancing Armenian studies and research."

Results of Elections

The following candidates were elected to the NAASR Board of Directors: incumbents Ara Araz of Franklin Lakes, NJ; Michael Bobelian of Cold Spring Harbor, NY; Dr. Gregory Ketabgian of La Canada, CA; Stephen Kurkjian of Manomet, MA; Dr. Armineh Mirzabegian of Wellesley, MA; and Judith Saryan of Cambridge, MA; and new members Dr. Sharon Chekijian of New Haven, CT; Ani Hovannisian of Los Angeles, CA; Dr. Mary Papazian of

Livermore, CA; and Dr. Henry C. Theriault of Brookline, MA.

Tribute to Longtime Members and Those Who Have Passed Away

Chairperson Saryan recognized with gratitude 25, 50, 60, and 65-year members for their enduring commitment to NAASR: 25 years: Roger K. Hagopian, Paul R. Ignatius, Marc A.

Mamigonian, Carissa D. Vanitzian, and Gayle M. Yapchaian; 50 years: Eva A. Medzorian, Robin L. Tashjian, and Dr. Edward H. Yeterian; 60 years: Yervant Chekijian and Michael Kilijian; 65 years: Mary-Louise Essaian and Edward Shooshanian.

Finally, Saryan paid respects to a number of extraordinary leaders in the community and dedicated supporters of NAASR who passed away during the past year: diplomat and author Edward Alexander, who passed

away at the age of 103; NAASR Board Member and principal benefactor for NAASR's Vartan Gregorian Building, musician and philanthropist Edward Avedisian of Lexington, MA; Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian, one of the leading lights of Armenian Studies for more than half a century at UCLA; Dr. Mary Kilbourne Matossian, longtime NAASR member and pioneer scholar of Soviet Armenia and women's studies; Peter Onanian, former NAASR Board Member and prominent Boston-area community leader; and Dr. Dennis Papazian, NAASR Charter Member and former Board Member, and founder of the Armenian Research Center in Dearborn, MI.

New Executive Committee Formed

Following the close of the Assembly and the tallying of election results, the newly reconfigured Board of Directors met and approved a new Executive Committee consisting of Ara Araz, Chairperson; Margaret Mgrublian of Pasadena, CA, Vice-Chairperson; Arlene Saryan Alexander of Washington, D.C., Secretary; Bruce W. Roat of Los Angeles, CA, Treasurer; Nancy R. Kolligian of Watertown, MA, Advisor; Mark Momjian of Wayne, PA, Advisor; and Dr. Henry Theriault, Advisor. Araz becomes the first NAASR Chairperson from outside of the Greater Boston area in the organization's history, and the geographical diversity of the Executive Committee reflects the fact that the work of the organization is truly national, if not international, in its scope.

Special Assembly of Members Approves New Bylaws

At a Special Assembly on Saturday, June 10, 2023, NAASR's membership voted to approve a comprehensive amendment and restatement of the organization's bylaws. These restated bylaws replace NAASR's former constitution in its entirety and contain updated provisions, procedures, and terminology to conform to Massachusetts law, reflect best practices, and clarify procedures. NAASR's bylaws can be found on its website, www.naasr.org.

The NAASR Board had voted on February 27, 2023, to recommend these proposed restated bylaws for submission to the membership for a vote. They were initially drafted by the NAASR Bylaws Committee, which worked diligently for over two years with the advice of counsel. The committee consisted of Ara Araz, Yervant Chekijian, Roxanne Etmekjian, Sarah Ignatius, Marc Mamigonian, Silva Sedrakian, and Shushan Teager.

NAASR Honors Christina Maranci as Harvard Mashtots Chair

MARANCI, from page 1

Dr. Lisa Gulesserian, Preceptor on Armenian Language and Culture in Harvard's Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, formally introduced the evening while expressing her gratitude towards Maranci, both as a friend and a personal mentor. Drawing attention to the invaluable contributions of NAASR's supportive community in making the event, the Mashtots Chair, and the proliferation of Armenian studies in the United States in the last 70 years possible, Gulesserian assured that "nothing was possible in the past without your support, and nothing will be possible in the



Dr. Lisa Gulesserian

history with NAASR after it was first established by friends and members of the NAASR community more than 60 years ago.

Having served as a board member of NAASR—and whose sister, Sarah Ignatius, previously served as NAASR's Executive Director—Adi spoke of his family's own entwined history with the organization, remarking that "I want to thank everyone whose families turned the dream of establishing a chair at Harvard into a reality. Donations poured in from throughout the country, including from my own and Sarah's grandfather ... and I want to extend thanks to all of you who continue to support Armenian Studies through NAASR today."

After reviewing the distinguished speakers for the evening, Adi also invited the audience to meet and get to know the dozen or so current and former students of Maranci's in attendance, identifying them as some of the hopeful future scholars who will continue to define and expand the field. Following the recognition of all who made the event possible, Adi introduced and invited Silva Sedrakian, NAASR's Executive Director, to the podium.

Speaking on behalf of NAASR, and in particular its chairperson, Judith Saryan, who missed the event due to illness, Sedrakian attested to how "the work of scholars like Christina Maranci is crucial to our understanding

both of our rich cultural heritage and the importance of [Armenian] heritage to our continued existence as a people." She outlined NAASR's major success in expanding and strengthening the study of Armenian history, language, culture, religion, and identity across the country. "By starting the movement to establish chairs and permanent programs in Armenian Studies more than 65 years ago," she proudly stated, "NAASR took a bold step towards the fulfillment of this mission. Today, there are 13 chairs at universities across the United States."

Sedrakian went on to confer special recognition on Yervant Chekijian and Marc Mamigonian for their years of dedication to NAASR's cause. She explained that Chekijian has been a NAASR member since 1963, member of the Board of Directors since 1998, and Chairman from 2016-2022, serving in many key leadership roles during his years as a board member including spearheading the ambitious and successful campaign to design and construct a new

NAASR headquarters building, which opened in 2019. She noted, too, that he was present as a teenager in 1959 when NAASR celebrated the completion of the Harvard Chair fundraising campaign, and saluted his "tireless efforts to fulfill the organization's mission."

Of comparable significance to the growth and continued direction of NAASR, Marc Mamigonian—who presently serves as its Academic Director—was honored for his quarter century with the organization. His labors have transformed NAASR into a preeminent international hub for Armenian Studies. Speaking further of his contributions, Sedrakian explained that he has "built on the work of NAASR's founders to realize NAASR's mission of advancing Armenian Studies and has dedicated his career to that goal, encouraging the continued growth of the field as well as the strength and integrity of the organization."

Following these words of praise, Sedrakian stepped aside to allow Mamigonian to share a presentation going into greater detail regarding the entwined histories of NAASR and the Mashtots Chair at Harvard. Describing how previous attempts to establish Armenian Studies chairs and programs had been without success, he traced the narrative line from NAASR's original visionaries who immediately set out, following the organization's founding in 1955, to establish such a chair at Harvard University. With the goal of raising \$300,000 within the space of three years (roughly \$3.5 million today,) he explained how more than 3,000 individual contributors made donations to secure the funding, a remarkable feat of community support which set the Mashtots Chair in a league of its own.

He related that "there had never been a chair established at Harvard University, or anywhere else, through the kind of community-wide effort led by NAASR," and that in 1958, Hamilton Gibb, then the Director of Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, wrote to NAASR Chairman Manoog Young that "it will be, I believe, the first chair to be founded in this way in America, and that fact itself gives to the chair additional—and piercing—significance. You can be sure that this is fully appreciated here at Harvard." These circumstances prompted Gibb to suggest naming the chair "The Armenian Community's Chair of Armenian Studies."

By May of 1959, a large contribution from the Gulbenkian Foundation pushed the total raised past the necessary \$300,000, and a special "Victory Banquet" attended by more than 1,000 people was held at Harvard's Memorial Hall on May 16, 1959, to celebrate.

In 1969, Robert W. Thomson, who had begun teaching at Harvard in 1963 as a language instructor, was appointed to the chair, which in 1980 was named the Mashtots Chair, a position he held until the early 1990s when he took the Gulbenkian Chair at Oxford. In his inaugural public talk as chair in 1969, entitled "The Hub and the Spokes," Thomson stated:

"What I must stress is the result of NAASR's work in establishing a chair at Harvard. Because it was this endowment which gave permanency



Prof. Christina Maranci, Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard

future without you."

At the close of her remarks, she invited Fr. Stephan Baljian of the St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church of Merrimack Valley, located in North Andover, Massachusetts, to offer a traditional Armenian blessing upon the food. Following Der Stephan's invocation, Gulesserian turned the proceedings over to Adi Ignatius, the Master of Ceremonies for the gala and the editor-in-chief of *Harvard Business Review*. An internationally recognized author, editor, and journalist who previously served as the deputy managing editor for *Time* magazine, Ignatius spoke warmly of the Mashtots Chair's shared



Emcee Adi Ignatius

and proper standing to Armenian Studies, and which for the first time made possible expansion and development of the field. For this opportunity ... not only Harvard University, but also the whole scholarly world, owes a debt to you—to your organisation and its indefatigable leaders, and to every single member of the community who contributed time, effort, and money to make this possible. The chair, ladies and gentlemen, is the hub without which there are not spokes or wheel.”



Prof. Sebouh Aslanian of UCLA with Robert Dulgarian

Following Thomson’s move to Oxford, the Mashtots Chair was filled by James R. Russell, whose research exploring Zoroastrianism in Armenia continues to be foundational to the study of interreligious exchange and formation within Armenian history. After Russell’s retirement, Harvard opened a search for a new professor of Armenian Studies, and in 2022 it was announced that Christina Maranci would be its third and newest occupant.

Closing his remarks about the history of the Mashtots Chair as the brainchild of NAASR during its founding, Marc Mamigonian concluded that “we cherish our close relations with all chairs and scholars, but the relationship with the Mashtots Chair is special, as NAASR’s beginning and the creation of the Harvard Chair and the birth of Armenian Studies as a field in the U.S. are all inextricably linked. Likewise, the future of NAASR, the Harvard Chair, and Armenian Studies are interconnected. And we believe the future is bright.”

Following this presentation, dinner was served, after which Adi Ignatius returned to reveal a special unlisted speaker of great importance to the night’s guest of honor: Robert Dulgarian, a professor of English literature and classics in translation at Emerson College and the husband of Christina Maranci. Reviewing the story of how he and Christina first met during a NAASR-sponsored bus trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2009, and jokingly acknowledging his own loving bias, he spoke glowingly of Christina’s many attributes and her exceptional academic acumen, closing in declaring that “it is with profound gratitude and a considerable degree of awe that I see this once guttering torch of scholarship and memory passed to my beloved Christina Maranci, who will make that torch flame more gloriously than

any can imagine. I am in awe.”

The next speaker, Dr. Robin Kelsey, the Shirley Carter Burden Professor of Photography and Dean of Arts and Humanities at Harvard University, was invited to share a few words for the occasion. In his introduction, Adi Ignatius described Dean Kelsey as having been the main point of contact between Harvard University and NAASR, addressing concerns and answering questions, and providing assurance that the best possible outcome would be achieved in finding a new Mashtots Chair. Kelsey confirmed this relationship, joking that almost as soon as he became the Dean of Arts and Humanities he began to receive phone calls from NAASR inquiring about the state of the Mashtots Chair.

Kelsey described how he became “deeply moved” in learning about the history of the Mashtots Chair and its significance to the Armenian community, characterizing it as “unique ... there is no other chair that I know of that was crowdfunded in this way and so reliant on a local community.” This understanding instilled him with a sense of responsibility in seeing the chair pass into “the next phase of its great story.” Speaking later of his excitement upon Christina’s appointment, Kelsey joined the night’s previous speakers in lauding her as “a great scholar and a great art historian” who “not only brings great scholarship in the area of Armenian studies but ... a faculty leader to rival the great faculty leaders we have in the humanities.”



Prof. Khaled El-Rouayheb (left) and Dean Robin Kelsey (right)

The next distinguished speaker was Dr. Khaled El-Rouayheb, the James Richard Jewett Professor of Islamic Intellectual History and Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. Dr. El-Rouayheb shared how, despite the propensity for hiring committees comprised of academics to be opinionated and fractious, in the case of Maranci’s appointment, “there were no problems. The process went as smoothly as any I had experienced, and this is a testimony to [her] sheer brilliance.”

He then directed the audience to a brief collection of pre-recorded remarks from some of Maranci’s former graduate students, who each spoke of the quality of her mentorship, character, sincere care, and positive impact in their lives. At the conclusion of their words of admiration and gratitude, Maranci at last approached the podium to much applause as the night’s concluding speaker and guest of honor.

Expressing her thanks to the leadership at

NAASR, her faculty and administrative peers at Harvard, her friends and family for their ongoing confidence over the years, and all those who made the night possible, Maranci spoke about the significance and value of NAASR in her personal journey — from a graduate student to a senior scholar — as well as within the wider Armenian Studies world. Additionally, she called attention to the dozen or so of her current and former students which were in attendance. She continued to speak of her own parents’ contributions to the creation of the Mashtots Chair at its inception, proud to continue their legacy and hopes in her appointment.

“[Armenian Studies] will always be the foundation of everything else I do, most of all teaching but also advocacy and community work. It’s a refuge, it’s a joy—sometimes a frustration—but inherently at the core of who I am.”



NAASR Library Curator Ani Babaian with Susan V. Barba and NAASR Board member Dr. Susan E. Barba

Redirecting her focus to her students, Maranci stated in the last academic year, enrollment in her classes grew by 110% to a total of 21 students. She also shared her intent to create and teach what would perhaps be the first gen-ed course in Armenian Studies ever in Harvard’s history. Further plans to expand Armenian Studies at the university include establishing an Armenian Studies concentration at the undergraduate level, as well as a doctoral track in Armenian Studies through either the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (NELC) or the History of Art and Architecture. Finally, she expressed hopes to also contribute to the formation of a NELC track in the study of the Christian East.

She concluded her remarks, as well as the evening’s events, in expressing her vision of what the future of Armenian Studies at Harvard could be, saying:

“The Armenian community that founded the Mashtots professorship knew that the most prestigious university in the world needs a share of Armenian Studies. I believe that our Harvard Armenian Studies now needs to grow in scale as well as stature. I see an exciting future ahead, including a second chair, full-time lecturers in both modern and classical Armenian languages, and even perhaps a center to complement NAASR. All of this will make Harvard competitive with the other great Armenian Studies centers in the United States.” The audience met her vision with enthusiastic applause.

Grants Support Vital NAASR Projects

Cummings Foundation

NAASR was one of 150 local nonprofits that in 2023 shared in \$30 million awarded through the Cummings Foundation's major annual grants program. NAASR was selected from a total of 630 applicants during a competitive review process. It will receive \$150,000 over three years for the project "Expanding Education to Help Prevent Future Genocides."

NAASR Chairperson Judith Saryan remarked that "we are extremely grateful to the Cummings Foundation for their generous support that will allow NAASR to work with teachers and librarians to promote active engagement and newfound understanding to help prevent future genocides. NAASR is a prime institution of research and education in Massachusetts with a vast collection of valuable and trustworthy primary sources of the Armenian Genocide as well as the Holocaust and other genocides."

The funding from the Cummings Foundation aims to provide librarians and teachers with reliable genocide education materials leading to a more accurate and enriched understanding of genocide for educational purposes in schools and in communities. The funds will be used to create an online curated genocide resource center featuring documentary resources suitable for users at a high school level education and to promote the new online genocide resource center to librarians and schoolteachers within the communities of Essex, Middlesex, and Suffolk counties.

NAASR has hired Sara Cohan, an experienced human rights and genocide education consultant, to develop the project. Cohan worked for The Genocide Education Project for seventeen years as their education director. Her background combines research, study, curriculum development and teaching. She has been a museum teacher fellow for the US Holocaust Museum and Memorial and worked extensively with the USC Shoah Foundation. In 2001, Cohan was named the research fellow for Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center and later she served on their advisory board in 2012. She also studied in Mexico as a recipient of a Fulbright-Hays scholarship and studied Islamic influences in Europe as a fellow for the National Endowment for the Humanities. She was an expert lecturer at the Council of Europe's European Youth Centre in Budapest in 2009 and has worked with the Armenian Genocide Museum and Institute in Yerevan. Cohan has written articles and designed educational materials for a variety of organiza-

tions and publications. She is the granddaughter of an Armenian Genocide survivor.

The Cummings \$30 Million Grant Program primarily supports Massachusetts nonprofits that are based in and serve Middlesex, Essex, and Suffolk counties. Through this place-based initiative, Cummings Foundation aims to give back in the areas where it owns commercial property. Its buildings are all managed, at no cost to the Foundation, by its affiliate, Cummings Properties. This Woburn-based commercial real estate firm leases and manages 11 million square feet of debt-free space, the majority of which exclusively benefits the Foundation.

"The way the local nonprofit sector perseveres, steps up, and pivots to meet the shifting needs of the community is most impressive," said Cummings Foundation executive director Joyce Vyriotes. "We are incredibly grateful for these tireless efforts to support people in the community and to increase equity and access to opportunities."

The majority of the grant decisions were made by about 90 volunteers. They worked across a variety of committees to review and discuss the proposals and then, together, determine which requests would be funded. Among these community volunteers were business and nonprofit leaders, mayors, college presidents, and experts in areas such as finance and DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion).

The Foundation and volunteers first identified 150 organizations to receive three-year grants of up to \$225,000 each. The winners included first-time recipients as well as nonprofits that had previously received Cummings grants. Twenty-five of this latter group of repeat recipients were then selected by a volunteer panel to have their grants elevated to 10-year awards ranging from \$300,000 to \$1 million each.

This year's grant recipients represent a wide variety of causes, including housing and food insecurity, workforce development, immigrant services, social justice, education, and mental health services. The nonprofits are spread across 46 different cities and towns.

Cummings Foundation has now awarded \$480 million to greater Boston nonprofits. The complete list of this year's 150 grant winners, plus nearly 1,500 previous recipients, is available at www.CummingsFoundation.org. Woburn-based Cummings Foundation, Inc. was established in 1986 by Joyce and Bill Cummings of Winchester, MA and has grown to be one of the largest private foundations in New England.



Ani Babaian and Silva Sedrakian with former Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker at the reception for Cummings Foundation grant awardees

The Foundation directly operates its own charitable subsidiaries, including New Horizons retirement communities, in Marlborough and Woburn, and Cummings Health Sciences, LLC.

Dadourian Foundation

In 2023, the Dadourian Foundation again provided generous support for a series of NAASR programs. The theme this year was "The Art of Armenian Church Mural Painting."

The striking architectural designs of Armenian church structures are usually the first thing that catches the eye, inspiring awe and reverence. Upon closer examination and no less important and impressive are the many distinctive ways that these beautiful churches are ornamented. Relief carvings, sculptures, and stone inscriptions abound on the exterior, and ceramics, decorative tiles, and murals decorate the interior. These decorative features are just some of the ways Armenian churches are imbued with a particular meaning and power but are not nearly as well known and appreciated as the structural architectural features of Armenian churches.

In this series of three programs, NAASR presented an in-depth exploration of mural paintings, one of the most striking aspects of Armenian church decoration. Focusing on several important examples of mural painting in Armenian churches, the series presented detailed discussions of how these works of art were created, how they inform our understanding of these structures and their function as sites of religious practice, and what their current state of preservation is today.

The first program was a hybrid lecture by Christina Maranci, "Wall Painting in Ani, Horomos, and Mren: Findings and Remarks," hosted at NAASR's Vartan Gregorian Building on June 1. In this lecture Maranci presented research concerning the wall paintings in the city and surrounding area of Ani and looked spe-



**Cummings
Foundation**

cifically at the painting programs at the tomb of Tigran Honents' and the church of Surb Grigor Abughamrents', both at Ani, the church of Surb Geworg at the Monastery of Horomos, and the Cathedral at Mren, demonstrating how much is hidden behind the whitewash of these well-known monuments.

Maranci, who is the Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies at Harvard University and the author of four books and over 100 articles and essays on medieval Armenian art and architecture, including most recently, *The Art of Armenia* (Oxford, 2018), emphasized the importance of combining technological innovations with knowledge of the conventions of Armenian art and texts, as well as traditional methods of visual and comparative analysis.

The second program in the series was co-sponsored by the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts / Matenadaran in Yerevan and was a webinar with Dr. Karen Matevosyan, the Head of the Department of Study of Art History and Scriptoria at the Matenadaran. His October 6 presentation was entitled "The Art of Armenian Mural Painting: A Historical Overview," and provided rich context for this artform dating back to antiquity.

While the works of Armenian medieval mural paintings stand out for their artistic merits, with often original iconography, they are of great importance not only for Armenian but also for world art. Matevosyan showed that mural painting is one of the oldest branches of Armenian art, one which is inextricably linked with architecture. Ancient samples of mural painting in Armenia have been preserved from the times of the Kingdom of Urartu (Ararat), 8-7th centuries BC.

A recurring theme in the series was the relative lack of scholarly work on Armenian murals. Matevosyan made clear that although analysis and preservation efforts directed at Armenian murals have become particularly frequent in the last 15 years, nevertheless, there is still much to be done towards their documentation and restoration.

Matevosyan is the author of 25 books (8 co-authored) and more than 114 scientific articles, focusing on the history, architecture, and art (mural miniature painting) of medieval Armenia. English-language translation for the program was provided by Sona Baloyan, Senior International Relations Specialist at the Matenadaran.

The third and final program in the series was a hybrid presentation by NAASR's Library Curator Ani Babaian, which took place on December 13 in conjunction with NAASR's Holiday Open House. Babaian's illustrated talk was titled "Revealing the Murals of Amenaprkich Vank of New Julfa."

Babaian, who in addition to her work at NAASR is an artist, art conservator, and researcher on Armenian art, formerly worked for the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of Isfahan on numerous important conservation projects, including the murals in



Karen Matevosyan via Zoom on October 6

the *gavit* or narthex of S. Amenaprkich Vank, in Chehel Sotoun Palace, and in the Museum of Decorative Arts of Isfahan. She has continued her conservation work for private collections and institutions including Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, and others.

In her talk she focused on Amenaprkich Vank, which is the seat of the Diocese of Isfahan and the southern part of Iran, and until the mid-20th century also for Armenians in India, and which has played an important role in the history of Nor Jugha (New Julfa).

The construction of this remarkable church began in 1655 and ended in 1664. The church is decorated with fascinating murals, which show scenes from the Old and New Testaments, the life of Gregory the Illuminator, the Last Judgment, floral ornaments, and bands of ceramic tiles. Babaian gave insights into the creation of the murals—the artistic styles, the artists, the projects to conserve the murals, and discoveries she made during the conservation process.

Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Portugal, has supported the NAASR/Calouste Gulbenkian Lecture Series on Contemporary Issues since 2016. The programs have



covered a wide array of timely and important topics; 2023 was no exception to this pattern. For more information see page 15, "NAASR/Calouste Gulbenkian Programs Explore Contemporary Issues."



Mass Cultural Council

NAASR was a recipient of a Mass Cultural Council Cultural Sector Recovery Grant for Organizations. These are unrestricted grants to Massachusetts cultural organizations, collectives, and businesses negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

SJS Charitable Trust

NAASR's Mardigian Library contains the unique personal archives of scholars, writers, Armenian Genocide survivors, religious figures, and early immigrants to the U.S., from as early as the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Thanks to a generous grant from the SJS Charitable Trust, these materials are now more accessible for researchers. Throughout 2023, through a partnership with Armenian Cultural Association of America (ACAA), Mary Joulouyan worked part-time at NAASR to create finding aids for many of the archival collections that reside in the Mardigian Library's Special Collections room. These aids will help users to find information in a specific record group, collection, or series of archival materials, and will be added to NAASR's online catalogue.

Joulouyan is the director of research and archivist of Hairenik since 2021. Over the past year, her expertise and meticulous attention to detail have been instrumental in creating these tools. She organized and prepared aids for more than 40 archives in the NAASR collection and



Mary Joulouyan at work on the SJS Trust-supported archival work

unearthed invaluable insights into the documents, organizations, and individuals immortalized within the library.

The archival holdings in NAASR's collection consist of personal papers, manuscripts, and notes of immense interest to scholars, researchers, and the general public. They contain first-hand accounts of vital significance and some of the richest details of Armenian daily life, experiences and political and personal reactions to major historical events, as well as literary works and essays not available outside of NAASR's collection. They are a rare source of sociological and historical data on key events of the past 125 years.

In 2024, SJS support will allow for the digitization of selected archives, a process that will be reported on in next year's *NAASR Newsletter*.



A portion of the archival collections at NAASR

NAASR Takes Its “Expanding Horizons” to Los Angeles

On January 29, 2023, the National Association of Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) hosted a celebration at the historic Jonathan Club in Los Angeles to celebrate 60 years of the organization’s collaboration with UCLA and the appointment of Dr. Taner Akçam as the inaugural director of the Promise Armenian Institute’s Genocide Research Program, while introducing NAASR’s Executive Director Silva Sedrakian to the Southern California community.

Following welcoming remarks by filmmaker Ani Hovannisian, NAASR’s Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian, who served as Master of Ceremonies for the occasion, remarked that “we are all fortunate to be here in this beautiful place with the privilege of enjoying ourselves in comfort, and we are thankful for that. But we also cannot forget that for nearly two months Armenians in Artsakh have been under blockade and are dealing with



Guest of honor Taner Akçam

extreme privations and perilous circumstances and the danger of ethnic cleansing and genocide.”

Mamigonian recalled that when he began working at NAASR, 25 years earlier, it was already recognized that there was a need to revitalize the organization’s efforts in California. “Since we don’t have a physical presence here, this could only be done through the combined efforts of those with boots on the ground here and those in Boston, and by building and rebuilding relationships,” he explained.

To that end, he continued, “we established a vital partnership with the Ararat-Eskijian Museum and its fantastic director Maggie Goschin, with whom we have worked more than anyone. We worked with the amazing Armen Aroyan to



Peter Cowe addresses the gathering

reboot our Armenian heritage tours with him and Richard Hovannisian leading the way. We worked with the legendary Michael Hagopian and then Carla Garapedian and Jerry Papazian at the Armenian Film Foundation. We look forward to working with the new Armenian American Museum. We reinvigorated our relationship with UCLA, and although we are emphasizing UCLA tonight we are highly cognizant of, and proud also to work with, Armenian chairs and programs at UC Irvine, USC, Northridge, and further to the north at Fresno and Berkeley.”

Mamigonian also acknowledged the vital contributions of NAASR’s regional board members in Southern California, past and present, who worked to maintain and raise the profile of the organization, as well as the many generous members and donors in the region.

He proceeded to offer a short, illustrated history of NAASR’s decades of partnership with UCLA, from the early 1960s when UCLA was identified as the site of the second campaign for a chair in Armenian Studies, down to the present-day active collaborations on a multitude of programs and scholarly endeavors.

He then introduced the two UCLA chairholders in Armenian Studies who are key to these collaborations, Dr. S. Peter Cowe, the Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies, and Dr. Sebouh Aslanian, the Richard G. Hovannisian Chair in Modern Armenian History. Both scholars offered insightful and generous remarks on NAASR’s role in the academic world and in particular at UCLA, supporting important events such as the annual Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies at UCLA and two major UCLA conferences in 2023, “Armeno-Indica: Four Centuries of Togetherness and Familiarity” and “What’s Next? Armenian Genocide Restitution in the Post-Recognition Era.”

The next speaker was Silva Sedrakian, who began as NAASR’s Executive Director in December 2021. Emphasizing that the strength of

NAASR is in its dedicated members and supporters as well as the small but dedicated staff, Sedrakian gave an illustrated overview of NAASR’s Vartan Gregorian Building and the organization’s various activities in different areas, such as public programming, grant issuing, and the Mardigian Library. She then invited the guests to enjoy their dinners.

Following dinner, the program resumed with a video tribute to the late NAASR Board Member and benefactor and philanthropist extraordinaire, Edward Avedisian. This was

followed by remarks by NAASR Chairperson Judith Saryan, who paid further tribute to Avedisian and introduced the musicians Boris Alakhverdyan, clarinet, and Alin Alakhverdyan, piano, who gave a special performance in honor of Avedisian, who was himself a clarinetist.

Mamigonian then introduced Dr. Ann Karagozian, who is the Inaugural Director of The



NAASR Board member Bruce Roat and Silva Sedrakian

Promise Armenian Institute and Distinguished Professor in the Department of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering at UCLA. Karagozian commented on the strong relationship between the Promise Institute and NAASR, which began at the outset of the Institute which was launched in 2020, and introduced the evening’s guest of honor, Dr. Taner Akçam.

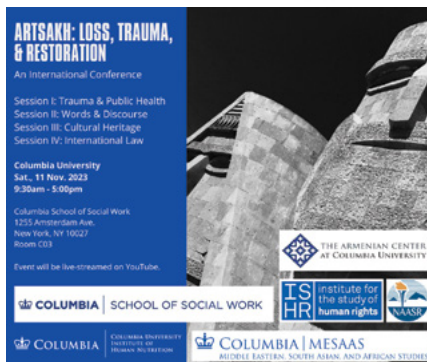
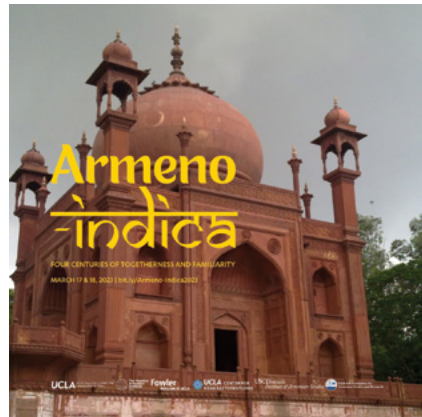
Akçam’s remarks focused on his own years of collaboration with NAASR, from his time at the University of Minnesota, through his years as the Kaloosdian & Mugar Chair at Clark University, and continuing at the Promise Institute with the creation of the new Genocide Research Program. Emphasizing the pioneering work of scholars such as the late Vahakn Dadrian and Richard Hovannisian—who was present in the audience—Akçam pointed out that the next phase in the development of Armenian Genocide studies will only occur when the research is institutionalized, which is why he took the opportunity to lead the new Promise genocide initiative.

Major Conferences Highlight a Busy 2023

During 2023, NAASR organized or co-sponsored some 69 high quality academic events—lectures, seminars, and conferences. This total, which is more than in any previous year, reflects both our efforts to bring quality programming to as wide an audience as possible as well as, crucially, the vital and important collaborative relationships we have with a number of universities and institutions in the U.S. and around the world as well as other Armenian institutions. NAASR believes that one of our greatest strengths lies in our ability to work with others towards our goals—name-



Taner Akcam offering opening remarks at “What’s Next?”



ly, advancing Armenian Studies and research. We are grateful to all of our partners who share this collaborative vision.

Among the highlights of the year was NAASR’s co-sponsorship of the major conferences “Armeno-Indica: Four Centuries of Togetherness and Familiarity” on March 17-18 and “What’s Next? Armenian Genocide Restitution in the Post-Recognition Era” on March 25, both at UCLA, “Artsakh: Loss, Trauma & Restoration” at Columbia University on November 11, and “All’ombra dell’Ararat: L’arte armena nella letteratura odeporea (XIII-XXI sec.) / In the Shadow of Ararat: Armenian Art in Travel Literature (13th-21st Centuries),” at the University of Udine in Italy on December 1-2. NAASR also hosted the Twelfth International Conference on Armenian Linguistics at our Vartan Gregorian Building on May 31-June 2.

As always, up-to-date information on NAASR events—past, present, and future—as well as links to videos of many previous programs can be found online at naasr.org.

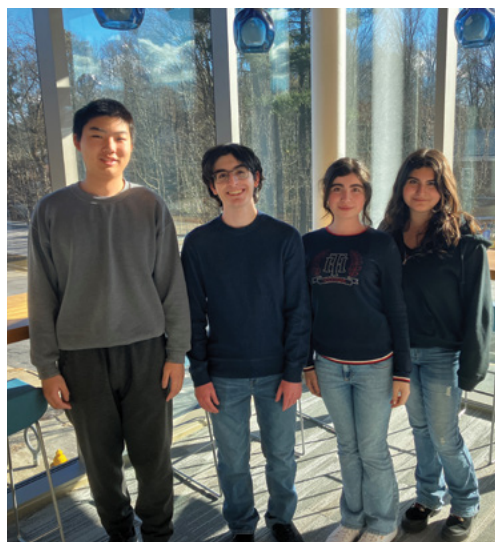
Belmont High School Volunteers Lend a Hand

NAASR has been fortunate over the years to have a number of talented and dedicated Belmont High School students as volunteers.

During 2023 we had an exceptional crew: Krikor Hachikian, Ruby Jin, Narineh Mardiros, Patil Mardiros, Zepure Merdinian, and Boyang Qin have provided outstanding assistance in tasks such as performing bookstore inventory, shelving and labeling books in the library, scanning materials to fulfill research requests, and organizing duplicate books in the library.

We also have benefited from the help of other Belmont and Watertown high school students acting as greeters when we have in-person events at our center.

In addition, a steadfast crew of “grown up” volunteers provide invaluable assistance in the NAASR library and bookstore. We thank Adrenna Antreassian, Roger Hagopian, Anna Nazarian, and Roubina Varjabedian for their valuable work!



Left to right: Boyang Qin, Krikor Hachikian, Patil Mardiros, Narineh Mardiros



Zepure Merdinian—who also helped organized a workshop, “Armenians Like You: Exploring Obligation and Desire to Contribute to the Armenian Community,” at NAASR in June 2023.

Balakian's Siamanto Program at NAASR Focuses on Importance of Humanities in Medicine

By Alin K. Gregorian

On April 27, poetry, medicine and the Armenian Genocide converged at a program at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) featuring Peter Balakian speaking about his classic translations of the devastating poems by Siamanto.

Bloody News from My Friend: Poems by Siamanto, translated by Balakian and Nevart Yaghlian, was published by Wayne State University Press in 1996. The book contains works by one of the most famous modern Armenian poets who with his words captured the horrors of the Adana Massacres of 1909 before he himself was rounded up and executed by the Ottoman forces in 1915.

The poems he wrote about the Adana events were a reaction to the letters he had received from his friend, Balakian's grandfather, Dr. Diran Balakian, who had been a witness to the calamity.

The stunned Diran Balakian had poured his heart out in letters to his friend, Adom Yarjanian, whose pen name was Siamanto, about the gruesome sights he had seen. "In Adana, my grandfather wrote back a group of letters to his



Dr. Peter Balakian at NAASR

family and his friend, Siamanto," he recalled. "Siamanto was obsessed and riveted by them. He used them to write a cycle of 13 poems."

The poems were published in Armenian in 1911 in Constantinople. The letters themselves are lost, Balakian said.

The poet Balakian, a professor at Hamilton College, and the winner of numerous awards for his works, from the PEN/Martha Albrand Prize for the Art of the Memoir (*Black Dog of Fate*) to the Pulitzer (*Ozone Journal*), recalled his family history, in which medicine figured highly; both his father and grandfather were physicians.

Balakian explored the friendship between the doctor and the poet in 1909, and of the former's eventual fleeing from the cosmopolitan circles in Constantinople and Vienna to Indiana in the aftermath of the Genocide.

"Adana is horrific, shocking," he said. "You've lived through the Hamidian massacres of the 1890s, you have seen this moment of 1908 and the declaration of the velvet revolution of overthrowing the Sultan and the celebration of the new age and multiculturalism and you are thinking, 'maybe the nightmare is over.' Not even a year has passed when the explosion of Adana happens to the Armenians of the city and the surround-

ing areas," he said. The key, he said, was the "backlash" against the gains of the rights for the Christian minority.

"It really was a canary in a mine for 1915," he said. "Ethnic minorities are not going to become free and even limitedly equal," for Christians, Jews, or other "gavours," or even Arabs and Kurds, who happened to be Muslim as well.

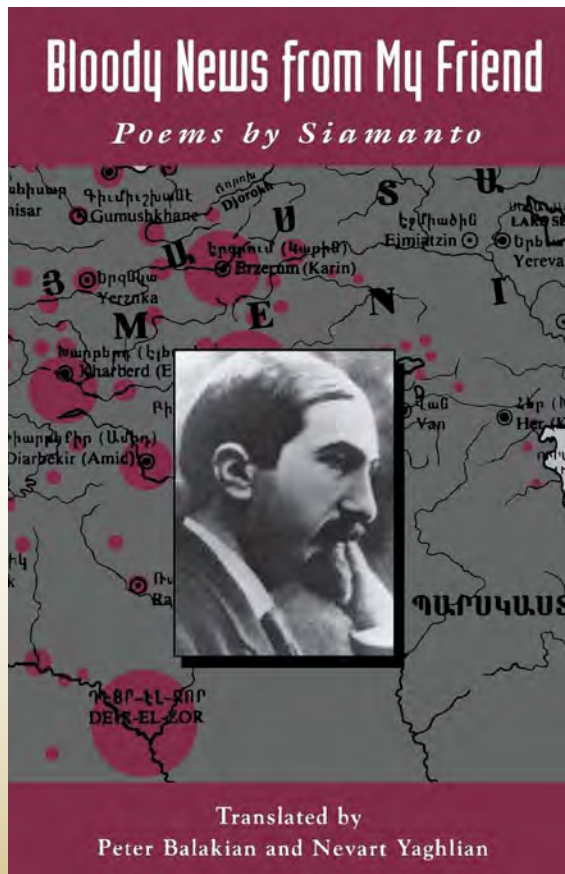
"The ruins, the accounts of massacre, pillaging and looting, so much as we know in the genocidal paradigm and the morphology of genocide can be connected to avarice and booty and theft of wealth and property. And that certainly happened in Adana. Armenians were prosperous as were Greeks. A small bourgeoisie that was bitterly resented by the Muslim underclass that were often rural and agrarian," he added.

A Young Doctor

Diran Balakian was born in Tokat. He got a scholarship to study at the Echmiadzin academy. "He did very well in his Echmiadzin studies and got a scholarship to the Nersisian College in Tiflis," Balakian noted. From there, he went to Leipzig, Germany to attend medical school and became an ophthalmologist.

At one point, Balakian said, his grandfather worked on a dig in Ani with Georgian archeologist Nikolai Marr. In fact, he was probably there with his cousin, Grigoris Balakian, the translation of whose memoirs, *Armenian Golgotha*, the younger Balakian and Aris Sevag published in 2010.

Diran Balakian, after his studies in Vienna, eventually came back to Constantinople to work. Soon after, the Adana Massacres took



place in April 1909, and the Armenian patriarchate “rounded up a group of Armenians to do rescue and relief work,” including author Zabel Yesayan. “She and my grandfather were in that same group that went from Bolis to Adana,” Peter Balakian observed.

“After Adana, he went back to Constantinople where he married my grandmother, Koharik Panossian, who was the daughter of a wealthy Bolis family. Her father, Moorad Panossian, owned coal mines and they had a big mining enterprise. They lost everything, as most families did, during the Genocide,” Balakian recalled.

“He was conscripted into the Ottoman Army, as all Ottoman physicians were. He was given the rank of captain. He was put in a military base in Soma, on the western Turkish coast. That’s just the ghoulish kind of Shakespearean drama in my head: what did it mean to work for the Ottoman army while the Ottoman government was massacring, murdering, raping your entire ethnic group,” Balakian said. His grandfather left little information about that.

In 1922, the family fled Turkey for good, when his father was 2. “My grandfather somehow managed to land in Indianapolis, at a hospital, where he was accepted as an attending, pending the passing of the medical board.” He was 46 at that time.

“What a soft life I’ve had, compared to what these people went through,” he said, with awe. He added that his grandfather had to pass his boards in English — his fifth language — in his



Dr. David Hatem at NAASR

mid-40s. “My grandfather got us here by virtue of his studying, his education and his professional life,” he added.

Balakian was able to find out more about Siamanto’s connections though his great-aunt Verjin. “My auntie Verjin ... remembered how popular he was. He was a sensation,” Balakian said, likening his popularity to that of the Beat Poets of the 1950s, or the Slam poets more recently. “The Armenian cultural scene was undergoing a marvelous revival from the last decade of the 19th century to the first decade and a half of the 20th century, before the Ottoman government arrested 250 intellectuals on April 24, at one of the beginnings of what became the Arme-

nia Genocide. Why were they targeted? Because they were effective, they were the voice of the people. ... They had a following. They had impact. It reminds us of the power of literature at any time, especially in a pre-screen age.”

Siamanto, he said, had been a bardic poem, who often recited his poems. In a way, Balakian explained, he was like William Butler Yeats in Ireland, Walt Whitman in the U.S., Pablo Neruda in Chile, poets who “saw themselves as embodying the people of the nation.”

“Siamanto was one of them,” he added.

Before writing about Adana, he explained, Siamanto was tackling the myths and mythology of Armenian identity. The singular “brutality, killing, blood, beheading, and particular focus on brutality done to women,” changed Siamanto forever. “These poems were witnessing the barbarism of the Ottoman state.”

With Adana, Siamanto broke his literary streak of romanticism with the evils and horrors of the Genocide, Balakian noted. “He is engaged in probing the tortured human body and that’s because my grandfather, the physician, was witnessing and writing,” he said, adding he assumed his grandfather must have been a good writer. “The power of those depictions and representations gave rise to these poems.”

Balakian read his translation of one of the most famous of Siamanto’s poem, “The Dance,” which features a graphic description of the torture and killing of 20 brides by Ottoman soldiers. “You can see the poems veer away from anything romantic,” he said. The imagery was vivid, shocking, and visceral, about whipping, dousing with kerosene, crucifixions.

Asked about family lore regarding the Siamanto poems and the family connection, he referred to another of his books, *The Black Dog of Fate*, in which he wrote about his coming to terms with and understanding the Armenian Genocide. “When I am scratching my head about why there is so much silence in my family about the events of 1915, I understand a level of it, concealing trauma from children,” he said, “I understand there can be some repression, but later on in life, I go on to become a writer and an academic and two of my aunts became scholars and I wonder why.”

The Balakians, he said, never talked about the family history but only about their grandfather’s achievements. “I don’t think fathers were ‘parenting’ in the early part of the 20th century,” he

said. “As an Armenian-American friend said, ‘we didn’t have dads; we had fathers.’”

Medical Ties

The NAASR program was co-sponsored by the Armenian American Medical Association (AAMA) of Boston. Dr. Armineh Mirzabegian, who is a member of both the Board of Directors of the AAMA as well as that of NAASR, offered opening statements about the importance of art for medical professionals. Also speaking was Dr. Rosalynn Nazarian, the president of the



Dr. Armineh Mirzabegian at the NAASR program

AAMA, who in turn introduced Dr. Elizabeth Gauferg, Associate Professor of Medicine and Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Director of the Cambridge Health Alliance Center for Professional and Academic Development, about the role of humanities in medicine.

Gauferg spoke about how Balakian had introduced Mirzabegian to her, knowing that she had an interest in the humanities as well. Also speaking was Lisa Wong, a musician and pediatrician at the Massachusetts General Hospital, who works with Gauferg, and is a strong advocate for incorporating the arts into medicine. “As I was listening to the very difficult and painful poetry, I thought not only does art document for us, but it captures an emotion for us,” Wong said.

“We as physicians have the privilege and opportunity to be with people at their most joyful, but also their most painful and vulnerable times. As we walk the journey with them, I think what a privilege,” she noted.

Another speaker was Dr. David Hatem of the UMass Chan Medical School, co-chair of the Humanities in Medicine Committee at the UMass Medical School. He said, “We do tell them, we admit humans to medical school and we want to make sure we graduate humans who retain their humanity. And that’s not always the way medical education is.”

One of his students, Lori Sahakian, also offered her comments about Hatem’s humanities course.

(*Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, May 18, 2023; photos by Ken Martin)



2023 Grants Issued by NAASR and Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies



NAASR has issued research grants since 1966. Since 2008, NAASR and the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies (FAS) have issued over 200 grants, either jointly or separately. We are proud of the impact of these grants which have allowed scholars to present, publish, and enrich their work and contrib-

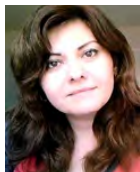
ute immeasurably to the growth of the field. A larger number of grants were issued in 2023 than in any previous year, with a significant number going to researchers based in Armenia, with others in France, Italy, Britain, the U.S., Ecuador, Australia, and elsewhere.



Dr. Lusine Abgarian (Brusov State University), grant from NAASR to support publication of her French-language doctoral thesis, “Representations of the Armenian Genocide at the Turn of the 20th Century in France: Postmemorial Narratives, Fiction, Graphic Novels,” in Armenian by Ankyunacar publishing house.



Dr. Eduard Abrahamyan (University of Leicester), travel grant from NAASR to present paper on “Russia’s role in 2020 war and Armenia’s search for new security architecture,” at the 16th EISA Pan-European Conference on International Relations, Potsdam, Germany, September 2023.



Dr. Lilya Arakelyan (Florida International University), travel grant from NAASR to present paper on Russia’s Hybrid War in the South Caucasus at the ISA-Global South Caucus Conference 2023, “The Global South in International Organizations and Beyond: Transformation, Influence, and Empowerment in an Evolving World Politics,” December 2023 at Thammasat University in Bangkok, Thailand.



Dr. Isabelle Augé (Université Paul Valéry-Montpellier III), grant from NAASR / Dean Shahinian Fund to support project “Sur les pas de Step’annos Orbelean, évêque de Siwnik”/ “In the footsteps of Step’annos Orbelean, bishop of Siwnik’.”



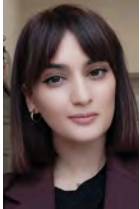
Dr. Artur Avagyan (National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia) and **Dr. Karen Balyan**, curators, NAASR grant to support publication of a bilingual catalogue for the art exhibition “Armenian Book Design from the ‘Char-ents Epoch’: 1928–1935” at the Martiros Saryan House-Museum in Yerevan, Armenia.



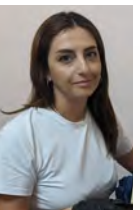
Argam Ayvazyan (independent researcher), grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies to support publication in Armenian, English, and Russian of book on the material culture heritage of Nakhichevan.



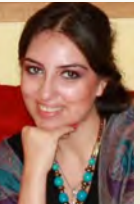
Dr. Mara Baghdasaryan (University of Bologna), travel grant from NAASR for research project “The Issue of the Identity of the Armenian Immigrant in Italy: Linguistic, Cultural and Social Perspectives.”



Satenik Baghdasaryan (Yerevan State University), grant from NAASR / Dean Shahinian Fund to support research project on the medieval cemetery of Noratus in Gegharkunik region of Armenia in the context of Armenian medieval art.



Gohar Chatyan (Matenadaran / Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts), grant from NAASR / Dean Shahinian Fund to support travel from Yerevan to Jerusalem for research on manuscript heritage created by the Nater dynasty.



Dr. Satenik Chookaszian (Yerevan State University and National Gallery of Armenia), grant from NAASR / Dean Shahinian Fund to support book project on the Cilician Royal manuscript, Gospel No. 9422 from Matenadaran.



Emre Can Daglioglu (Stanford University), travel grant from Knights of Vartan FAS for research for doctoral project on “Armenians, Capitalism and Sericulture in the Ottoman Empire (1881-1915).”



Dr. Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev (Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski), and **Haroutioun Khatchadourian** (independent researcher), grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies and NAASR to support the completion of the volume *Monuments and Identities in the Caucasus. Karabagh, Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan in Contemporary Geopolitical Conflict*, Igor Dorfmann-Lazarev and Haroutioun Khatchadourian, eds. (Leiden: Brill Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity; XXXI).



Arman Dzhragatspanyan (American University of Armenia), grant from NAASR to support research project on “Trauma and Resilience among Armenians in Armenia and Artsakh.”



Dr. Ruben Elamiryan (Russian-Armenian University), travel grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies and NAASR to present paper “Small states in times of changing global order: Perspectives for Armenia’s foreign and security policy” at the 27th Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities (ASN) at Columbia University, May 2023.



Dr. Daniel Fittante (Södertörn University), grant from NAASR to support fieldwork in Italy for book project about Armenian Genocide recognition efforts across Europe.



Davit Gasparyan (Harvard University), travel grant from NAASR to visit Armenia for research towards MA thesis on Armenia and the EU.





Greta Gasparyan (Matenadaran / Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts), travel grant from NAASR / Dean Shahinian Fund to visit New Julfa for research project “In the footsteps of the Matenadaran Gospel of 1610 illuminated in New Julfa” (based on the manuscripts of the museum of Holy Savior Cathedral of New Julfa).



Dr. Avetis Grigoryan (Yerevan State University), grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies to support archaeological project “The Silk Roads Leading to the Sotk Gold Mine: Infrastructure, Communication Indicators, Cultural Interactions and Means of Exchange.”



Piruza Hayrapetyan (Central European University), travel grant from NAASR to support participation in March 2023 conference “Forming Words, Forming Things,” organized by the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean at the University of Cambridge, to present paper “Forming Mary in Byzantium and Beyond: The Journey of the Apocalypse of the Theotokos from Byzantium to Armenia.”



Fr. Hovsep Karapetyan (Catholic University of America), travel grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies and NAASR to go to Armenia to study manuscripts and other available resources at the Matenadaran relating to the Armenian version of the works of Evagrius of Pontus.



Dr. Narek Karapetyan (Armenian State University of Economics), grant from NAASR to support research project “Fiscal Decentralization Issues in the Context of Regional Development in the Republic of Armenia: Possible Mechanisms and Effects of Enhancing the role of Local Governments.”



Tatevik Karapetyan (Yerevan State University), grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies and NAASR to support research project “A Question of Identity: How Displacement Shaped the Lives of Artsakh People.”



Hratch Kestonian (City University of New York), travel grant from NAASR to conduct research in Philadelphia at Presbyterian Historical Society and Paris to conduct

research at Nubarian Library for dissertation, “The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis and the Medicalization of Late Ottoman Society, 1827-1922.”



Ovsanna Khachatryan (Matenadaran / Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts), travel grant from NAASR / Dean Shahinian Fund to conduct research at San Lazzaro (Venice) on “The Genres of Kafa and Ggrarajk’ in Armenian Manuscripts” for thesis on Medieval Literary Genres in Manuscripts (12-15th Centuries).



Dr. Hans-Lukas Kieser (University of Newcastle, New South Wales), grant from NAASR to support German-language translation of *When Democracy Died: The Middle East's Enduring Peace of Lausanne* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2023).



Tsovinar Kuiumchian (University of Oxford), travel grant from NAASR to conduct research for dissertation on “Trauma and Vitality in Contemporary Armenian Art.”



Dr. Ümit Kürt (University of Newcastle, New South Wales), grant from NAASR to support publication of forthcoming volume *Perpetrators in the Armenian Genocide: The Lives of Génocidaires*.



Dr. Anna Leiloyan-Ekmalyan (State Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations, Paris) and **Seda Manukyan** (Matenadaran / Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts), travel grant from NAASR to travel to Jerusalem for project “The study of the Vaspurakan school of script and miniature art with manuscript examples from St. Hakobyants (Saint James) Monastery in Jerusalem.”



Levon Mkrtchyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia), grant from Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies and NAASR to support excavations in Khanjyan village (Armavir province), fortified settlement dated to the Late Urartian and Yervanduni (Orontid) period.



Hazal Ozdemir (Northwestern University), grant from NAASR to support research for dissertation, “They Vowed Never to Return: Visual Documentation of the Armenian Transatlantic Mobility at the Borders of the Ottoman Empire.”



Dr. Hayk Paronyan (Regional Autonomous University of the Andes–UNIANDÉS, Santo Domingo, Ecuador), travel grant from NAASR to support participation in the 23rd International Conference on Diversity in Organizations, Communities & Nations, in Complutense University of Madrid, Spain, June 2023, to present paper, “Diaspora and Democratization in Armenia: Development through Diversity” (“Diáspora Y Democratización En Armenia: Desarrollo A Través De La Diversidad”).



Lori Pirinjian (UCLA), travel grant from NAASR to conduct fieldwork in Armenia for research project “An Analysis of the Domestic Violence Law in Post-Soviet Armenia.”



Dr. Christopher Sheklian (Radboud University, the Netherlands), grant from NAASR to support research for project “Literary Place-making in a Layered Diaspora: The Case of Marseille.”



Konrad Siekierski (King's College London), travel grant from NAASR to collect ethnographic data in Armenia for project “Gospel Books as Home Saints: Between Vernacular Christianity and Armenian National Heritage.”



Sarkis Tricha (USC Institute of Armenian Studies), grant from NAASR to support translation of interviews for research project “Armenians in Los Angeles, Language and Masculinity.”



Dr. Bert Vaux (University of Cambridge), and **Bianca Bagatourian**, research assistant, NAASR grant to support research for book on “Preserving the History of the New Julfa Armenian Dialect,” forthcoming from Oxford University Press.



Dr. Nzhdeh Yeranyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences, Republic of Armenia), grant from NAASR to support research project on Artsakh archaeological materials and archives stored in St. Petersburg.

Two Anniversaries at NAASR in 2023

The year 2023 marked two significant anniversaries for NAASR staff members Ani Babaian, Library Curator, and Marc A. Mamigonian, Director of Academic Affairs. Babaian’s 10th year with NAASR was celebrated after her December 13 lecture “Revealing the Murals of Amenaprkich Vank of New Julfa,” with cake and remarks by Executive Director Silva Sedrakian and Marc Mamigonian who both praised Babaian’s work to bring a new level of professionalism to NAASR’s Mardigian Library.

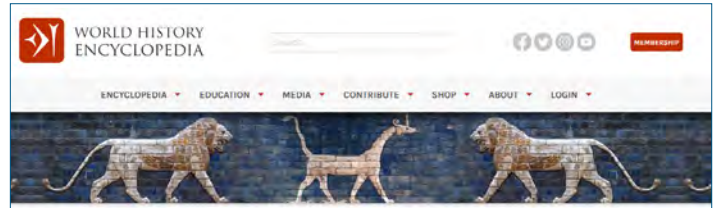


Ani Babaian

Earlier in the year, on March 16, Mamigonian’s 25 years at NAASR were celebrated in a special program. Opening with a piano performance by Tanya Barteveyan of a Chopin Impromptu, the evening consisted of a conversation between Mamigonian and Khatchig Mouradian, Armenian and Georgian Area Specialist at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and lecturer in Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies at Columbia University, and member of the NAASR Board of Directors.



Left to right: Judith Saryan, Silva Sedrakian, Khatchig Mouradian, Marc Mamigonian, Laura Yardumian, Susan Barba, Armineh Mirzabegian, Ani Babaian, Jirair Balayan



World History Encyclopedia



NAASR & Knights of Vartan Grants Make an Impact

During 2023, we received the following note from the head of the online World History Encyclopedia (www.worldhistory.org). We are most appreciative of this testimony to the power of NAASR and the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies grants.

In 2016 NAASR and the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies gave us a grant to produce content on ancient Armenia. Back then we were still known as Ancient History Encyclopedia (we’ve since changed name). We greatly appreciate the grant you have given us as we now are one of the most comprehensive encyclopedias about ancient Armenian history.

I wanted to get in touch with you to share a new feature that we have created, which is an analytics dashboard for sponsors and grant-givers like you. You will be happy to hear that our Armenia content that you funded has now been read over 334,000 times.

Please let me know if you have any questions!

Best wishes,

Jan van der Crabben
CEO & Founder
World History Encyclopedia



Marc Mamigonian and Khatchig Mouradian

NAASR/Gulbenkian Programs Explore Contemporary Issues

In 2022-2023, with the continuing support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, NAASR organized and/or co-sponsored 12 successful, thought-provoking, and timely programs as part of the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues. Given the developments during this time period, unsurprisingly, the deteriorating situation in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) figured prominently in these programs.

NAASR is grateful for the Gulbenkian Foundation's ongoing backing of these vital programs which have contributed significantly to framing important discussions about current and future developments that affect us all.

September 18, 2022: "Armenia on the Brink: Strategies in a Diminishing Landscape," with Lilit Gevorgian and Armen Kharazian. Co-sponsored by AIWA NJ Chapter, Armenian Bar Association, Daughters of Vartan-Sahaganoush Otyag, Justice Armenia, Knights of Vartan-Bakradouny Lodge, the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, the Zohrab Information Center, and Saint Leon Armenian Church. (webinar)

November 8, 2022: Zedig Tisserand, "The Armenians of Abkhazia: Identification & Self-Identification in the Early 21st Century." Hybrid event at NAASR. Sponsored by the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues.

January 21, 2023: Panel, "The Blockade of Artsakh and Global Indifference," with Bedross Der Matossian, David Phillips, Lara Setrakian, and Henry Theriault, moderated by Christina Maranci and Marc Mamigonian. Co-sponsored by the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Founda-



Panel addressing "The Blockade of Artsakh and Global Indifference"

tion Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard University, and the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS). (webinar)

March 2, 2023: Eduard Abrahamyan, "Small-State Strategies for Reforming Armenia's Military: How Armenia Can Punch Above Its Weight." Co-sponsored by Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Armenian Bar Association, Armenian Network of America-Greater NY, Daughters of Vartan-Sahaganoush Otyag, Justice Armenia, Knights of Vartan-Bakradouny Lodge, the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, and St. Leon Armenian Church. (webinar)

March 6, 2023: Karnig Kerkonian, "Nagorno-Karabakh: At the Crossroads of Self-Determination and Subjugation," in-person at Harvard Law School. Organized by the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard and co-sponsored by Harvard Law School Armenian Students Association and the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues.

September 12, 2023: Gerard J. Libaridian, "A Precarious Armenia: The Third Republic, the Karabakh Conflict, and Genocide Politics," hybrid event at NAASR. Presented by the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues.



Gerard J. Libaridian

September 20, 2023: "Denial of Genocides in the Twenty-First Century," Bedross Der Matossian in conversation with Marc A. Mamigonian. Presented by the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues and the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS). (webinar)

September 28, 2023: Anna Ohanyan, "The Neighborhood Effect," in-person event at The MacPhaidin Library, Stonehill College, Easton, MA. Presented by The MacPháidín Library, Stonehill College Office of Academic Affairs, and the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues.

October 1, 2023: Panel, "The Fall of Artsakh: Refugee Crisis, Existential Threat, and Uncertain Future," with panelists Vicken Cheteryan, Bedross Der Matossian, Nerses Kopalyan, Anna Ohanyan, and David L. Phillips. Moderated by Marc A. Mamigonian. Co-sponsored

by the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) and the NAASR / Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues. (webinar)

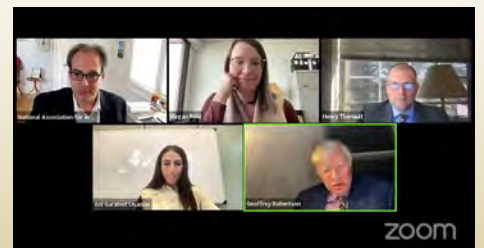
October 5, 2023: "Heritage Forensics: Satellites and Specters in the Contested Caucasus," with Lori Khatchadourian, Adam Smith, Ian Lindsay, and Husik Ghulyan of Caucasus Heritage Watch, in-person at Harvard University. Organized by the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies, and co-sponsored by Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Program on Georgian Studies, Department of Anthropology, and the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues.



Participants in the "Advancing Women's Leadership in Local Government in Armenia" panel

October 19, 2023: Panel: "Advancing Women's Leadership in Local Government in Armenia," in-person event at NAASR. Co-sponsored by the Cambridge-Yerevan Sister City Association (CYSICA) and the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues.

October 24, 2023: Panel: "The Blockade of the Lachin Corridor and the Conquest of Nagorno-Karabakh," with panelists Bedross Der Matossian, Ani Ohanian, Geoffrey Robertson, and Henry Theriault, moderated by Marc A. Mamigonian. Co-sponsored by the NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lecture Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute), and Genocide Studies International Journal. (webinar)



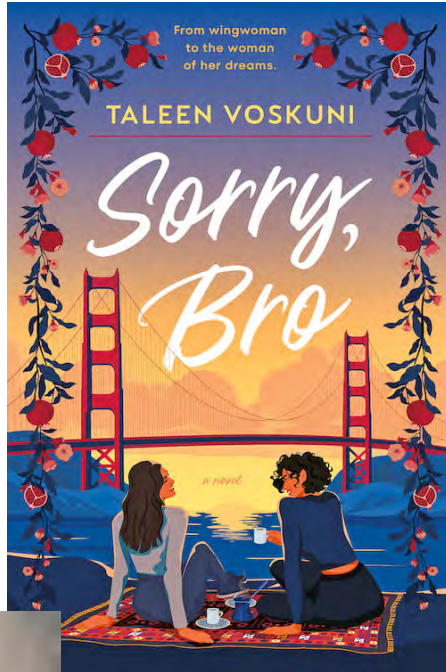
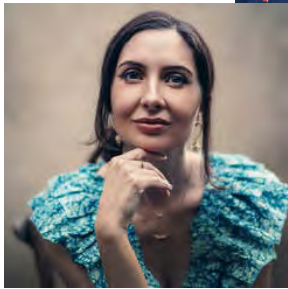
"The Blockade of the Lachin Corridor and the Conquest of Nagorno-Karabakh" panelists

Literary Lights

A Reading Series Featuring New Works by Armenian Authors

In 2023, the International Armenian Literary Alliance (IALA), the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), and the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center began Literary Lights, a monthly reading series featuring new works of literature by Armenian authors. Each event—held from February to November in a mixed online and in-person format—featured a writer, editor, or translator reading from their work, followed by a discussion with an interviewer and audience members. Audience members are invited to read along with the series. The Literary Lights series is continuing in 2024.

The reading series began with a virtual event on February 7, focusing on Taleen Voskuni's *Sorry, Bro*, a queer romantic comedy in which an Armenian-American woman re-discovers her roots and embraces who she really is. Voskuni, an Armenian-American writer based in the San Francisco Bay Area, was



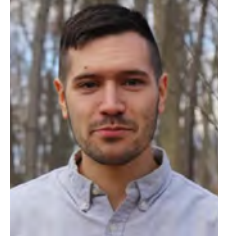
Sorry, Bro is the first published novel by Taleen Voskuni (left).

joined in discussion by author J.P. Der Boghossian.

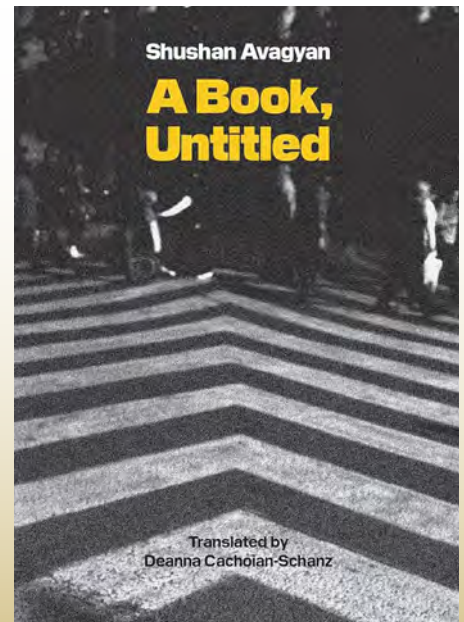
On March 29, there was an in-person event at the Zohrab Information Center in New York on *A Book, Untitled* by Shushan Avagyan, translated by Deanna Cachoian-Schanz, who engaged in conversation with Dr. Lisa Gulesserian of Harvard University. The book is about an imagined encounter between two early twentieth-century feminist writers, Zabel Yesayan and Shushanik

Kurghinian, juxtaposed with a conversation between the author and a friend.

A program at Columbia University on April 3 highlighted the new anthology *We Are All Armenian: Voices from the Diaspora*, edited by Aram Mrjoian, author, editor-at-large at the *Chicago Review of Books*, and an associate fiction editor at *Guernica*. The program, hosted by the Columbia University Armenian Center and co-sponsored by the Armenian Society of Columbia University,

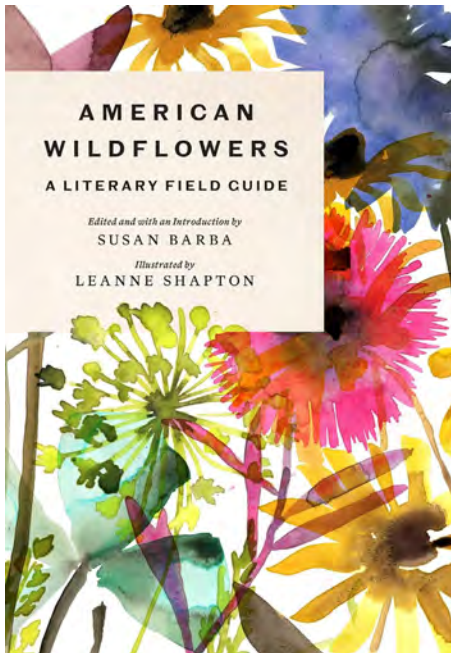


We Are All Armenian editor Aram Mrjoian



Aram Mrjoian speaking at Columbia on April 3

featured Mrjoian as well as volume contributors Chris Bohjalian, Nancy Kricorian, Scout Tufankjian, and Hrag Vartanian. A second, virtual event on April 29 included Mrjoian with Kohar Avakian, Chris McCormick, and J.P. Der Boghossian.

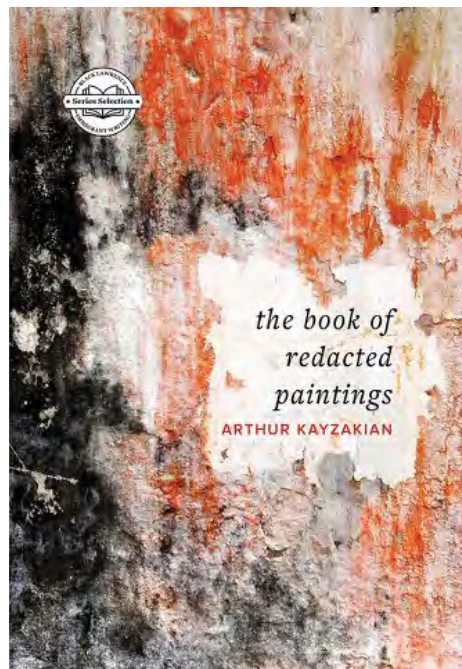


On May 17, NAASR hosted an in-person event with Dr. Susan Barba, editor of *American Wildflowers: A Literary Field Guide*, in conversation with Dr. Jesse Arlen, a writer, researcher and Director of the Zohrab Center. Barba is the author of the poetry collections *Fair Sun* (2017) and *geode* (2020), and an editor at *New York Review Books*.

Arthur Kayzakian's *The Book of Redacted Paintings*, poems about a boy in search of his father's painting, which may or may not exist, was the centerpiece of the June 17 Literary Lights, featuring the author and Iranian-American poet and scholar Kaveh Akbar. Kayzakian is an author, teacher, IALA Poetry Chair and Board

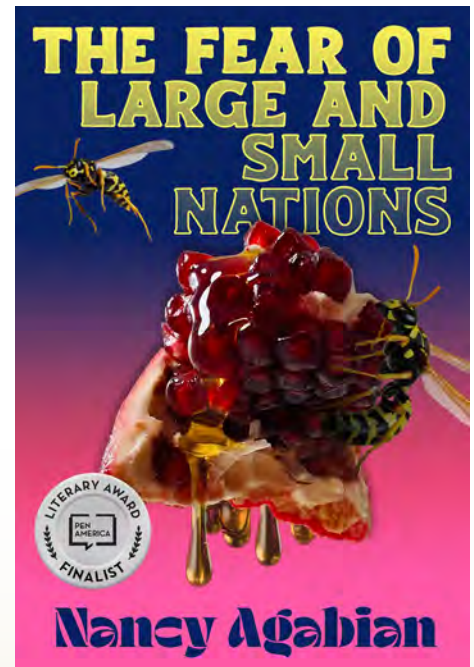


Lisa Gulesserian (left) and Deanna Cachoian-Schanz discussing *A Book, Untitled*



Member, and a Contributing Editor at *Poetry International*.

The series resumed on November 5 with an event on Nancy Agabian's *The Fear of Large and Small Nations*, which was a finalist for the PEN/Bellwether Prize for Socially Engaged Fiction. An activist, teacher and IALA Board Member, Agabian is the author of *Princess Freak* (2000) and *Me as Her Again: True Stories*



of an *Armenian Daughter* (2008), finalist for a Lambda Literary Award in LGBT Nonfiction and shortlisted for a William Saroyan International Prize.

The final 2023 Literary Lights program was on December 3. Mashinka Firunts Hakopian discussed her work *The Institute for Other Intelligences*, which chronicles the transcription of a symposium at a fictive institute where machine intelligences convene annually for lectures and training on algorithmic justice, with J. P. Der Boghossian. Hakopian is a Yerevan-born, Glendale-based writer, artist, researcher, teacher, and IALA Advisory Board Member.



Jesse Arlen and Susan Barba

Teni Apelian Leads Children’s Events in 2023

In 2023, NAASR hosted four “ԱԲԳ for Children” programs led by Teni Apelian. The programs were engaging sessions carefully curated to suit the season, with traditional songs, games, and dances in Armenian.

These programs consisted of A Call for Rain / Գարունը եկաւ ամպերով, Ամպերը եկան անձրեւով, on April 30; a Celebration of Hampartsoum / Համբարձումս on May 18; Lavash and Letters, on October 21; and Ghapama on November 19.

Through “ԱԲԳ for Children” events, we aim to create a welcoming environment where children can learn, grow, and connect with their peers in meaningful ways. By inviting children to our headquarters and introducing them to our organization from an early age, we hope to instill a lifelong curiosity about our work and inspire future generations to become active participants in building a brighter future for all.

Teni Apelian is one of the singers and arrangers in Zulal, the Armenian a cappella trio, and a collaborator on educational and language projects supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Teni’s foremost passion lies in discovering and sharing the ancient melodies that help us define the Armenian musical character and connect to our roots.



With every smile, song, and story, we renew our dedication to enriching children’s lives and nurturing wonder and possibility in our world.

As an educator, Teni taught Armenian folk music at the Hovnanian School in New Jersey and has been a facilitator at Zarmananzan (an Armenian language immersion program in the French Alps) since its inception.



Gyumri Armenian Bakery in Watertown, MA donated lavash to each attendee.



After a fantastic performance of the Ghapama song, the children enjoyed a real Ghapama and took a piece of it home with them.

Garabed Kaloustian

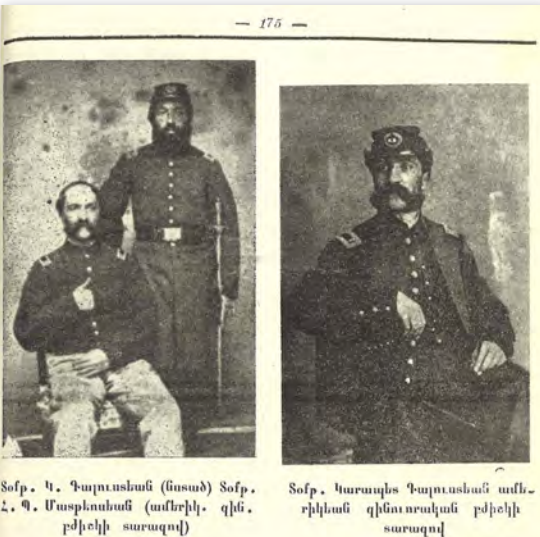
A Constantinople Armenian Doctor and the American Civil War

By Ani Babaian & Marc A. Mamigonian

We are pleased to share with you one of our 2023 Treasures of the NAASR Mardigian Library. All such features can be found online at <https://naasr.org/blogs/treasures-of-naasrs-mardigian-library>.

It has long resided in a folder within the Avedis Derounian Archive, which has been at NAASR since the early 1990s, inside an envelope labeled “Dr. Kaloustian,” but until recently we did not realize its significance, let alone that this year marks the 200th anniversary of this interesting individual’s birth.

Opening the folder this past summer, we were surprised to see a photograph of a man in an American Civil War-era Union Army uniform, a



Left-hand photo: Seated, Dr. Garabed Kaloustian. Standing, Dr. H. B. Matteosian [Հ. Գ. Մատթօսեան]. Date and location unknown. Right-hand photo, same as item from NAASR Derounian Collection. Published in Mezbourian, p. 175. Visual clues suggest the photos were not taken on the same date—e.g., Kaloustian is wearing different trousers in the photo with Matteosian.

man who turned out to be Dr. Garabed Kaloustian [Գարապետ Գալուստեան] (1823-1898).

M. Vartan Malcom mentions a “Dr. Calousdian” in his pioneering 1919 book *The Armenians in America*, but gives no photo or additional details. However, versions of the photo have been printed in two English-language publications of which we are aware.

The late Mark A. Kalustian (no relation to Garabed, as far as we know), dedicated collector and chronicler of interesting arcana of Armenian life, included a copy of the photo in an article titled “Three Armenian Physicians Who Served in the Civil War (1861-1865),” published in the

Armenian Mirror-Spectator (Aug. 24, 1985) and later reprinted without photos in the collection of his articles *Did You Know That...?* (Arlington, MA: Armenian Cultural Foundation, 2002). The other physicians he discusses are H. B. Matteosian and Garabed Vartanian.

More recently, Hayk Demoyan included him in his massive illustrated volume *Armenian Legacy in America: A 400-Year Heritage* (Yerevan, 2018) along with other “Armenians in the American Civil War” (pp. 34-35).

Fortunately, Mark Kalustian indicated his sources, which led us to *Hay ew Tsagumov Hay Bzhishkner* [Հայ եւ Ծագումով Հայ Բժիշկներ] (Armenian and Armenian-Descended Doctors) (1688-1940) by Dr. A. N. Mezbourian [Տօբր. Ա. Ն. Մեզբուրեան] (Istanbul: Becid Basimevi, 1950), which offers the most substantial information we have yet seen about Dr. Garabed Kaloustian.

In the under-studied area of Armenian-American history, the decades prior to the 1890s are especially murky, as a tiny number of Armenians began to form the basis for what would become a more substantial and established community after the mid-1890s.

We offer this single-object Library Treasures in the spirit of encouraging further interest in this “antediluvian” era of Armenian-American history. The following biographical sketch derives mainly from that given by Mezbourian.

Garabed Kaloustian was born in 1823 in the Yenimahalle (new neighborhood) of the Üsküdar district in Constantinople. He, along with Patriarch Nerses Varjabedian [Ներսէս Պատրիարք Կարժապետեան] (1837-1884) and translator and linguist Bedros Keresteciyani [Պետրոս Բէրէստէճեան] (1840-1909), who is said to have compiled the first etymological dictionary of Ottoman Turkish, were first cousins, the children of three sisters. Garabed received his primary and secondary education at Cyrus Hamlin’s seminary in Bebek.

After graduating from the Bebek seminary, he taught for some time. Then he was invited by the Americans to Smyrna, where he served as a teacher at the local American school and worked as a translator for the missionaries.

Subsequently, he moved back to Constantinople and married in 1853. During the Crimean War from 1854 to 1855, he served alongside his wife Heghine as a translator in the British Sanitary Corps in Constantinople and Trabizond. After the end of the war, they journeyed from Smyrna to New York on a cargo boat carrying



Photo of Dr. Garabed Kaloustian by Garabed Baghdasarian, active in Constantinople from 1858 to ca. 1890.

figs. Between 1856 and 1859, he attended the New York Medical School and received his medical certification.

During the American Civil War of 1860-1865, he served in the Union army in the medical corps as a doctor and surgeon and received a citation and a promotion. After the end of the war, Kaloustian returned to his birthplace, settled down, and achieved success as a doctor, living in Beyoğlu and then Üsküdar. The photograph in the NAASR collection was obviously taken after his return to Constantinople.

Kaloustian was a friend and close associate of Garabed Panosian [Կարապետ Փանոսեան] (1826 or 1828-1905), the longtime editor of the Armeno-Turkish publication *Manzume-i Efkar* (see Masayuki Ueno, “One Script, Two Languages: Garabed Panosian and His Armeno-Turkish Newspapers in the Nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 52.4, pp. 605-622). The two traveled together throughout the Bithynia region and Kaloustian helped provide local residents with free medical services.

After the resignation of Dr. H. B. Matteosian in 1866 and Dr. Mozian in March 1868, the leadership of Surp Prgich Hospital was entrusted to Panosian. He was supported by Kaloustian, the chief physician, who was concurrently working at the Military Hospital in Eyüp. According to Mezburian, “The tenure of these two Garabeds was short-lived and gave rise to gossip.”

Garabed Kaloustian died in Üsküdar; he committed suicide by throwing himself from a window. He was buried on January 7, 1898, in Üsküdar, according to the Surp Khach [Holy Cross] Registration Book.

NAASR's Mardigian Library

A Scholarly Resource and a Repository of Memory

By Ani Babaian & Marc Mamigonian

In Paris, at the Palais de Chaillot, the site of several important museums, are inscribed the words of Paul Valéry: "It depends on those who pass / Whether I am a tomb or treasure / Whether I speak or am silent / The choice is yours alone."

A library or a museum is a living thing—it grows, it changes, based on how it is perceived. We believe that our library is alive and it will remain alive as long as we project to the world that it is alive; obviously, the converse is also true.

We believe that NAASR's Mardigian Library serves a dual function as both a leading research facility that is used and valued by scholars around the world and a repository of memory for the Armenian community.

Members of our community come to NAASR with their books and other items: often these are family possessions,

sometimes multi-generational. It is a deeply humbling experience to have people entrust to us items that in some cases they or their parents or grandparents have preserved for decades and which often carry great significance for them. Many of them state explicitly that they do so because they know, or they have been told, that NAASR is a caring and responsible organization that will take care of and make use of the materials. This is a responsibility and a commitment we strive to be worthy of.

Over the past decades, and in particular during the past 15 years, NAASR has assembled one of the foremost research libraries in the Armenian diaspora. During that period, the library has grown significantly in size—from a total of around 18,000 items in 2009, the earliest year for which we could find reliable numbers, to almost 36,000 as of today—but even more, it has grown in



Researcher Leo Torossian visiting the library



Detail of *hmayil* (prayer scroll) donated to NAASR by Paul and Peggy Seferian from the estate of Dr. Vartan Ghugasian



Ani Babaian shows off a rare item while Arto Kurkjian, Ani Kurkjian, George Vosgerichian, Ken Martin, and Nancy Kolligian look on.

terms of its stature, its level of professionalism and organization, its accessibility, and of course the physical space itself has been utterly transformed with the construction of NAASR's Vartan Gregorian Building, which includes key library-related features such as a special room for rare books and archives and a conservation room.

We have also made efforts to familiarize the community with some of the riches of the Mardigian Library's holdings through open house events and through the "Library Treasures" online features that have been appearing since 2020. In all areas, we feel that great progress has been made even as we acknowledge how far we have yet to go.

Although NAASR is not the only Armenian library in the diaspora or even in the region, and while each library has unique or unusual holdings, we believe that the Mardigian Library is unsurpassed in the responsiveness of the relevant staff to inquiries of any kind. This sampling of feedback from some of the scholars who have used the library supports this view, as does the impressive number of important publications that make use of, and acknowledge the assistance of, NAASR's library.



Ephemera relating to restaurateur George Mardikian and Dinner at Omar Khayyam's from NAASR's collection



Ani Babaian showing visitors around the Library

What Do Library Users Say?



“NAASR’s Mardigian Library is one of the richest Libraries related not only to specific Armenian History but also late Ottoman History. For many years I have benefited from the important materials in this Library, which have been invaluable

to me in my research. This is true also of many of my students whom I have sent to NAASR to find resources they could not get elsewhere. It was because of my confidence in NAASR’s library that I recommended that the Krikor Guerguerian archive be donated to NAASR.”

Dr. Taner Akçam



“NAASR’s library has an invaluable collection of materials for any researcher, whether it is someone like me working on revolution or women/gender in Iran or one of my graduate students on the Armenian immigrant experience in the U.S. Equally priceless

are the generosity, attentiveness, and regard afforded to both the researcher and the research itself. I remain grateful and have nothing but the highest respect for their work and dedication.”

Dr. Houri Berberian

“The collections at NAASR are extremely important in studying the Armenian Genocide. I hope to come back here very often.”

Dr. Uğur Ümit Üngör



“I ended up using the translation introductions you sent me in an article on reading and literary translation among Ottoman Armenians, which came out today. Those introductions ended up having some of the most useful and unique

information about the thought-processes of the translators, so I am very grateful to you for sharing them. They definitely made the article much richer than it would have been.”

Dr. Jennifer Manoukian



“The NAASR Library is a rapid response service for Armenian Studies. When a scholar can’t make it to the library, the library comes to the scholar’s rescue. I have lost count of how many times I have requested—

and promptly received—scans of book chapters from the NAASR team over the past decade.”

Dr. Khatchig Mouradian



Uğur Ümit Üngör visiting the Mardigian Library in 2023, with Marc Mamigonian

And it is not only scholars who use it: the resources are also used by high school students, including one, Sarah Lange, who attends the Montrose School in Medfield, MA, and who in 2023 won the National History Day gold medal (#1 in the state) for her paper, “A Mountain of Defiance: The Forgotten Humanitarian Resistance Movement During the Armenian Genocide and Musa Dagh’s Fight for Survival,” for which she did extensive research at NAASR. (See “Local Student Wins Gold Medal in National History Day Competition,” page 36.)

The Mardigian Library serves two fundamental functions: the first is to provide materials for researchers to write books, articles, dissertations, term papers, or do personal research (such as family history); the second is to serve as a repository of community memory and identity (by “community” we mean not only the local Armenian-American community but the global Armenian community, and in particular the diasporan Armenian community).

By preserving, protecting, and making accessible the materials in our library, we are making a strong statement about their value to the community, affirming that they have permanent importance, and are attempting to set a strong positive example regarding the dignity and value of these materials.

We believe that the Mardigian Library’s function as a repository of memory is crucial. Many individuals who may never use or even visit the library share our conviction that a library holds our cultural legacy and that safeguarding and making accessible that legacy to scholars and to future generations is important. We believe that by showing that we understand the value of these precious materials that others will, too.



DONATIONS TO NAASR'S MARDIGIAN LIBRARY

The following donors contributed items to NAASR's Edward and Helen Mardigian Library in 2023. Donations to the Mardigian Library from our members and friends have been instrumental in making the library what it is today, and continue to be the most important source for the growth of our holdings.

If you have materials in any language on Armenian and related subjects that you wish to consider donating to NAASR, please contact Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian at marc@naasr.org or 617-489-1610. Due to space limitations we cannot accept all items; we can only take items that we need to expand our collection.

Adrienne Alexanian, New York, NY
Theodore Andreasian & Nune Karamyan, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY
Vahe Apelian, Boylston, MA
Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Mission Hills, CA
Dr. Jesse Arlen, New York, NY
Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, Haverhill, MA
Armen Aroyan, Monrovia, CA
Alik Arzoumanian, Cambridge, MA
Dr. Ani Atamian Bournoutian, Haworth, NJ
Dr. Anny Bakalian, New York, NY
Dr. Levon & Deanna Bastajian, Belmont, MA
Nurhan & Victoria Becidyan, Paramus, NJ
Eric Bogosian, New York, NY
Hayg Boyadjian, Lexington, MA
Michael Boyajian, Fishkill, NY
Dr. Azat Bozoyan, Yerevan, Armenia
Dr. Seta Dadoyan, New Rochelle, NY
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Dr. Heratch & Sonya Doumanian, Chicago, IL
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Nairi & Nijdeh Havan, Lexington, MA
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David Kherdian & Nonny Hogrogian, Holyoke, MA
Louisa Kheremian, Belmont, MA
Dr. Anahit Khosroeva, Yerevan, Armenia
Raffi Kortoshian, Yerevan, Armenia
Kevork & Zepure Koushagjian, New Milford, NJ
Nancy Kricorian & James Schamus, New York, NY
Abraham Krikorian & Eugene Taylor, Port Jefferson, NY
Arto & Ani Kurkjian, Belmont, MA
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Tigrane Yegavian & Dr. Victoria Khurshudyan, Paris, France
Lilit Yeremyan, Yerevan, Armenia
Arno Yeretian, Glendale, CA
Aida Zilelian, Forest Hills, NY

NAASR Announces Winners of 2023 Aronian Book Prizes

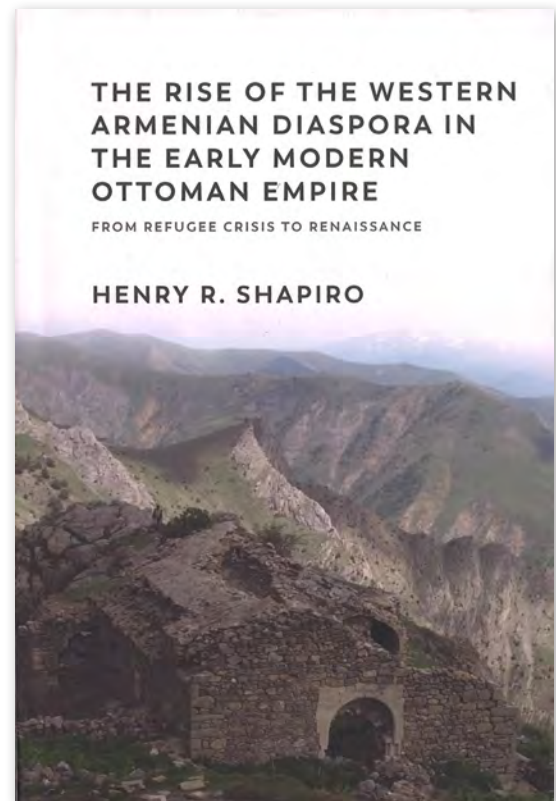
The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) is pleased to announce the 2023 Dr. Sona Aronian Book Prizes for Excellence in Armenian Studies, jointly awarded to Dr. Vartan Matiossian for *The Politics of Naming the Armenian Genocide: Language, History and 'Medz Yeghern'* (I. B. Tauris, 2022) and Dr. Henry Shapiro for *The Rise*

as well as other European languages in order to trace the development of the concepts pertaining to mass killing and genocide of Armenians from the ancient to the modern periods. In so doing, it makes important original contributions to our knowledge of the language used to refer to the Armenian Genocide—and the uses and abuses of language.

Dr. Matiossian, a scholar of Armenian history, literature, and language, is the Executive Director of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church and book review editor for *Armenian Review*.

Matiossian commented that “I am deeply grateful to NAASR for bestowing this truly humbling honor upon a book that was not born from my main lines of research, but from an intrinsic wish to show how knowledge of the Armenian language and Armenian sources truly matters when it comes to the *Medz Yeghern*, the Great Crime of genocide against the Armenians, and the everlasting attempts at its denial. I hope that my incursion into genocide scholarship and the adjacent territories of language, history, and politics may serve as a corrective and a reminder in these sad times when words are being twisted and perverted to the point of being unrecognizable.”

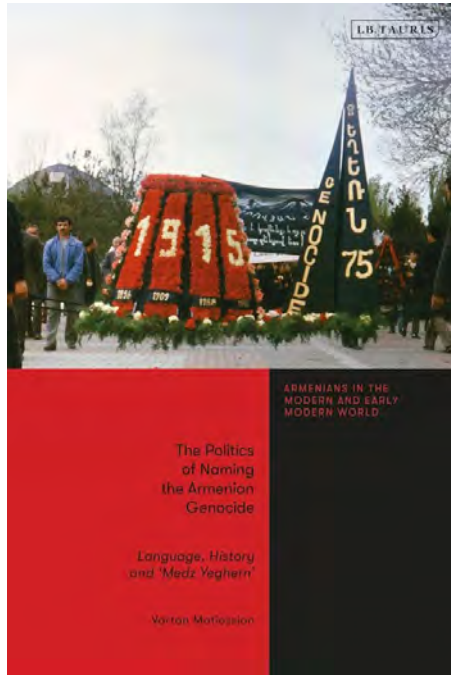
Dr. Henry Shapiro is an Ottoman historian at the Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul, Turkey.



THE RISE OF THE WESTERN ARMENIAN DIASPORA IN THE EARLY MODERN OTTOMAN EMPIRE

FROM REFUGEE CRISIS TO RENAISSANCE

HENRY R. SHAPIRO

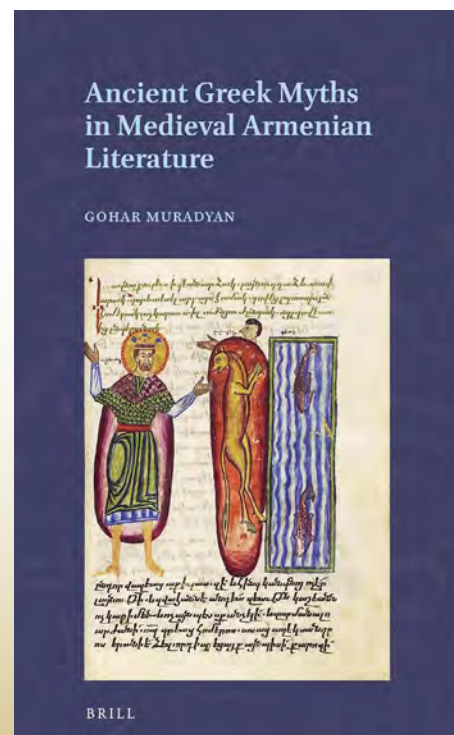


of the Western Armenian Diaspora in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire (Edinburgh University Press, 2022); and to Dr. Gohar Muradyan for the English-language translation *Ancient Greek Myths in Medieval Armenian Literature* (Brill, 2022), a translation of Հին հունական առասպելների արձագանքները հայ միջնադարյան մատենագրության մեջ (2014). The 2023 awards are for books with a 2022 publication date.

NAASR’s Aronian Book Prizes were established in 2014 by the late Dr. Aronian and Dr. Geoffrey Gibbs, to be awarded annually to outstanding scholarly works in the English language in the field of Armenian Studies and translations from Armenian into English.

“In a year with numerous ground-breaking scholarly works, it is a pleasure to recognize these three that cover such a wide range of topics with admirable scholarly rigor,” commented NAASR’s Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian.

Vartan Matiossian’s *The Politics of Naming the Armenian Genocide* explores the genealogy of the concept of *Medz Yeghern* (“Great Crime”), an Armenian term for the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923. The work draws upon extensive research based on Armenian sources, neglected in much of the current historiography,



Ancient Greek Myths in Medieval Armenian Literature

GOHAR MURADYAN



BRILL

The Rise of the Western Armenian Diaspora in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire, based on his 2018 Princeton doctoral thesis, traces how Armenian migrants changed the demographic and cultural landscape of Istanbul and Western Anatolia in the course of the 17th century and adds a great deal to our knowledge of a hitherto understudied but crucial chapter in Armenian (and not only in Armenian) history.

Reached by email, Shapiro remarked, “I am truly honored to have won the Dr. Sona Aronian Book Prize for Excellence in Armenian Studies. It takes many years to write a book, and appreciation of this kind is very valuable and motivating. Moreover, I am grateful to NAASR for having supported research for my monograph. Now I feel all the more motivated to work on the next one!”

Dr. Gohar Muradyan is a philologist and translator. She is a senior researcher and head of the Department for the Study of Translated Literature at the Institute of Ancient Manuscripts / Matenadaran in Yerevan. *Ancient Greek Myths in Medieval Armenian Literature* brings together all the known references to ancient Greek myths in medieval Armenian literature. Alongside the original Armenian passages and, when extant, their Greek originals, Muradyan provides annotated English translations.

When informed of the prize, Dr. Muradyan replied that “I am delighted to be awarded this prize and I thank you heartily.”

IN MEMORIAM

Dennis Papazian

(1931–2023)

The NAASR Board of Directors and staff join with many worldwide in mourning Dr. Dennis Papazian (1931-2023), a friend and colleague and contributor to multiple aspects of academia, Armenian-American life, and Armenian Studies for decades. He was a Charter Member of NAASR, having joined in 1955, and a NAASR Life Member. He served as a NAASR Regional Director for Michigan from 1967-1971, on the NAASR Board of Directors from 1973-1990, and for decades as a member of the NAASR Academic Advisory Committee.

“Dennis was always willing, in fact eager, to share his knowledge and his life and work experiences,” recalls NAASR Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian. “He wanted to see Armenian Studies grow, and he did a lot to make sure it did grow.”

The founder of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan, Dearborn, where he was Professor of History, Papazian was twice President of the Society for Armenian Studies and editor of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*. Papazian was Director of the Armenian Assembly of America from 1975-78 and led the Armenian Assembly’s NEH grant-supported Oral History Project which documented survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

In the words of NAASR Board Member Michael Bobelian, who worked closely with Papazian on his memoir *From My Life and Thought: Reflections on an Armenian-American Journey* (published in 2022), Dennis Papazian was not only deeply involved in scholarly endeavors but also “built institutions that established a foundation for generations to come. His pioneering accomplishments in the early years of the Armenian Assembly established a template for Armenian-American advocacy. The development of the Armenian Research Center at UM-Dearborn served as a major depository for Armenian holdings and helped countless scholars. To truly appreciate Dennis as a person, however, one had to look beyond these accomplishments. The broad smile on Dennis’s face showcased his good-natured bonhomie and personified the ineffable qualities that made him so effective in the many hats he wore as a community organizer, spokesman, and point-person.”

Dennis Papazian is survived by his wife Mary (Arshagouni) and his daughters Ani and Marie.

The following is lightly adapted from the biography of Dennis Papazian that appears on the website of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan Dearborn.

Dr. Dennis R. Papazian was the founding director of the Armenian



Research Center at the University of Michigan Dearborn (UM-Dearborn). A graduate of Wayne State University in Detroit, MI, Papazian earned his PhD in history from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in 1966. His dissertation was entitled “Nikolai Ivanovich Kostomarov: Russian Historian, Ukrainian nationalist, Slavic Federalist.” He was a faculty member at the UM-Dearborn from 1962 onward, and a full professor of History from 1971 to 2006. He taught courses in Russian and Armenian history, as well as on historiography, world history, European history, U.S. diplomatic history. He headed at different times the University’s Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences (1966-1968), the Department of Social Sciences (1968-1969), as well as the College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters (1969-1973). Among other administrative positions, he also was Director of Graduate Studies (1979-1985). In parallel to directing the ARC, Papazian also served as President of the Society for Armenian Studies (1988-1991, 1997-2001) and was the editor of volumes 6 to 11 of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* (1995-2001).

Papazian presented numerous papers, delivered academic presentations and lectures for a variety of audiences, and authored many articles, book reviews, reports, and op-eds and gave interviews to media outlets on matters of his expertise.

Papazian was active in Armenian-American affairs and advocacy. He was chairman of the Board of Directors of the Alex Manoogian Cultural Fund from 1969 to 1977. In this period, he also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Diocesan Assembly of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, and the Board of Trustees of the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in 1985-1997.

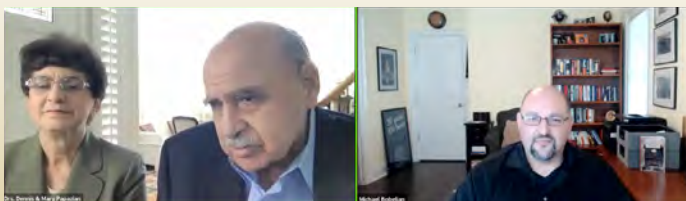


Dennis Papazian with Richard Hovannisian, NAASR conference on Genocide and Human Rights, April 1985.

In 1975 Papazian took a leave of absence from the UM-Dearborn for

four years to serve as Director of the Armenian Assembly in Washington, D.C. During this period and after, he was active in Washington, D.C., meeting with U.S. and foreign officials, and building contacts with many Michigan senators and House representatives.

Papazian has long been a member of the Knights of Vartan fraternal organization with which he founded the ARC. He was Commander of the Nareg (now Nareg-Shavarsan) Lodge in 1988-1989 in Michigan, and Grand Commander of the national Knights of Vartan in 2010-2012.



Mary and Dennis Papazian with Michael Bobelian discussing Dennis’s memoir, Sept. 2022.



NAASR Receives Generous Bequests

NAASR was the beneficiary of several generous bequests in 2023 from dedicated longtime members and supporters Archie H. Arpiarian of Cambridge, MA, Diana M. Hanoian of Haverhill, MA, and George Zakarian and Mariam Zakarian of Watertown, MA. These bequests, totaling more than \$500,000, will be used to support NAASR's operations and activities.



Archie Harry Arpiarian passed away on January 30, 2022, at age 88. Archie was born on August 21, 1933, in New York City to the late Nubar and Elize (Arnaghani-an) Arpiarian. He was a regular presence for many years at Boston-area NAASR lectures and functions and was a member continuously since 1963. He had also donated books to NAASR's Mardigian Library. Arpiarian was a graduate of New York University where he obtained his degree as a Mechanical Engineer. In 1962 Archie took a job at MIT where he worked on the

NASA Apollo lunar mission. Later, he continued his career at Polaroid until his retirement in 1988.

Diana Hanoian first became a NAASR member in 1957, and at the time of her death had been a member continuously since 1974. She was born in Haverhill on September 12, 1935, the daughter of the late Haroutun (Harry) Hanoian, who was born in Kharpert, and Araksi (Helen) (Haroutian) Hanoian of Uxbridge, MA, who owned and operated the H & H Cleaning & Tailoring on Winter Street in Haverhill for many years. She passed away in 2020.



She graduated from Boston University and matriculated to Boston College where she earned her master's degree in education. She was a highly respected and well-liked mathematics teacher in the Advanced Placement program at Haverhill High School for many years who was appreciated both by her peers and her students. In addition to her long association with NAASR, she was a member of the Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe and a Life Member of Women's City Club of Haverhill.

Put NAASR in Your Estate Plans

There are many ways you can help NAASR and its programs to advance Armenian Studies. One of the most significant is to include NAASR in your estate planning. Contact NAASR to discuss possibilities at 617-489-1610 or hq@naasr.org.



Mariam and George Zakarian, who passed away in 2019 and 2016, respectively, were two of the four children of the late John and Sarah Zakarian. John was born in the Kharpert region and Sarah was from Adana.

Mariam graduated from Watertown High School in 1940 and attended the St. James Armenian School for five years. After high school Mariam worked in the office of a steel distributing company in Allston. She later worked for General Electric and was the secretary to the President and Vice President of Urell in Watertown for 25 years. She was a frequent attendee at NAASR events for many years.

George Zakarian was a World War II veteran. Following the completion of his bachelor's degree in Engineering at Tufts University, he entered the military and was stationed in Germany. After the war he resumed his education and received advanced degrees.

"It means so much that these dedicated members of the community and friends of NAASR chose to continue their support through these generous bequests," said NAASR Executive Director Silva Sedrakian. "It demonstrates the remarkable commitment they had to the goals and purposes of NAASR, and we are incredibly grateful," Sedrakian commented.

Peter Onanian

NAASR Board Member

Peter Onanian (1930-2023) was a prominent member of the Greater Boston Armenian community and a longtime member and supporter of NAASR as well as a member of Board of Directors from 1993-1998.

Peter formed Lusalon Mason Contracting in the early 1960s, and it became the largest masonry contractor in New England. In the 1970s, he branched into general contracting specializing in commercial and industrial

building projects. He became an arbitrator with the American Arbitration Association. Peter invested in a multitude of real estate ventures, including golf course ownerships.

In addition to his service to NAASR, Peter served on many charitable boards and was a Life Member of the Armenian Assembly of America.



Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian

A Giant of Armenian Studies

HOVANNISIAN, from page 1

Richard G. Hovannisian was Professor of Modern Armenian and Near Eastern History at UCLA. He was born and raised in Tulare, California, into a family of Armenian Genocide survivors. After receiving his B.A. and M.A. in history from the University of California, Berkeley, he went on to obtain his PhD in 1966 from UCLA. His dissertation was published in 1967 as *Armenia on the Road to Independence 1918* and would serve as a prologue to the four-volume history *The Republic of Armenia* (1971-1996).

Having joined the UCLA faculty in 1962, he was also an associate professor of history at Mount St. Mary's College, Los Angeles, from 1966 to 1969. He served as the Associate Director of UCLA's Center for Near Eastern Studies from 1978 to 1995 as well as becoming the first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History in 1986, a chair which is now named in his honor.

Sebouh D. Aslanian, who holds the Richard G. Hovannisian Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA, remarked that "Dr. Hovannisian was a mentor to several generations of scholars and a recipient of numerous awards and prizes, including a distinguished Guggenheim fellowship. As the present holder of the chair, I am profoundly indebted to his distinguished contributions to the teaching of Armenian history and for establishing Armenian Studies in North America on a firm foundation—a legacy that will be carried forward in future generations."

NAASR Board Member Anna Ohanyan, the Richard B. Finnegan Distinguished Professor of Political Science and International Relations at Stonehill College, writing from Tbilisi, Georgia, pointed out that "this is a loss not just for the Armenians and the Armenian Studies, but also for those who research the Caucasus in general. He has stimulated the historiography of the Caucasus region in the early 20th century, mentored scholars from the region, and worked closely with the historians of the region, in and outside of the South Caucasus."

Hovannisian served on the board of directors of many scholarly and civic organizations, and following his retirement from UCLA was an adjunct professor at USC, advising the Shoah Foundation on its Armenian Genocide testimony collection. The massive Hovannisian collection of Armenian Genocide survivor interviews, conducted by Hovannisian and his students in the 1970s, is now part of the Shoah Foundation



Hovannisian speaking at NAASR program "Turkish Armenian Dialogue and the Direction of Armenian Studies," September 2006; also shown, Kevork Bardakjian and Rachel Goshgarian

Visual History Archive. With Nina Garsoian, Dickran Kouymjian, Avedis Sanjian, and Robert Thomson he was one of the founders of the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) and served three times as its president.

A passionate advocate for research on and education about the Armenian Genocide and genocide and human rights in general, he served on the boards of the Zoryan Institute, Armenian National Institute, and Facing History and Ourselves, and was involved in many other efforts of the same kind.

He first joined NAASR in 1963 and was an honorary life member. He spoke many times for NAASR over the course of 60 years—the first in 1963 and the most recent in 2022—was a trusted advisor, and served as scholarly leader of several trips to Historic Armenia organized by NAASR with Armen Aroyan between 2009 and 2013. In 2016, on the occasion of the celebration of NAASR's 60th anniversary, Hovannisian with Nina Garsoian were presented with the NAASR Founders' Awards for Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Armenian Studies.

Former NAASR Chair (2016-2022) Yervant Chekijian said that "Richard's monumental academic work educated the world about the Armenian history and has made a major contribution towards the respect and positive recognition that the Armenian Republic receives from the world community. On a personal note, I traveled with Richard four times to Historic Armenia and Cilicia. I will cherish that forever."

Nancy R. Kolligian, former NAASR Chair (2002-2009), reflected, "I am at a loss for words other than to say that I loved him and had the greatest respect for Richard as a human being and gifted scholar. As Armenians we are indebted to Richard for his relentless pursuit of bringing our history to the forefront of world history."

Hovannisian edited and contributed to more than thirty-five books, including 15 volumes (2000-2021) of proceedings from the UCLA conference series "Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces," an invaluable set of publications that chronicle Armenian history and culture throughout historic Western Armenia and other long-established communities.

Among his many other edited volumes such important works as *The Armenian Holocaust: A Bibliography Relating to the Deportations, Massacres, and Dispersion of the Armenian People, 1915-1923* (1978), *The Armenian Image in History and Literature* (1981), *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective* (1986), *Remembrance and Denial: The Case of the Armenian Genocide* (1999), *Enlightenment and Diaspora: The Armenian and Jewish Cases* (with David Myers, 1999), *Looking Backward, Moving Forward: Confronting the Armenian Genocide* (2003), *The Armenian Genocide: Cultural and Ethical Legacies* (2007), as well



Nancy Kolligian and Richard Hovannisian at NAASR, 2011



Richard and Vartiter Hovannisian at NAASR, 2012

as the landmark two-volume *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times* (1997). He also was a contributor to many volumes, academic journals, and other publications, and literally gave too many lectures and conference talks than can be counted.

Richard Hovannisian was born on November 9, 1932, to Kaspar and Siroon (Nalbandian) Hovannisian, both survivors of the Armenian Genocide. Being the son of genocide survivors played an important role in his academic path. The family's saga



WILL SPEAK — UCLA instructor Richard Hovannisian will speak about the Armenian communities of the Far East at a special dinner presented by the National Association For Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) on Friday evening, February 15, at 7 p.m. The event, which will feature pianist Maro Ajemian, will be held at the Armenian Cilicia Congregational Church in Pasadena.

Ad for Hovannisian's first NAASR lecture, February 1963



Hovannisian speaking at NAASR's 40th anniversary celebration, 1995, as Founding Chairman Manoog S. Young looks on



Vartan Gregorian, Nazik Kotcholosian, Khenguhi Kotcholosian, Simon Vratsian, Richard Hovannisian, Fresno, 1958 (Courtesy of the Hovannisian family)

from genocide in Western Armenia to a new life in California is told by Richard Hovannisian's grandson Garin K. Hovannisian in *Family of Shadows* (2010) and also has been the theme of several of Richard's talks in his later years.

In 1957, he married Dr. Vartiter Kotcholosian and had four children: Raffi, Armen, Ani, and Garo. He was predeceased by his beloved wife and partner in 2021, and is survived by his children, their families, and a large and loving extended family.

Hovannisian's career as a scholar roughly coincides with

the development of the field of Armenian Studies in the U.S. He is among the first generation of scholars who shaped the field that was in its infancy when he was a graduate student. In 1969 he became the first professor of modern Armenian history in the U.S. and eventually the first to hold a chair in modern Armenian history.

What set Richard Hovannisian apart from most of the other early figures in Armenian studies who took their places in the developing field in the 1950s and 1960s was his focus on modern Armenian history; and it is mainly through his enormous efforts that the study of modern Armenian history developed and gained credibility. Through his efforts as a researcher, teacher, and mentor, the study of modern Armenian history flourished.

In a remarkable and unfortunate coincidence, Mary Kilbourne Matossian, whose valuable *The Impact of Soviet Policies in Armenia*, published by Brill in 1962, was one of the few significant works on modern Armenian history in English before Hovannisian's work, passed away on July 9, one day before Hovannisian. (See page 29 on Matossian.)

Hovannisian's magnum opus is the formidable and definitive *The Republic of Armenia*. Hovannisian was inspired by Simon Vratsian, the last Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia in 1920, who became a mentor to Hovannisian when as a young man he traveled to Lebanon to study at the Nishan Palanjian Jemaran, and who had published the seminal *Hayastani Hanrapetut' iwn* (Հայաստանի Հանրապետություն = The Republic of Armenia) in 1928.

In a 2020 interview with NAASR's Marc Mamigonian and Ani Babaian, Hovannisian recalled "I was in Beirut to learn Armenian in 1955-56, and it was a challenge for me because I had determined that this [i.e., *Hayastani Hanrapetut' iwn*] was the book I had to read. I got there in September of 1955 and recognized the Armenian letters but I couldn't read—I could paste words together—and so I spent many hours a day and surprised everybody, including Baron Vratsian, in that I completed reading that book by December." He continued that: see GIANT, page 28



Richard Hovannisian, on Zoom during the pandemic with Marc Mamigonian and Ani Babaian, 2020 (Courtesy of Ani Hovannisian Kevorkian.)

GIANT, from page 27

I did have the conviction that I wanted to write about that period of time, because it was so important and so controversial. Especially in the United States our communities were split apart by the symbolic meaning of the tricolor—one segment virtually idolized it as a symbol of freedom and independence to be redeemed and the others saw it as a symbol of misery and horror that was overcome only by Armenia becoming a part of the Soviet system and having the protection of the Soviet Red Army. They were both right and they were both wrong. We were, in those times, rather fundamentalist we didn't relativize very much, so I wanted to sort of bring this Republic out of the shadows, the shadows

of ignorance and prejudice that prevailed. Because everyone on all sides really didn't know that much about it, and most of us were Western Armenian diasporans who hadn't lived there and haven't lived through it. So, that was my mission, but I didn't think that I would be doing a definitive history or competing with Simon Vratsian.

Hovannisian remarked many times that he never intended to be and did not consider himself to be a scholar of the Armenian Genocide. Nevertheless, with the possible exception of Vahakn Dadrian, it is difficult to think of any-



Presenting his final publication, *Armenian Communities of Persia/Iran*, to volume contributor and NAASR Library Curator Ani Babaian, prior to lecturing on May 6, 2022

one who did more to foster the increasing knowledge of the Armenian Genocide or to understand, expose, and combat genocide denial; and in numerous important conferences and edited volumes he provided a forum for several generations of scholars to develop their work on the subject.

“Richard’s passing marks the end of an era. Along with Dadrian, Richard built a formidable scholarly field on the foundation created by individuals of an earlier generation such as Aram Andonian, Krikor Guerguerian, and Haigazn Kazarian,” said Taner Akçam, the inaugural director of the Armenian Genocide Research Program of the Promise Armenian Institute at UCLA.



Richard Hovannisian and Marc Mamigonian at NAASR's 60th Anniversary Gala, 2016

NAASR Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian, in remarks given in 2012 when Hovannisian was presented with the ANCA's Vahan Cardashian Award, observed that “while Richard Hovannisian is a scholar and not a professional activist, much of his scholarship carries with it a message that is sometimes explicit and sometimes implicit. What I understand that message to be is hard to put into a few words, but in my opinion, it is something like this: “There is such a thing as truth in history. The pursuit of truth in history is congruent with the pursuit of justice; the two cannot be separated from each other. We must constantly pursue and reaffirm both truth and justice.”

Over the course of six decades, no individual did more to shape Armenian Studies, and certainly no one did as much to advance and give legitimacy to the study of modern Armenian history, as Richard Hovannisian. A great deal of the progress that has been made in the past 60 years is a direct result of his work, and certainly the study of modern Armenian history and all that it entails would scarcely exist if not for him, or it would exist in a different form.

The void left by Richard Hovannisian's passing is enormous. We are fortunate, however, that the legacy of his life and work is even larger; and his legacy will endure.

Armenian Studies Pioneer Mary A. Kilbourne Matossian Passes Away

We are grateful to our colleague and former NAASR Board Member Dr. Lou Ann Matossian for sharing this tribute to her mother, Dr. Mary Kilbourne Matossian, a remarkable and pioneering scholar who became a NAASR member in the year of the association's founding, 1955.

By Lou Ann Matossian
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Historian Mary Allerton Kilbourne Matossian, a pioneer of Armenian, women's, and interdisciplinary studies, passed away on her 93rd birthday, July 9, 2023, in Portola Valley, California.

Her groundbreaking 1962 study, *The Impact of Soviet Policies in Armenia*, stood virtually alone for two decades as the main Anglo-phone source on Soviet social reforms in Armenian life. To this day, her chapters about Armenian women remain the historiographical point of reference for contemporary scholars.

In popular culture, Mary Matossian was known for her 1982 interpretation of the Salem witch trials; her research was reported widely and featured in a *New York Times* editorial. Using historical climate data, she defended the theory (originally proposed by Linnda Caporael) that ergot-infected rye bread caused symptoms of mold poisoning, which the colonists attributed to witchcraft. The Salem case was included in *Poisons of the Past* (1989), a synthesis of public health and social history that drew international attention.

A native of Los Angeles, California, Mary was born July 9, 1930, to Norman J. Kilbourne, MD, a Yale honor graduate, and the former Katharine R. Hillix, a YWCA secretary. Named for her Pilgrim ancestor Mary Allerton (1616–1699), the young Mary Kilbourne was deeply influenced by her family's Anglo-American Protestant traditions, which included spiritual conviction, social reform, communion with nature, women's education, and the worldwide missionary movement. Her great-aunt, medical missionary and botanist Fannie Andrews Shepard, MD, served in Aintab, Ottoman Turkey, from 1882 to 1919.

At age seventeen, Mary received a scholarship to Stanford University, from which she graduated in 1951 magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. The following year, as a Rotary Fellow, she attended the American

University of Beirut (Lebanon), receiving her MA in Near Eastern History, then returned to Stanford, where she completed her PhD in History in 1955.

On July 9, 1954, Mary married Garo S. Matossian (1921–2004), an Armenian physician born in Aintab, whom she had met in Beirut. Garo's parents, Setrak and Eliza (Ayvazian), were both educators, Setrak having taught at the American missionary-led Central Turkey College in Aintab and later at Aleppo College in Syria.

Mary and Garo moved to Boston in the fall of 1956, where Garo received advanced medical training at the Lahey Clinic. While affiliated with the Russian Research Center at Harvard, Mary revised her dissertation on Soviet Armenia for publication. She taught History at the University of Maryland for 31 years.

Mary Matossian was the author of *The Impact of Soviet Policies in Armenia* (Brill, 1962); *Armenian Village Life Before 1914* (with Susie Hoo-gasian Villa, Wayne State University Press, 1982); *Poisons of the Past: Molds, Epidemics, and History* (Yale University Press, 1989); *Shaping World History: Breakthroughs in Ecology, Technology, Science, and Politics* (M.E. Sharpe, 1997); *Öncesi Ermeni Köy Hayatı* (Turkish edition of *Armenian Village Life Before 1914*, Aras Yayıncılık, 2006); and *Plants, Stars, and the Origins of Religion: With a Decipherment of the Phaistos Disk* (Mill City Press, 2014).

Her articles and essays of note include "Two Marxist Approaches to Nationalism" (1957), "Soviet Diary, October 1957" (1958), "The Armenians" (1967), "Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some Tensions and Ambiguities" (1962), "In the Beginning, God was a Woman" (1973), "Birds, Bees, and Barley: Pagan Origins of Armenian Spring Rituals" (1979), and a reflection on her early work, "The Transformation of Armenian Society Under Stalin" (1980).

Mary Matossian is survived by her children Lou Ann, Michele, Viken (Mary), and Mark (Renée) Matossian and nine grandchildren.



IN MEMORIAM

Abraham D. Krikorian

(1937–2023)

NAASR is deeply saddened to note the passing on May 21 of Dr. Abraham D. Krikorian of Port Jefferson, NY, esteemed Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry and Cell Biology at SUNY Stony Brook, dogged researcher on the Armenian Genocide, and generous donor of invaluable materials to NAASR's library.

Dr. Krikorian was a native of Worcester, MA, the son of Abraham Der Krikorian and Tarquohie Tashjian Der Krikorian, both originally from the village of Kerope (Körpe) in the Kharpert region of historic Armenia.

Together with his partner of 58 years, Eugene Lynn Taylor, who survives him, Krikorian amassed a formidable library of scholarly works, memoirs, periodicals, graphic materials, and other valuable resources relating to the Armenian Genocide and Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, including related areas of study such as Great Power relations, World War I, the



Eugene Taylor and Abraham Krikorian in 2004

Holocaust, genocide studies in general, and a great deal more. In addition to this vast library of published materials, Krikorian and Taylor also visited and collected digitized materials from a large array of archives containing relevant related materials.

In 2013, Krikorian and Taylor agreed to donate their collection to NAASR, and soon thereafter began the process of delivering materials to NAASR's Belmont headquarters. Along with the exceptional book and periodical materials was an impressive collection of framed original Near East Relief posters, which are on display in NAASR's Vartan Gregorian Building on the third floor. In 2021, Krikorian and Taylor also donated a beautiful Steinway Model B grand piano to NAASR.



Shortly before Krikorian's unexpected death, some 160 boxes of additional materials were picked up from Port Jefferson and delivered to NAASR where they are being catalogued and added to the Mardigian Library. Among

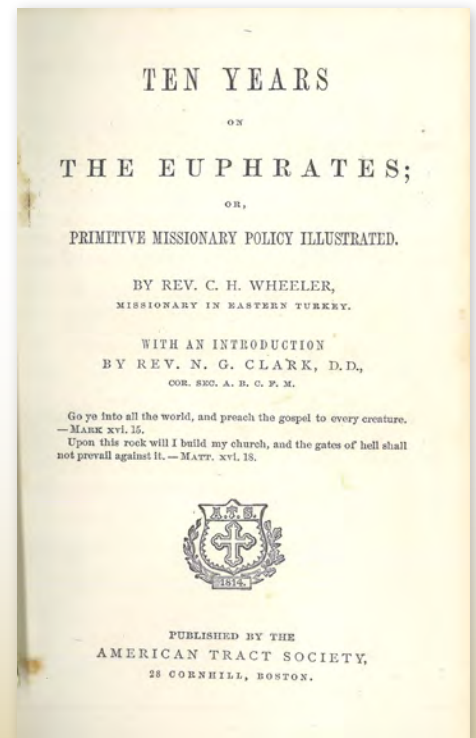


Sheet music for "Armenian Maid, Dedicated to Aurora Mardigianian," from the Krikorian and Taylor Collection

the items were more rare Near East Relief posters and an exceptionally scarce original poster for the film *Ravished Armenia* (1919). Their collection as a whole has added significantly to the depth and breadth of NAASR's library. Through the second half of 2023, Jaxon Washburn, who received his MA at Harvard in May, has been working on cataloguing and processing the huge collection.

"Over the past 15 years or more that I have known Abe Krikorian, I have always been impressed by his sense of humor as well as his indefatigable efforts to investigate important aspects of the Armenian Genocide, especially the visual record," stated NAASR's Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian. "He was a good friend and incredibly valuable resource. He had absolute integrity, and for that reason his and Gene's decision to entrust their precious materials to us means so much. We will miss him."

Krikorian had a distinguished scientific career covering a diverse range of topics and subjects. He participated with his PhD mentor from Cornell, F.C. Steward, in the 1975 joint Soviet-USA Biological Satellite Cosmos 782 mission



Title page of rare copy of Rev. Crosby Wheeler's *Ten Years on the Euphrates*, from the Krikorian and Taylor Collection

Edward Alexander

(1920-2023)

NAASR Lecturer and Member, Diplomat, and Author

NAASR joins with family and friends in mourning the passing of longtime member and supporter Edward Alexander, after an extraordinarily rich, distinguished, and long life.

Edward Alexander of Bethesda, MD, passed away on October 5, 2023, at the age of 103. He was a career diplomat in the Foreign Service where he served as a Public Affairs Officer in West Berlin; Budapest, Hungary; Athens, Greece; and East Berlin, GDR. He played a key role in the visits of President Kennedy to Berlin in 1963 and Richard Nixon to Bucharest in 1969. During the course of his career, Alexander arranged numerous cultural exchanges of renowned American musicians, conductors, composers and actors, introducing European audiences to performances by Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Kirk Douglas, and Zsa Zsa Gabor, among others. During his tour as Deputy Director for the Soviet Union and East Europe, Alexander traveled throughout the Soviet bloc supervising American press and cultural affairs.



After graduating from Columbia University with a degree in Musicology followed by a Master's degree from the Columbia School of Journalism, he entered the U.S. Army in World War II, serving in Europe on the staffs of Generals Eisenhower and Bradley in the Psy-

chological Warfare Division. After the war, he worked as Public Relations Director to Sir Laurence Olivier on the two Shakespearean films *Henry V* and *Hamlet*. In 1950, he joined the Voice of America, organizing broadcasts to Soviet Armenia, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and Tatarstan, and was appointed Chief of the Armenian Service, where he remained for ten years.

Following his Foreign Service postings, he served on the Board for International Broadcasting, overseeing Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty broadcasts, at the State Department in the Freedom of Information Division, and was Spokesman to three international conferences on Human Rights. He was official Escort and Interpreter for the White House visit of Catholicos Vazgen I with President Bush in the Oval Office and also for the visit of former Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan. Shortly after Armenia's independence, Alexander was invited to Armenia to serve as advisor to the Foreign Ministry.

He lectured about Armenia at NAASR, Tufts University's Fletcher School of Diplomacy, The Library of Congress, the Armenian Embassy, and several universities. Alexander wrote three books, *The Serpent and the Bees*, about the 15-year attempt by the Soviet KGB to recruit him, *A Crime of Vengeance*, about the Berlin trial of the murder of Talaat Pasha of which a feature film is planned, and *Opus*, a novel about the search by two Armenian diplomats for a stolen Beethoven manuscript.

He was born in New York City in 1920 to John der Alexanian, a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, and Nevert Faljian Alexanian.

Edward Alexander is survived by his wife of 77 years, Roseann, son Mark and his wife JoAnn Palazzo, son Scott and his wife Cathy Davis, and son Christian and his wife Arlene Saryan, and five grandchildren, Derek, Maya, Miranda, Garen, and Sean Alexander.

by flying totipotent cells of carrot capable of developing into full grown somatic embryos. This was a first, and over the years was followed by many experiments with aseptically cultured higher plants and plantlets in space. He maintained a large laboratory and enjoyed consistent funding largely through NASA, and together with Thora Halstead was a prime mover in 1984 in the establishment of the American Society for Gravitational and Space Biology (ASGSB) - name now modified to Research rather than Biology, ASGSR.

He received numerous awards and held offices in various learned societies. He specialized in cell and tissue culture for cloning purposes and was able to integrate that aspect of the research into spaceflight experiments and in the cultivation of various tropical plantation crops. Daylily and

its hybrids were also studied in-depth and served as a subject for research in space at low gravity.

Krikorian and Taylor were formally married in the state of New York as soon as it became legally possible in 2011. They traveled extensively across the globe and drove across the U.S. seven times, often in connection with documenting the Armenian Genocide especially as it involved the collection of photographs and imagery, visiting numerous archives and repositories, and gathering materials.

Abraham D. Krikorian was the youngest of six children (3 girls and 3 boys). He was predeceased by his brothers Charlie and Peter and is survived by older sisters Alice, Anna and Mary. He will be missed by surviving family members and many colleagues and friends around the world.



Jaxon Washburn at NAASR cataloguing the Krikorian and Taylor Collection



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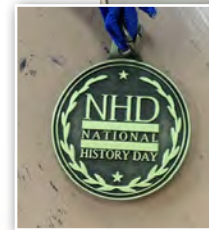
Local Student Wins Gold Medal in National History Day Competition

In late 2022 we were contacted by Sarah Lange, who attends the Montrose School in Medfield, MA, requesting to visit NAASR to use the library and to discuss her project of writing an essay for the 2023 National History Day competition. Within the framework of the year's theme of "Frontiers in History," Sarah intended to write a paper on the Musa Dagh resistance movement.

Sarah came to NAASR and spent time using materials from the collection and discussing the project at length with Library Curator Ani Babaian and Academic Director Marc Mamigonian, who also put her in contact with historian Vahram Shemmassian of Cal State Northridge, who has written extensively on Musa Dagh.

The National History Day competition begins with approximately 700,000 students nationwide, representing all 50 states plus Washington D.C., South Korea, China, South Asia, and Central America to name a few. The national competition consists of 3,000 students who competed over four days at the University of Maryland in June.

We were excited to learn first that Sarah's essay was chosen to represent her school at the National History Day regional competition at



the beginning of March and subsequently that she was awarded the National History Day Massachusetts gold medal for her paper, "A Mountain of Defiance: The Forgotten Humanitarian Resistance Movement During the Armenian Genocide and Musa Dagh's Fight for Survival." We are truly proud to have been able to provide assistance to her and look forward to her future accomplishments.



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National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Inc.

395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA 02478 • Tel.: 617-489-1610

Fax: 617-484-1759 • E-Mail: hq@naasr.org • Web: www.naasr.org

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