

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR ARMENIAN STUDIES AND RESEARCH

PRESENTS

THE KING AND THE FORTY ORPHANS:

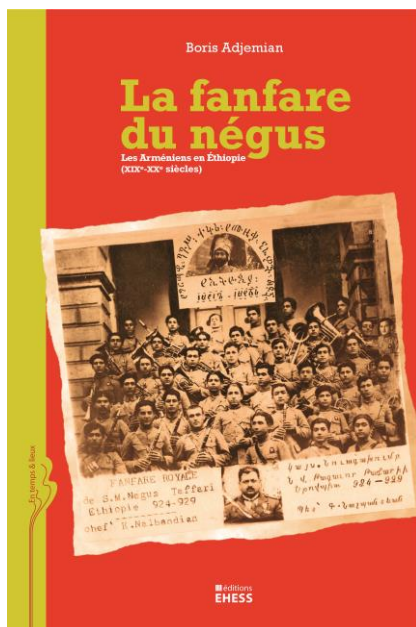
THE INVENTION OF AN ARMENIAN HOMELAND IN ETHIOPIA

by **Dr. Boris Adjemian**

Director, AGBU Nubarian Library, Paris

**Thursday, February 16, 2017, 7:30 p.m.,
at the NAASR Center**

395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA



In 1924, the Crown Prince and Regent of Ethiopia Ras Täfäri Mäkonnen (the future Emperor Haile Selassie) recruited forty young Armenian orphans to form the first Ethiopian royal brass band. Kevork Nalbandian, the director of this brass band, was asked by the Crown Prince to write the first Ethiopian national anthem. In this lecture, historian Boris Adjemian will discuss the meaning of this event in the history and the memory of Armenian immigration to Ethiopia.

Armenian immigration to Ethiopia started in the late 19th century, although Armenian travellers had already benefited in the past centuries from the close relationship existing between the Ethiopian and Armenian Churches. Throughout the 20th century, Armenian immigrants and their descendants in Ethiopia demonstrated their deep integration into the host society. Focused on the leitmotiv that Armenians were, among all the foreigners, the closest to Ethiopia and Ethiopian rulers, the idealized great narrative of Armenian immigration re-mapped Ethiopia as a genuine homeland of substitution for a people in exile.

Dr. Boris Adjemian is a historian and the director of AGBU Nubar Library (Paris). He is also the editor-in-chief of the bilingual academic journal *Études arméniennes contemporaines*. He defended his PhD in 2011 at École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales and Università degli Studi di Napoli. His first book, entitled *La Fanfare du Négus: Les Arméniens en Éthiopie (19e-20e siècles)*, was published by Éditions de l'EHESS in 2013.

Dr. Adjemian will also be a featured speaker at the February 19 concert "From Armenia to Addis Ababa: The Emperor, the Nalbandians, and the Dawn of Western Music in Ethiopia," organized by the Friends of Armenian Culture Society, at Dorothy and Charles Mosesian Theatre for the Arts, Watertown, MA.

Admission free (donations appreciated). A reception will take place prior to the program.

Contact NAASR at 617-489-1610 or hq@naasr.org for more information.