



NAASR ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2020 SONA ARONIAN ARMENIAN STUDIES BOOK PRIZES

The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) is pleased to announce the winners of the 2020 Dr. Sona Aronian Book Prizes for Excellence in Armenian Studies: Prof. Houri Berberian for the monograph *Roving Revolutionaries: Armenians and the Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman Worlds* (Univ. of California Press) and Dr. Lou Ann Matossian, Dr. Vartan Matiossian, and the late Aris Sevag for the translation of Bedros Keljik's *Armenian-American Sketches* (The Armenian Series of the Press at California State University, Fresno). The 2020 awards are for books with a 2019 publication date.

Berberian's *Roving Revolutionaries* explores the interconnected aspects of three early twentieth century revolutions—in the Russian, Ottoman, and Iranian empires—through the involvement of Armenian revolutionaries in each, while also providing insights into the circulation of revolutionaries, ideas, and print across borders.

NAASR Academic Director Marc A. Mamigonian stated that "*Roving Revolutionaries* makes important original contributions to our knowledge of Armenian activism and political thought in the late 19th and early 20th centuries within a wide regional/trans-imperial context and is grounded in thorough research in archival and published sources." Dr. Berberian, via email, expressed her thanks for "this honor and recognition of *Roving Revolutionaries*, especially at this moment in time, when the book's protagonists—those committed to peaceful co-existence and self-determination—have become endangered species and the hybrid and cosmopolitan world they inhabited almost unrecognizable."

The prize awarded for the translation of Keljik's *Armenian-American Sketches* (originally published in 1944 in Armenian as *Amerigahay Badgerner*), recognizes a team effort which includes the efforts of the three translators, Aris Sevag, Dr. Lou Ann Matossian, and Dr. Vartan Matiossian, as well as the publication's co-editors Christopher Atamian and Barlow Der Mugerdechian. (Matossian also served as a co-editor.) Lou Ann Matossian first translated one of Keljik's "sketches" and published it in *Ararat Quarterly* in 1997 and subsequently lectured on Keljik at NAASR in 2010; the late Aris Sevag translated the remainder of the book prior to his death in 2012; and Dr. Matiossian translated additional Keljik pieces published in the *Baikar Annual* in the 1940s.

As Dr. Matossian commented, "If Leo Hamalian and Aris Sevag had not published the early translations, or Marc Mamigonian had not invited a lecture on Keljik, or Christopher Atamian had not taken an interest, or Barlow Der Mugerdechian had not accepted our proposal, or Vartan Matiossian and the Keljik brothers had not

come on board, or Asdghig Sevag [widow of the late Aris] and the donors been less generous, this chain could have been broken at any moment. The reappearance of the Keljik stories really was due to the passion of every individual along the way.”

Echoing these sentiments, Marc Mamigonian noted that “in awarding the prize for *Armenian-American Sketches*, we recognize the important contribution the book makes to expanding our knowledge of Armenian-American literature and culture. I wish that our late friend and colleague Aris Sevag were alive to receive this award along with Lou Ann and Vartan, and I am grateful that Asdghig can accept on his behalf. Furthermore, while the prize itself is given to translators, we also want to acknowledge with gratitude the vital efforts of Christopher Atamian and Barlow Der Mugrdechian in making this publication a reality.”

National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR)

395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA 02478

www.naasr.org hq@naasr.org

January 21, 2021