



The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research

NAASR Honored by Clark's Strassler Center for Support

The Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Clark University hosted the Third International Graduate Students' Conference for Holocaust and Genocide Studies on April 9-12 2015, in cooperation with the Danish Institute for International Studies, Department of Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Copenhagen. NAASR provided funds to support the conference from its Manoog S. Young Fund for Armenian Studies.

The conference provided a forum for doctoral students to present their research projects to peers and established scholars. The keynote speaker was Professor Eric Weitz, Dean of Humanities and Arts and Professor of History at the City College of New York.

At the dinner for conference participants and invited guests on April 10, held in Clark's Tilton Hall, NAASR was saluted for its support of the Armenian program and its faculty and students.

NAASR's Director of Academic Affairs, Marc A. Mamigonian offered the following remarks on this occasion.

I would like to share a little bit of history: NAASR's Founding Chairman, the late Manoog S. Young, did an MA in history at Clark where he submitted a thesis on "Russia and the Armenians, 1700 to 1923," in 1952. Thus, for us, it is very meaningful that NAASR's support for the 2015 Graduate Student Conference comes from our Manoog S. Young Fund for Armenian Studies. I think that Manoog, who passed away in 2012, would be pleased with this, since above all else he

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"Near East Relief and Its Legacy: A Century of Service to Armenians and to Humanity"

Collaboration between NAASR and Near East Foundation

As a signature event in its year-long efforts to commemorate and discuss various aspects of the Armenian Genocide in its centennial year, NAASR collaborated with the Near East Foundation to organize a special event entitled "Near East Relief and Its Legacy: A Century of Service to Armenians and to Humanity," which took place on April 12 at the National Heritage Museum in Lexington. The event was made possible by a generous donation by Peter Palandjian.

The program featured speakers Dr. Suzanne Moranian, historian, member of NAASR's Board see LEGACY, page 2



Part of the NER lobby display (Photo courtesy of Near East Foundation.)

NAASR Holds 61st Assembly, Elects New Board Members

NAASR held its 61st Annual Assembly of Members on Saturday, May 16, 2015, at the NAASR Headquarters in Belmont, MA. The Assembly was chaired by NAASR Board Chairman Raffi P. Yeghiayan of Bedford, MA, and Stepan Pilgian of Westford, MA, served as Secretary of the Assembly.

The afternoon was highlighted by an informative and emotional presen-

tation by Robert Aram Kaloosdian on his recently published book *Tadem, My Father's Village: Extinguished During the 1915 Armenian Genocide*.

The son of a survivor of the Armenian Genocide, Kaloosdian was raised in Watertown, Massachusetts, and graduated from Clark University and the Boston University School of Law. As a leader in Armenian community affairs, Kaloosdian has

devoted much of his life to the recognition and study of the Genocide. He was founding chairman of the Armenian National Institute and a founder of the Armenian Assem-



Stephen Kurkjian, Manoog Kaprielian, and George Aghjayan get ready to vote



Featured speaker Robert Aram Kaloosdian signs books while Chairman Raffi Yeghiayan gets ready for the Assembly to begin.

bly of America. A lawyer for more than fifty years in Greater Boston, he aided the team defending a school curriculum guide against Genocide deniers in federal court. Kaloosdian see ASSEMBLY, page 5

“Near East Relief and Its Legacy: A Century of Service to Armenians and to Humanity”

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of Directors, and President of the Armenian International Women’s Association; Shant Mardrossian, Chairman, Board of Directors, Near East Foundation; Dr. Charles Benjamin, President, Near East Foundation; Molly Sullivan, Director and Curator, Near East Relief Historical Society; His Excellency Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations; and His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America. NAASR’s Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian served as emcee. In addition, the Near East Foundation mounted a photographic display in the lobby of the museum entitled “Lest They Perish,” presenting a visual history of the organization.

During the darkest hour of the Armenian people, the Genocide of 1915, the organization that provided the most generous and effective assistance was Near East Relief. Formed solely to alleviate the plight of the Armenians and other victims of Ottoman violence, NER was established by a group of American business executives, academics, religious leaders, and political figures, who felt compelled to take action.

Created in 1915 as the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief in response to the call from Ambassador Henry Morgenthau for the United States to provide assistance to the surviving victims of the genocide of Armenians and other Christians, including Assyrians and Greeks, in the Ottoman Empire, the group was responsible, between 1915 and 1930, for saving hundreds of thousands of lives. As the United States’ oldest nonsectarian international development non-governmental organization, the Foundation has played a crucial role in establishing the American philanthropic tradition, and pioneered many of the strategies employed by the world’s leading development organizations today.

In his welcoming remarks, NAASR Chairman Raffi P. Yeghiayan noted that in the year of the centennial “it is appropriate to acknowledge the humanitarian role played by the people of

the United States in support of the Armenians.” He also noted that “when [Near East Relief] was renamed the Near East Foundation in 1930, one of the orphanage sites in Antelias was made available to establish the displaced Catholicosate of the Great See of Cilicia, where my father was recruited as a teacher and eventual Dean of Studies.” Yeghiayan himself was educated there as a child.

Marc Mamigonian, in his introductory com-

The “paradox,” however, as Moranian explained, was that “the self-interest that impelled the United States to engage on behalf of the Armenians is the same self-interest that impelled the United States to abandon the Armenians, leaving relief and subsequent development to non-governmental international organizations, such as the Near East Foundation.”

Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the U.S. gradually moved away from isolationism towards internationalism. “Though they appeared to be opposite on the surface,” Moranian said, “these movements were ironically driven by the same impulse—to protect and strengthen the self-interest of the United States. Each was a search for power based on expediency. In the end, each would lead to the abandonment of moral principle in the case of the Armenians.”

Of course, the American-led relief efforts were of enormous benefit to the Armenians displaced by war and genocide, but “Americans gave to save the Armenians, not only out of sympathy, but because the country as a whole looked actively to transplant a blend of Christianity and American democracy overseas in order to recreate America overseas. The mission to save Armenians became enmeshed in America’s mission to pursue its self-perceived, unique role in the world.”

Eventually, Moranian noted, “it better served the self-interests of the Washington policymakers, as well as the missionary leadership, to disengage from the Armenians in the 1920s and instead align instead with Kemal’s Turkey,” but “it is very important to note that the Near East Foundation continued to serve the Armenian people. Though kicked out of Armenia in 1927 by Stalin and the Soviets, the Near East Foundation returned to Armenia in 2004 to resume its dedication to serving the Armenian people.”

Shant Mardrossian presented a “different side of the Near East Relief” that combined history with personal stories. Starting with quotations from U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau’s dispatches as the Genocide unfolded in 1915, and chronicling the coming together of key figures such as James Barton and Cleveland Dodge, Mardrossian described the



Left to right: Charles Benjamin, Raffi Yeghiayan, Yervant Chekijian, Suzanne Moranian, Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Molly Sullivan, Marc Mamigonian, Nancy Kolligian, Shant Mardrossian (Photo courtesy of Near East Foundation.)

ments, emphasized NAASR’s commitment to organizing and supporting conferences, symposia, lectures, and publications that advance knowledge about the Armenian Genocide, and that “contained within our commitment is the awareness that the Armenian Genocide is not only important and relevant for Armenians, many of whom are the descendants of survivors of the Genocide. The Armenian Genocide, as an archetypal crime against humanity, is, therefore, a matter for all of humanity.”

Dr. Suzanne Moranian presented an historical overview entitled “A Legacy of Paradox: U.S. Foreign Policy, Philanthropy, and the Armenian Question.” Moranian opened with the statement that “on the eve of the Armenian Genocide nearly one hundred years ago, the United States was a young nation with little experience in Middle Eastern affairs. The Genocide provided an opportunity for America to experiment with intervention.” She added that this established “a blueprint for its foreign policy worldwide ever since.”

birth of what became Near East Relief.

Initially tasked with raising \$100,000, and not intended to be a permanent operation, Near East Relief raised an unprecedented \$116 million by 1930 and gave birth to what became known as citizen philanthropy. As Mardirossian stated, “little did they know that they were about to embark on one of the largest non-governmental humanitarian missions in U.S. history.”

Mardirossian went on to describe and show examples of many of the sophisticated public relations campaigns, posters, celebrity spokespersons, and other means used by the Near East



Armenian Orphans at the NER orphanage in Gyumri

Relief to promote their message to the American people. One of the most notable methods used was the motion picture, perhaps most famously the now mostly lost film *Ravished Armenia*, the story of Aurora Mardiganian. Another lost film was *Alice in Hungerland*, which told the story of another (non-Armenian) orphan, and Mardirossian informed the audience that Alice was still alive and well at age 103, and introduced her daughter who was in attendance.

The final portion of Mardirossian’s talk was the story of one orphan, Mari Libarian. Reading from her recollections later in life, he related that she was 8 years old in 1915 when she was deported with her family, losing her parents in the process. After many tribulations, she and some of her siblings were rescued by a NER orphanage. It was then that Mardirossian revealed that Mari Libarian was his grandmother and that while she was alive her family did not know her remarkable story and the role NER had played in it.

Dr. Charles Benjamin gave an overview of the Near East Foundation’s recent and current projects. Describing the transition from Near East Relief to the Near East Foundation that took place around 1930, he explained that the focus initially was on the countries in which the orphans and refugees aided by NER were resettled. A model for the Marshall Plan and the Peace Corps, today, the Near East Foundation is

active in over forty nations.

Benjamin provided numerous examples of the Foundation’s current work to provide “self-sufficiency, resilience, and autonomy,” including in areas affected by the Syrian civil war, Darfur—where NEF promotes collaborative natural resource management, and in the West Bank, where there has been a successful effort in building cross-border economic cooperation and development between Palestinians and Israelis, centering on the olive oil industry. He explained that not only had this led to increased commerce and earnings for both sides but also that there were substantially increased levels of trust between the two communities as a result.

Finally, Benjamin detailed the NEF’s work in Armenia working with women who are affected by domestic violence. A pilot project was instituted to provide women at shelters for abuse victims with economic independence and therefore more viable options.

Molly Sullivan described and showed many images from the Near East Relief Historical Society’s vast holdings. Since, as she said, “nothing compares to the power of the original image,” a priority has been placed on preserving, digitizing, and making available many of these items, with the goals of celebrating Near East Relief and commemorating the events that gave rise to the organization in the first place.

Through video and slide displays, Sullivan gave a sense of the challenges of archival management and preservation that the Historical Society faces—water damage, acidic materials, and the race against time to save unique items.

“One of the major initiatives of the Near East Relief Historical Society is to produce the Near East Relief Museum,” Sullivan informed the audience, and since that time an online museum has been launched at neareastmuseum.org.

Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan gave a stirring speech that emphasized the enduring values of Near East Relief. “What started one hundred years ago as a reaction to the plight of my people works today as a very elaborate organization to deliver relief and assistance to thousands and thousands of people around the world,” he noted, and attached particular importance to the messages of compassion, moral values, and solidarity embodied by Near East Relief/Foundation. Mnatsakanyan, as Armenia’s representative at the United Nations, wondered “what would the plight of my people have been

one hundred years ago if we had had the system of the United Nations then,” but confessed that “I can’t tell you I have a very convincing answer that it would have been different.”

Mnatsakanyan discussed the frequently heard argument that after a century and four or five generations Armenians should simply “get over” what occurred and “move on” and “be done with it.” Of course, as he pointed out, Armenians do “move on” but not at the cost of abandoning the pursuit of justice, because “the denial of justice is very hard on the human conscience.”

Archbishop. Oshagan Choloyan confessed at the outset of his remarks that he stood before the audience with “mixed emotions”: pride and gratitude for the accomplishments of Near East Relief/Foundation, but also “I started remembering the extension of the Genocide within our own families.” Reminding the audience that he comes from a location [Antelias] which was an orphanage for many thousands of orphans who survived, got education, food, and a future,” thanks to Near East Relief, he recalled his many friends who were children of those orphans who spread out around the world and have flourished.

Abp. Choloyan shared the personal memory of being cooked fasoolya at Jbeil by Maria Jacobsen, the Danish missionary who became beloved by the Armenians for her enormous efforts on their behalf. He described the work of the Near East Relief as “the extended hand of God.”

Taking special note of the fact that the Armenian martyrs of 1915 would be canonized on April 23, Abp. Choloyan emphasized that this canonization “is a responsibility for all of us, because we are going to become grandchildren or great-grandchildren of saints ... We have to carry on our shoulders the responsibility of being the children of a noble people.” He concluded,



His Eminence Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan

triumphantly, “they are not dead: we are here!”

Following the program, attendees enjoyed a reception in the Museum lobby, organized by NAASR’s Administrative Director Lana R. Jurigian, and were able to take in the Near East Foundation’s superb exhibition. On a beautiful spring day after one of the longest winters in memory, it was a special occasion for everyone present.

Video of the entire program is available online through the Near East Foundation’s youtube channel, at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbq04I0tVICmBNC4IZfScXOAWIWWwWD7N>.

NAASR Programs Tackle Contemporary Issues

In fall 2014 and spring 2015 NAASR organized two highly successful events at Boston-area college campuses as part of an effort to tackle contemporary issues of wide interest in the Armenian community. Like any ethnic organization NAASR needs constantly to work at establishing ties to a younger generation and to get a sense of its interests and concerns. It was for this reason that a committee was established consisting of Dr. Seda Ebrahimi, Judy Saryan, Stepan Piligian, Jirair Balayan, and Marc A. Mamigonian (later also joined by Zareh Zurabyan), to develop programs with an eye towards expanding the breadth of our programming and connecting with a younger audience.

The first of these events was a thought-provoking panel discussion on December 12, 2014, entitled “Exploring Identities in the Armenian Diaspora: A Panel Discussion with Members of the Emerging Generation,” at Northeastern University’s Curry Student Center. The program was sponsored and organized by NAASR and co-sponsored by the Northeastern Armenian Students Association, the MIT Armenian Society, and AGBU-YP Boston.

The panel was ably moderated by Middlesex County Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian and the featured panelists were Armine Afeyan, Dr. Areg Danagoulian, Alison Hamlin, and Anahis Kechejian, a diverse group of under-40 Armenian Americans. The panelists engaged in a frank discussion on numerous topics relating to Armenian identity in the diaspora. It was clear from the discussion that there is no one universally applicable standard for what being Armenian means and that judging someone as being “not a real Armenian” on the basis of his or her being “only part” Armenian or not fluent in the Armenian language is shortsighted and exclusionary, and a detriment to the development of the community. It was clear that inclusivity and embracing the diversity of Armenianness is a source of strength.

An entertaining highlight of the evening was a special video prepared by Northeastern President Joseph Aoun, who was unable to be present, showing him with members of the Northeastern Armenian Students Association making paklava and then phoning Massis Bakery in Watertown to order more for the evening, followed by massive trays of paklava being brought into the auditorium. These were enjoyed by the audience as part of the post-panel reception.

The second event was the panel discussion

“Transforming Cynicism Into Success: Diasporan Involvement in Armenia’s Economic Development,” on May 1, 2015, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan Lab in

as well as sells wholesale to many other shops in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh. Meschian has been working in the software industry for over ten years and has a background in distributed systems, but has spent most of his career creating web applications and visualizations of complex scientific and business data. Revazian is a co-founder of Lionsharp (the creators of Voiceboard), an international software company with R&D rooted in Armenia focused on interactive computing. She has represented



Panelists Rouben Meschian, Lilit Revazian, and Gail O'Reilly at MIT

Cambridge, MA. This program was organized by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) with the co-spon-

Armenia in multiple international events and conferences, including Microsoft Imagine Cup, betapitch, CES 2015, and Innovate Armenia.

She holds a BS in Interior and Industrial Design (Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts), MS in Interior Architecture (New England School of Art and Design, USA).

Although none of the panelists downplayed the various challenges and difficulties of Armenia’s economy, all emphasized the rewards of building something new in Armenia and the tremendous opportunities and vitality there. The underlying message was: come to Armenia

and get involved. The audience was thoroughly engaged with the topic and continued discussions long past the end of the program.

Additional similar events are being planned for late 2015 and beyond. We welcome your feedback and ideas. If you have thoughts on potential topics please contact Marc Mamigonian at marc@naasr.org.



Panelists Anahis Kechejian, Armine Afeyan, Alison Hamlin, Areg Danagoulian at Northeastern

sorship of the MIT Armenian Society.

Moderator Ani L. Kharajian of the Harvard Business School presided over a wide-ranging discussion with entrepreneurs Gail O’Reilly, Rouben Meschian, and Lilit Revazian. O’Reilly is the founder (in the year 2000) of Made in Armenia Direct, which works with some 50 artisans and operates retail shops in Armenia

61st Annual Assembly, New Board Members Elected

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practices in Watertown and lives in Belmont, Massachusetts, with his wife, Marianne. He is a longtime member and generous supporter of NAASR.

Regarding Kaloosdian's book *Tadem*, which has been a number of years in preparation, Dr. Taner Akçam writes that it "adds a new piece of local history to Armenian historical writings" and that "this is a book you must read." Kaloosdian's talk, attended by a number of people with ancestral ties to *Tadem*, was indeed rich in local history and in particular important details about the carrying out of the Armenian Genocide in *Tadem*.

Following Kaloosdian's lecture, those attending the 61st Assembly of Members heard detailed reports about NAASR's ongoing efforts to further Armenian studies, research, and publication. Reports were given by the Board of Directors on organizational, informational, academic, and financial matters. In addition, there were reports by the Assembly's special committees



Dennis Papazian waits with Yervant Chekijian to get his copy of *Tadem* signed



New NAASR Treasurer Sarah Ignatius confers with Jack Medzorian

on Nominations, Constitution and Rules, New Business and Resolutions, and Auditing.

Change to Constitution Proposed

A motion was made and voted on to amend the NAASR Constitution so that there will no longer be Life Membership offered to those with ten or more continuous years of membership at twenty-five times the current membership rate. The Assembly stressed the importance of encouraging members to support the Leadership Circle which will help to place NAASR on a more stable financial footing, thereby enabling the organization to continue to achieve far-reaching results. For an amendment to become effective, the Constitution stipulates that, after it has been approved by at least two-thirds of the

members voting at the Annual Assembly, it be submitted to all members in good standing for final ratification by two-thirds of those members voting within 30 days of written notification by the Board of Directors.

Results of Elections

Departing the Board of Directors after years of distinguished service were Seta Kalajian of Bedford, MA, Dr. Seda Keshishian of Lincoln, MA, and William S. Parsons of Bethesda, MD. Roupen Berberian of Glendale, CA, Michael Bobelian of Cold Spring Harbor, NY, Adi Ignatius of Brooklyn, NY, Joan E. Kolligian of Arlington, MA, and Dr. James R. Russell of Cambridge, MA, were newly elected to the Board. Nancy R. Kolligian of Watertown, MA, Dr. Lou Ann Matossian of Minneapolis, MN, Jack M. Medzorian of Winchester, MA, Bruce W. Roat of Los Angeles, CA, and Raffi P. Yeghiayan of Bedford, MA, were reelected.

At a meeting following the Assembly the following Executive Committee was elected: Raffi P. Yeghiayan, Chairman; Yervant Chekijian of Boston, MA, First Vice Chairman; Jack M. Medzorian, Second Vice Chairman; Stepan Piligian of Westford, MA, Secretary; Sarah Ignatius of Somerville, MA, Treasurer; Roxanne Etmekjian of West Newton, MA, Advisor; and Nancy R. Kolligian, Advisor.

NAASR Honored by Clark's Strassler Center for Support

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worked to see the field of Armenian Studies grow and flourish.

Armenian Studies was first introduced at Clark in 1954 right around the time that the folks who founded NAASR were having their first discussions—among those people was Van Aroian who is here tonight. At that time, the committee for Armenian Studies in Worcester had the motto "You Have Been Waiting for this a Long Time," which is rather poignant since the nascent program died out in 1955 and Armenian Studies would not return to Clark until the establishment of the Robert Aram and Marianne Kaloosdian and Stephen and Marian Mugar Chair in 2003.

Especially since Taner Akçam became the holder of the chair in 2008, there has been a most productive partnership between NAASR and the Chair and the Strassler Center. Together we have organized major conferences on "The State of the Art of Armenian Genocide Research," "Beyond the Armenian Genocide: The Question of Restitution and Reparation in Comparative Review," and last year's "Manufactur-

ing Denial and the Assault on Scholarship and Truth," as well as smaller-scale lectures. NAASR has provided research grants to Prof. Akçam and several of his graduate students, including Khatchig Mouradian, Umit Kurt, and Asya Darbinyan. We work to find materials needed for their work, both in our own library and elsewhere. But above all else there is a feeling of partnership and collegial collaboration that I feel each time I speak with Taner, with Deborah Dwork, Mary Jane Rein, Sarah Cushman, and all of the good people at the Strassler Center. I have an idea how much work it is to keep this center humming along, but it all appears to happen with great ease—which is almost proof that it must be extremely taxing.

Most of you know, and Taner is himself keenly aware, that in terms of training a new generation of scholars to work on the Armenian Genocide, as well as the Ottoman genocides of the Assyrians and Greeks, Clark is the place to be. It is a heavy burden but I hope you know that we know the value of the work being done here, and in NAASR you have an ally and a partner now and in the future.

Eric Bogosian Presents *Operation Nemesis* Book in Boston Area to Overflow Crowd

By Aram Arkun

ARMENIAN MIRROR-SPECTATOR STAFF

LEXINGTON, Mass. — Actor, playwright, and novelist Eric Bogosian spoke about his new book *Operation Nemesis: The Assassination Plot that Avenged the Armenian Genocide* to a standing-room-only crowd at the National Heritage Museum (Scottish Rite Masonic Museum) in Lexington, MA. Almost 400 people were in the audience, with dozens others arriving late (on “Armenian time”) and unable to enter the hall because of strict fire regulations. It was a hometown crowd for Bogosian, with family members including his mother in attendance.



Eric Bogosian with Marc Mamigonian

The event was presented by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) with the cooperation and co-sponsorship of the Tekeyan Cultural Association, Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) New England District, AGBU-Young Professionals Boston, Armenian Cultural Foundation, Armenian Museum of America, Armenian Women’s Welfare Association, Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society, and Project Save Armenian Photograph Archives.

Master of ceremonies Marc Mamigonian began the event by introducing NAASR National Board of Directors Chairman Raffi P. Yeghian, who welcomed the audience and pointed out how happy he was that eight other Armenian organizations came together to sponsor the event both financially and through publicity. This cooperation contributed to the full house.

Mamigonian then introduced Bogosian with typical humor as the only NAASR member who has costarred with Steven Seagal. Of course he also noted that Bogosian was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his play “Talk Radio” and the recipient of the Berlin Film Festival’s Silver Bear Award, as well as three Obie Awards and the Drama Desk. In addition to his celebrated work in the theater and on screen, Bogosian is the author of three novels.

Bogosian took the stage and said he began the *Nemesis* project in 2007 as a writer, not expecting that it would last some seven years. The purpose was to publicize a lesser known aspect of the Armenian Genocide, and to give a broad context to the Genocide and *Operation Nemesis*. He emphasized that he did not write as a scholar or historian, and his work will be an introduction to people who know very little about the subject.

He thanked people who supported him while preparing the book. He said, “I see this as a group effort,” and pointed out that the work of Marc Mamigonian and NAASR, Ruth Thomasian of Project Save, Ted Bogosian the documentary film maker, and Ara Ghazarians at the Armenian

Cultural Foundation had to take place so that he in turn had resources to draw upon while researching his book. He singled out Aram Arkun as a scholar with whom he met for years for the translation of Soghomon Tehlirian’s memoirs and for a special “in-house on-going lecture” on topics connected to *Nemesis*. Arkun later provided some suggestions for various draft versions of the book, along with Mamigonian.

Bogosian read a few excerpts from his book. A bit surprised that the audience chortled when he said his grandfather had enjoined him as a 4-year-old to kill any Turk that he might encounter, he apologized to those who did not laugh, and tried to explain that perhaps the laughter was due to similar messages other Armenians may have received from their grandparents due to serious experiences.

He extremely rapidly charted the course of his life, moving from Armenian Watertown as a 7-year-old to a more American life in Woburn, another suburb north of Boston. Yet, as an American actor in ascendance, he refused suggestions to change his last name and appearance to be less Armenian-looking. He had promised his grandmother not to be like Joe Mannix (the famous role of Armenian-American actor Mike Connors, who changed his name from Krekor Ohanian), but it was hard, though today things have changed and ethnic names are more acceptable.

In the 1990s, several things rekindled Bogosian’s interest in things Armenian. Peter Balakian’s memoir, *The Black Dog of Fate*, “struck a chord within me,” and soon Bogosian was offered a role in Atom Egoyan’s film “Ararat.” Thirdly, watching scenes of “ethnic cleansing” in the former Yugoslavia on television made Bogosian realize that this was a modern version of the events through which his ancestors suffered.

Bogosian happened to come across the story of Tehlirian’s assassination of Talat Pasha, and his court trial in Germany and acquittal. First he thought it was “some kind of Armenian pipedream” or fantasy, but soon he found out it was true. Bogosian thought this could make a great movie, and read through the trial. When he read Jacques Derogy’s book, *Resistance and Revenge*, he found out that the story was much more complicated than an individual’s act of vengeance.

In fact, there was a big network behind him that assassinated other major Ottoman leaders responsible for the genocide. Bogosian felt he needed to do much more reading, and decided to present the story in a factual and readable way to a broader audience. He enriched the story with sources that were not available in Derogy’s time, and this led Bogosian to some



NAASR also co-sponsored Bogosian’s talk before a full house at St. Leon Armenian Church in Fairlawn, NJ, on May 28.

new speculation. For example, Bogosian feels that British intelligence was involved in Talat’s death.

Bogosian stressed the remarkable fact that many of the men involved in *Operation Nemesis* were otherwise seemingly ordinary men, living otherwise mundane lives. They did not have a powerful government helping them but were extremely motivated by the terrible weight of the Armenian Genocide.

NAASR Honors Leadership Circle Members in LA, Boston

On May 10, 2014, at the USC University Club, and on December 5, 2014, at Bentley University's LaCava Center, NAASR hosted events to thank its Leadership Circle Members for their support.

The USC event was attended by some forty people who enjoyed lunch and an informative illustrated talk by Tufts University Professor Christina Maranci entitled "The Cathedral of Mren: Past, Present and Future." Maranci discussed the historic importance of this 7th century church which is one of the focuses of her recent research, as well as her efforts to preserve Mren and have it placed on the World Monuments Fund's "Watch Site" as an at-risk building. NAASR's Leadership Circle member Avedis Boyamian chats with Khatchig Mouradian

Leadership Circle member Avedis Boyamian chats with Khatchig Mouradian

Leadership Circle member Bruce Roat and Gregory Ketabgian, as well as Hazel Antaramian Hofman from Fresno and Yervant Chekijian from Boston, were present.



Left to right: Yervant Chekijian, Gregory Ketabgian, Hazel Antaramian Hofman, Christina Maranci, Hrair Dekmejian, Bruce Roat

The December event was held, for the second consecutive year, at Bentley's LaCava Center. Following dinner, the assembled group of Leadership Circle Members and Board Members heard an informative talk by Clark University doctoral candidate Khatchig Mouradian, "Genocide and Humanitarian Resistance in

Ottoman Syria, 1915-1917," drawing on his dissertation research.

At both events, attendees were updated on NAASR's ongoing work and initiatives, and were encouraged and spurred on by Yervant Chekijian, who has spearheaded the creation and growth of the Leadership Circle, to continue to expand the Circle in order to permit NAASR to better fulfill its mission.

Bogosian's book includes a chapter on the Armenian Genocide in order to make clear the background of Operation Nemesis to a broad readership. Bogosian read a few excerpts from testimony of survivors collected by Dr. Verjine Svazlian of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia.

Bogosian then turned to Tehlirian's personal motivation to act, due to his experiences as a volunteer in the Russian army and the loss of his family in the Genocide. He was recruited as part of Operation Nemesis and brought to Germany, where he assassinated Ottoman Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) leader Talat. Then several other CUP leaders were assassinated by other Armenians.

Bogosian closed by mentioning the effort by Kemalist Turkey to rewrite history. Part of this effort included writing out the Armenians from the history of their ancient homeland, and their erasure from Turkish state museums and textbooks, with the exception of a few hostile mentions. But, Bogosian felt, by now the Genocide is a recognized fact globally, so that these Turkish efforts at disinformation are in vain.

After the conclusion of his formal presentation, Bogosian answered a large number of audience questions. This section of the event was handled by Aram Arkun, executive director of the Tekeyan Cultural Association. Arkun thanked Bogosian for his years of research and writing, and pointed out that as Tekeyan was now being reanimated in the Boston area, those interested in future events like this, or with speakers like Peter Balakian, could send in their email addresses to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* for notices.

The questions, as usual for an Armenian event, covered a wide range of topics. For example, the first one was whether Bogosian has received death threats (the answer, fortunately, was no). In response to another, Bogosian explained the definition of genocide, and said if you care about what happened to the Armenians in 1915 you have to care about what is happening in places like Darfur today.

When he was asked what Armenians should do to promote their cause, Bogosian felt consolidation within the diaspora was important, and seemed to be happening more. He felt that it was enough to be willing to identify as Armenian to be able to be accepted as one.

Other topics included the situation of the Armenians in Syria, the role of Germans in the Armenian Genocide, and future international legal efforts concerning the Armenian Genocide. On the latter issue, Bogosian said that there were a lot of avenues to pursue in court, and that "I wouldn't mess with Armenians."

He told another questioner that he had few direct encounters with Turkish denial during his book tours, but "I run into ignorance. I run into people who just don't know the story."

When asked what was the possibility of making his book into a movie now, Bogosian said there certainly was interest in it. At the end of the event, Bogosian signed copies of his books for audience members.

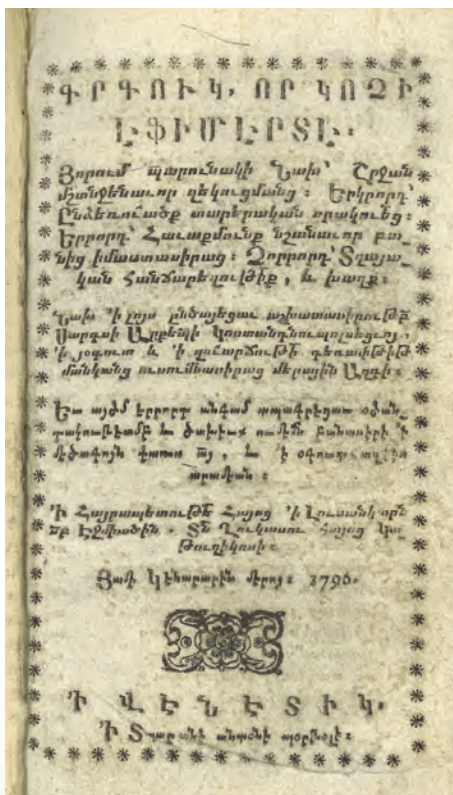
This article originally appeared in the June 4, 2015, issue of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator. We thank the Mirror for allowing us to reprint it.

Major Collections Expand Scope of NAASR's Mardigian Library

The arrival in 2014 and 2015 of two major collections, as well as the ongoing important donations of smaller collections from our members and friends, continue to expand and enrich NAASR's Edward and Helen Mardigian Library. The two large, high-impact collections are those of the late Manoog and Barbara Young and that of Abraham Krikorian and Eugene Taylor.

Manoog and Barbara Young Collection

Manoog Young, NAASR Founder and longtime Chairman of the Board of Directors, passed away in 2012, and his wife Barbara in



First page of rare book *Grguk, or koch'i Efimertē* from the Manoog S.Young Collection

2013. Together, and including books belonging to Manoog's parents, the late Soghomon (born Soghomon Malyemezian) and Aghavni (Der Kazarian) Young, and Barbara's grandmother, Aghavnie Canarian, the Young Collection added hundreds of new titles to the library. Especially strong in the area of Russian Studies and the general field of Middle East Studies, the collection also includes a number of rare items, such as the very unusual *Grguk, or*

koch'i Efimertē, published in Venice in 1796, as well as many titles personally inscribed to Young during his years as NAASR Chairman.

Beyond the book contents of the collection are a significant amount of materials relating to Manoog Young's involvement in the organization Armenian Youth of America in the 1930s and 1940s. The organization, associated with the Armenian Progressive League (*Harachtimagan*), is little known today, and the Young papers constitute a valuable source for future researchers. A number of photographs belonging to Manoog Young's parents, both natives of Kharpert, further enrich the collection and include a precious photo of the noted Kharpertsian writer and educator T'lgadintsi (Hovhannes Haroutiunian), possibly inscribed by T'lgadintsi himself, which belonged to Soghomon Young, who had been his student.



Photo of martyred writer T'lgadintsi from the Manoog S.Young Collection



A few Turkish-language books from the Krikorian & Taylor Collection

Abraham Krikorian and Eugene Taylor Collection

This collection, first mentioned without identifying the donors in the Fall 2013-Spring 2014 NAASR Newsletter, began arriving in late 2014 with a second shipment coming in spring 2015, with a large amount more to follow. This rich collection is being donated in memory of Abraham Der Krikorian and Tarquohie Tashjian Der Krikorian of Worcester, MA, both originally from the village of Kerope (Körpe) in the Kharpert region.

The Krikorian & Taylor collection deals primarily with the Armenian Genocide, late Ottoman history, comparative cases of genocide and mass violence, and the visual history of the Armenian Genocide. Among the twenty-five boxes thus far transferred are a large number of books entirely new to the Mardigian library, including many Turkish-language publications,



A rare image of Armenians being removed from Trebizond, from *L'Album de la Guerre* (Paris, 1925), part of the Krikorian and Taylor Collection

books on western missionaries in the Ottoman Empire, and numerous non-English histories of the Armenian people. Of special interest are three framed original Near East Relief posters included as part of the donation.

While most of the Young Collection has already been catalogued, work on the Krikorian and Taylor Collection is ongoing. However, both magnificent libraries have already added significantly to the growth and enrichment of the Mardigian Library.

Leon Janikian Begins Digitization of NAASR 78s

Following the cataloguing in 2014 by volunteer Ruben Kiredjian of many of the several hundred Armenian, Turkish, and other related 78 rpm records, dating from across the first half of the twentieth century, in summer 2015 Prof. Leon Janikian began the project of digitizing these interesting and historically important recordings.

Janikian, a former NAASR Board Member and longtime Professor of Music at Northeastern University in Boston, is also a veteran recording engineer and musician. He is the creator of the Archive of Armenian Music in America (armenianmusicarch.com), designed to store and restore for posterity the aural history and traditions of the Armenian community in the United States. The partnership

with NAASR and the inclusion of its recordings will be a significant step in this process, and it is hoped to make many of these recordings accessible.

producing audio recordings for sale in the US and Canada. Many of these were produced in the US on this project which has long been on my agenda. Currently the source recordings are held in



Leon Janikian examines records for digitization



Label to Sohag Records 78 containing a portion of Arshin Mal Alan.



A rare Parsekian Records label

Says Janikian: "The Armenian Diaspora in the United States has had a long tradition of performance, of an exemplar artist. I am so excited to finally get to spend a sabbatical leave focusing

by artists who had emigrated to the west in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide of 1915. This body of music, fairly widely dispersed but on formats that have long ceased to be commonly accessible and playable by most families, represent a watershed of music and culture. These are recordings of folkloric music, religious music, staged light opera, humorous music, and songs that recollect the history of the circumstances that brought the artists to these shores. This project is simple—to record, restore, and make available the body of music as an aural tradition. While musical notation can store the performance parameters of a song, it cannot provide the actual sound, in performance, of an exemplar artist. I am so excited to finally get to spend a sabbatical leave focusing

my office at Northeastern and at the Mardigian Library at NAASR. The method of delivery will be via an internet site, free of charge."

The records in the NAASR collection have been donated by a number of members and friends through the years and represent a cross-section of the kinds of music that Armenian-Americans enjoyed from the early twentieth century onwards. Folk songs, dance music, patriotic songs, novelty tunes, instrumentals—as well as, of course, many Turkish-language songs, often performed by Armenians. While it is recognized that for some in the Armenian community such records are a source of unease or even anger, they are a part of the Armenian-American experience that needs to be recognized and understood within the cultural context that produced them.

Although Janikian's main focus is on recordings made in America, the NAASR collection also includes records created in Turkey, Egypt, Greece, and Soviet Armenia. Although some of the recordings were released by major record labels such as Columbia, Victor, or Decca, a great number were issued by small, independent Armenian-owned companies such as Sohag/Sokhag, Parsekian, Margosian, Pharos, and Oriental/Armen Vahe, to name a few.

It is important that these fascinating pieces of our culture be preserved and documented. We hope that if you have such historic recordings, or ephemera related to them such as catalogues, that you will consider donating them to NAASR.



GRANTS AND FINANCIAL AID FROM NAASR AND THE KNIGHTS OF VARTAN (JUNE 2014-APRIL 2015)

1. NAASR issued a grant to Alex Demirjian in support of the March 2015 conference “The Armenian Genocide Legacy 100 Years On” at the Hague, Netherlands; and subsequently a grant towards the editing of the proceeds of this conference to be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2015.

2. NAASR and the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies, with additional support from Nigoghos Atinizian, provided a combined grant to Taner Akçam and his team to translate League of Nations documents into Turkish for publication online and in book form.

3. NAASR provided funding to support the February 2015 UCLA Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies.

4. NAASR provided support to the University of Rhode Island for its course “The Armenian Experience: History and Culture” in winter-spring 2015.

5. NAASR provided funds to Clark University’s Strassler Center in support of the April 2015 Third International Graduate Students’ Conference on Genocide Studies, “New Perspectives in Holocaust and Genocide Studies 100 Years After the Armenian Genocide.”

6. NAASR and the Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies issued a grant to Dr. Andrew Palmer of the Institute of Eastern Christian Studies in Nijmegen, Netherlands, in support of his translation of Syriac Bishop Israel Odo’s monograph on the persecution of the Armenian and Aramaean Christians in the Diyarbekir region in 1915.

7. The Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies issued a travel grant to Dr. Flora Keshgegian of the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, towards her work on a collaborative book on Armenian-Turkish dialogue.

8. The Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies issued a travel grant to Danny Fittante, doctoral student at UCLA, to conduct research in Moscow on the activities of the Armenian diasporan community.

9. The Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies issued a travel grant to Asya Darbinyan, doctoral student at Clark University, to present a paper at the conference “Why Does It Happen? Complicity and Resistance to Genocide in World History” in Grand Rapids, MI.

10. NAASR provided a travel grant to Erin Piñon, graduate student at Southern Methodist University, to present a paper at the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) conference in Yerevan in July 2015.

11. The Knights of Vartan Fund for Armenian Studies issued a grant to Dr. George Bournoutian to support the publication of his forthcoming translation of the 1820 Russian Survey of the Khanate of Shirvan.

12. In summer 2014 and 2015 NAASR continued its ongoing support of the Zoryan Institute’s Genocide and Human Rights Program at the University of Toronto.

Redesigned and Expanded Website, Improved Library Catalogue Launched

NAASR is very pleased to announce the launch of our newly redesigned and expanded website at the familiar address www.naasr.org, and we invite all of our members and friends to visit. The site’s makeover was supported by a generous donation from the late Anne Elbrecht.

We have made an effort to make the site more attractive and easier to navigate, in addition to adding new materials. The project of adding additional materials—photos, articles, audio and video, etc.—from across our sixty-year history will be ongoing. We welcome and value your feedback.

NAASR’s online bookstore is currently in the process of reconstruct-



tion by Administrative Director Lana R. Jurigian and we look forward to announcing its return in the fall. During the summer of 2015, volunteers Gabriel Pino and Miles Mamigonian have been scanning book covers and other materials for use in the soon-to-be relaunched bookstore.

In addition, due to the upgrading of our library cataloguing software, the navigation of the online catalogue of NAASR’s Mardigian Library has also improved significantly.



Miles Mamigonian and Gabriel Pino.



DONATIONS TO NAASR LIBRARY

The following donors have contributed items to NAASR's Edward and Helen Mardigian Library since the previous listing in the Fall 2013-Spring 2014 issue of the *Newsletter*. We are grateful to the donors for their generosity and continuing enrichment of the Mardigian Library. Thank you!

Dikran Abrahamian, Penetanguishene, Ontario, Canada
 AGBU Hye Geen, Pasadena, CA
 George Aghjayan, Westminster, MA
 Ara Aharonian, Glendale, CA
 Linda Aintablian, Andover, MA
 Dr. James Ajemian, Los Angeles, CA
 Adrienne Alexanian, New York, NY
 Armenian Apostolic Church of America, New York, NY
 Armenian Research Center, Univ. of Michigan, Dearborn, MI
 Armenian Review, Watertown, MA
 Dr. Sona Aronian, Kingston, RI
 Edmond Azadian, W. Bloomfield, MI
 Eliot Baker, Miami Beach, FL
 Martin Barooshian, No. Reading, MA
 Dr. Paul Barsam, Belmont, MA
 Michael Bobelian, Cold Spring Harbor, NY
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 Hagop Gagossian, Glendale, CA
 Dr. Ara Ghazarians, Lexington, MA
 David S. Gray, Ogden, UT
 Dr. John A.C. Greppin, Cleveland Heights, OH
 Marsbed Hablanian, Wellesley, MA
 Roger Hagopian, Lexington, MA
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 Berg Hovaghimian, San Francisco, CA
 Edna Hovagimian, Stoughton, MA
 Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Los Angeles, CA

Betty Hovsepien, Gainesville, FL
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 Paul H. Kalemkarian, Sr., San Diego, CA
 Dr. Meline Karakashian, Morganville, NJ
 Elaine Kasparian, Burlington, MA
 Puzant Keledjian, Waltham, MA
 Dr. Gregory Ketabgian, La Canada, CA
 Robert Khederian, Belmont, MA
 Roupen Kiredjian, Waltham, MA
 Sonig Kradjian, Vestal, NY
 Helen Krikorian, Vienna, VA
 Prof. Abraham Krikorian and Eugene Taylor, Port Jefferson, NY
 The Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund, New York, NY
 Mr. & Mrs. H.J. Manjikian, Studio City, CA
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 Muriel Mirak-Weissbach, Mainz-Kastel, Germany
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 Gohar Vardanyan, Medford, MA
 Estate of Manoog & Barbara Young, Belmont, MA

Dr. Sona Aronian Establishes Armenian Studies Book Prizes at NAASR

The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) is pleased to announce the creation of the Dr. Sona Aronian Book Prizes for Excellence in Armenian Studies. The prizes will be awarded annually to an outstanding scholarly monograph in the English language in the field of Armenian Studies and, in alternating years, to a translation from Armenian into English of a work of literature or of an academic book within the field of Armenian Studies. The prizes were established through the generosity of Dr. Aronian, and the first awards, for works published in 2014, will be announced in fall 2015.

“We are thrilled that Dr. Aronian, a scholar and

a longtime member of NAASR, has established these prizes that will provide encouragement to scholars,” remarked NAASR Academic Director Marc A. Mamigonian.

Dr. Aronian is Professor Emerita of Russian, Comparative Literature and Women's Studies at the University of Rhode Island. She has a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Boston University and a Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures from Yale. She taught at the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Pennsylvania, and at the University of Rhode Island she established and directed the program in Russian Studies and participated in the creation of the Comparative Literature and Women's Studies programs. She

has done archival research in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Prague, and Paris on the Russian modernist writer Alexei Remizov with the support of grants from the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX). She served as contributing editor of a two-volume set of *Russian Literature Triquarterly* devoted to the life and works of Remizov as well as a separate volume of his Selected Prose. She has also presented papers on Remizov at several international conferences in the United States and in Russia. In retirement she has become engrossed in the study of the Armenian language, literature, and culture, and the book prizes are her symbolic participation in the advancement of Armenian Studies.

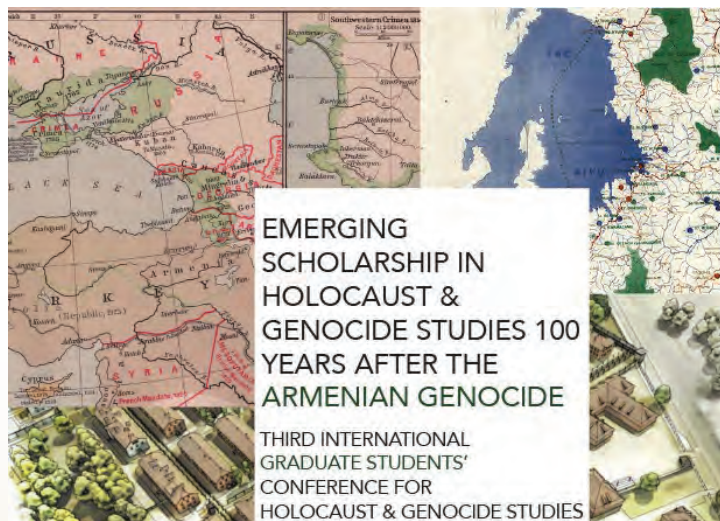
CONFERENCE:

“Emerging Scholarship in Holocaust and Genocide Studies 100 Years after the Armenian Genocide”

By Mary Jane Rein

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STRASSLER CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST AND GENOCIDE STUDIES, CLARK UNIVERSITY

Doctoral students and post-doctoral scholars traveled from 16 countries to present their research projects to peers and established scholars and to participate in fruitful discussions about new scholarship at the Third International Graduate Student Conference for Holocaust and Genocide Studies on April 9-12, 2015. Convened by Professor Taner Akçam and the Strassler Center doctoral students, and organized in partnership with the Danish Institute for International Studies, the conference memorialized the centennial of the Armenian Genocide. Once called the “forgotten genocide,” the systematic murder of the Armenians has become the subject of serious scholarship and hundreds of publications in a variety of languages have been written about it. Having rightfully taken its place within the field of Genocide Studies as a central case for research and comparison, the organizers recognized these and other advances by titling the conference, Emerging Scholarship in Holocaust and Genocide Studies 100 Years after



the Armenian Genocide.

Interdisciplinary in approach and comparative in scope, the conference reflected the full range of issues, concepts, and methods in current Genocide Studies research. A committee of Strassler Center doctoral students identified the participants through a competitive selection process. In addition to examining Ottoman genocides carried out against minority ethnic-religious groups, including Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks, the invited participants presented research about the Holocaust and genocides in Africa, Asia, and Latin America as well as on the aftermath and collective memorialization of genocides. Eric Weitz, Dean of Humanities and Arts and Professor of History at the City College of New York, opened the proceedings. An international group of senior scholars moderated nine



Left to right: Thomas Kühne of Clark Univ.; Keynote speaker Eric Weitz; Strassler Center Director Debórah Dwork; Taner Akçam of Clark Univ. (Photo by Mikal Eckstrom.)

panels and closed the conference with a discussion about major themes that emerged and insights into the development of the field. They included Cecilie Stokholm Banke (Danish Institute for International Studies); Matthias Bjørnlund (Danish Institute for Study Abroad); Lerna Ekmekçioğlu (MIT); Donna-Lee Frieze (Deakin University, Australia); Christian Axboe Nielson (Aarhus University); and Strassler Center Professors Taner Akçam, Debórah Dwork, Thomas Kühne, and Ken MacLean.

The closing session offered the opportunity to discuss major themes that emerged in the papers and discussions. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu pointed out that many nations have been built on some form of original sin that needs to be addressed through recognition and acknowledgement. She advocated for bringing new cases into the conversation. And, given the US context, she questioned how to incorporate slavery and the massacres of indigenous peoples. Donna-Lee Frieze asked whether we need to concern ourselves with the label genocide. In her work on the jurist Raphael Lemkin who in-



Clark graduate students focusing on the Armenian Genocide: Umit Kurt, Asya Darbinyan, Khatchig Mouradian, Anna Aleksanyan. (Photo by Mikal Eckstrom.)

troduced the term genocide, she observes an openness to interpretation. Cecilie Stokholm Banke spoke about the important role that scholars play in raising awareness of genocide and mass violence. And she encouraged the participants to recognize the dichotomies that are inherent to scholarship

continued on next page

CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA SPONSORED BY NAASR IN 2014-2015

From fall 2014 through spring 2015, NAASR made a major commitment of time and resources to co-sponsoring and, in some cases, organizing a number of major conferences and symposia relating to the centennial of the Armenian Genocide. It must be emphasized in no way would such a level of activity have been possible working on our own: it is through the strength of our collaborations and partnerships that so much is accomplished.

Reports on some of these events are included in this *Newsletter*. In addition, please note that those marked with an asterisk in the listing below have video available on Youtube.

Armenian Art and Culture in the Ottoman Empire Before 1915*

October 18, 2014, at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum

Organized by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum and the Armenian Studies Program at California State University-Northridge. Co-sponsored by the Armenian Jewelers Association, Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), Nor Serount Cultural Association, Organization of Istanbul Armenians, Tekeyan Cultural Association, and United Armenian Council of Los Angeles for the Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide



Manufacturing Denial and the Assault on Scholarship and Truth

October 24-25, 2014, at Worcester State University and Clark University

Co-sponsored and organized by the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies; the Kaloosdian/Mugar Chair in Modern Armenian History and Genocide Studies, Clark University; Worcester State University (WSU Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity, and other departments and offices); the Armenian Genocide Program, Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights (CGHR), Rutgers University-Newark; and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

The Armenian Genocide: Accounting and Accountability

January 31, 2015, at California State University-Northridge

Co-sponsored by the United Armenian Council of Los Angeles, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Knights of Vartan – Los Angeles County Chapters, the Armenian Bar Association, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures at CSUN, and the Mousa Ler Association of California.

Crossing the Centennial: The Historiography of the Armenian Genocide Re-Evaluated

March 19-20, 2015, at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Co-sponsored by the Harris Center for Judaic Studies, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), and the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) in cooperation with the Department of History, the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Program, and the Institute of Ethnic Studies at UNL.

Armenia 1915-Auschwitz 1945: Small Nations and Great Powers*

March 25, 2015, at Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University

Co-sponsored by the Harvard Kennedy School European Club, the Harvard College Armenian Students Association, the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard, and NAASR.

Near East Relief and Its Legacy: A Century of Service to Armenians and to Humanity*

April 10, 2015, at the National Heritage Museum, Lexington, MA

Organized by NAASR and the Near East Foundation, supported by a generous donation by Peter Palandjian.

from previous page

about historical injustices. Eric Weitz urged students to identify the fields they seek to impact. Many complex terms and categories emerged over the course of the conference, including empires, imperialism, resistance, colonialism, humanitarianism, women, and children, behind each of which a large historiography and social science literature exist. It is essential to engage with these broader intellectual fields and to bring genocide research to the attention of scholars in these areas. Thus, this rich and multifaceted conference closed with important advice to be heeded by the participants.

The Louis and Ann Kulin Endowed Fund, NAASR's Manoog S. Young

Fund, the Asher Family Fund, and generous friends of the Strassler Center provided the support that made it possible to gather this exciting group of young and established scholars. The training of doctoral students is central to the mission of the Strassler Center and the International Graduate Student Conference, organized triennially, expands that training to students from around the globe. Another conference is already planned for 2018 that will continue to advance the development of the field of Genocide Studies by fostering a cadre of engaged and well-prepared young scholars.

NAASR thanks the Strassler Center for permission to reprint this article from their 2014-15 annual report.

The Armenian Genocide: Accounting and Accountability

The conference “The Armenian Genocide: Accounting and Accountability” took place on January 31, 2015, at Cal State Northridge’s Grand Salon at the University Student Union.

The conference is dedicated to the generations of 1915 and 2015 as a part of the United Armenian Council of Los Angeles’ Armenian Genocide Centennial Commemorative Events. The Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures at CSUN co-sponsored the conference, along with the United Armenian Council of Los Angeles, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, The Knights of Vartan – Los Angeles County Chapters, the Armenian Bar Association and the Armenian General Benevolent Union. The Ararat-Eskijian Museum of Mission Hills exhibited American Near East Relief posters during the conference.

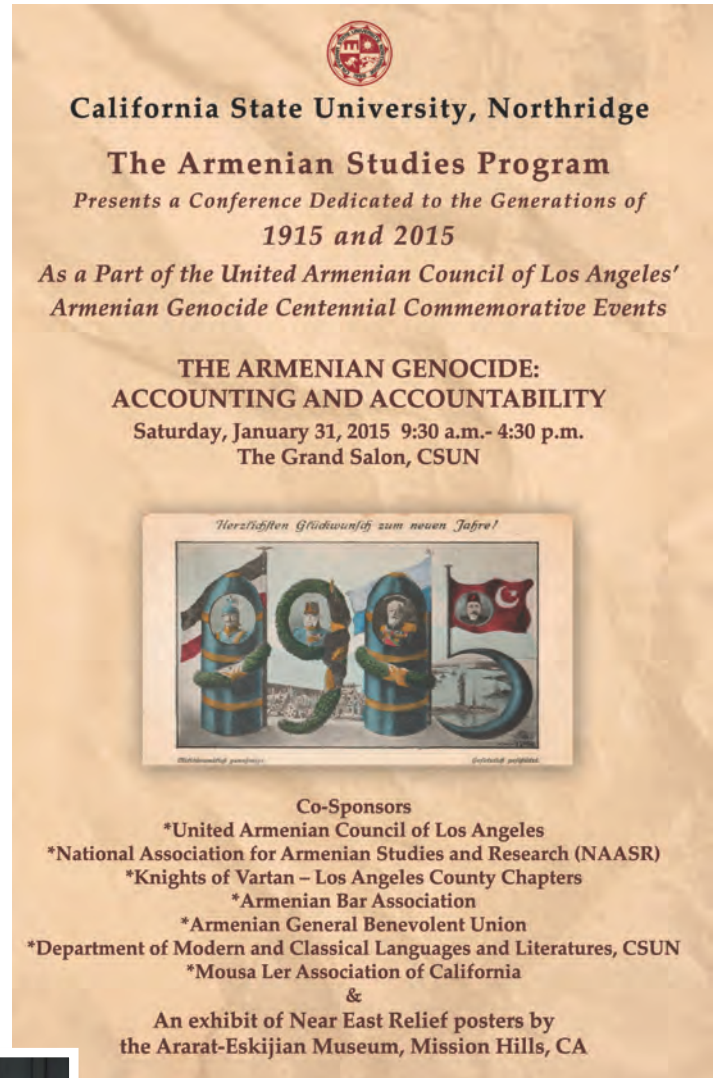
“The significance of hosting the conference at CSUN is three-fold,” said Vahram Shemmassian, director of CSUN’s Armenian Studies program within the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures. “CSUN has the largest number of students of Armenian background outside of Armenia, as far as four-year universities are concerned. The greater Los Angeles area is home to the second-largest community of the worldwide Armenian diaspora. Lastly, the conference also aims to further expose CSUN to the Armenian community at large, hopefully attracting more friends and supporters as a result.”

The morning session included two panels. The first panel, “Language as a Victim,” moderated by Hagop Gulludjian, featured the following speakers and topics: Vartan Matioonian, “Pleading no Context: On Uses and Abuses of the Word Yeghern;” Barlow Der Mugrdchian, “Western Armenian Language and Literature in Exile: Genocide and Its Consequences;” and Shushan Karapetian, “The Burden of Language as a Moral Obligation.”

The second panel explored “Teaching Genocide,” with Rubina Peroomian moderating. Hasmig Baran presented “Content and Pedagogy of Genocide Education in the 21st Century: The Armenian Case”; Roxanne Makasdjian spoke about “Armenian Genocide Education in Secondary Schools Today;” and Kori Street talked on “Educating for Change: Using Testimonies in Teaching about Genocide.”


Third and fourth panels were held in the afternoon. Levon Marshlian moderated the third panel, “Those Who Were Forced to Assimilate.” It featured Khatchig Mouradian on “Un-Hiding the Past: Myth-Making and the ‘Hidden Armenians’ of Turkey;” Elyse Semerdjian on “‘The Girl with the Cross Tattoo’: Field Notes on Crypto-Armenians;” and Vahram Shemmassian on “The Fate of Captive Armenian Genocide Survivors in Syria.”

The Armenian Bar Association conducted the fourth panel, titled “Legal Responses to Genocide-Related Liabilities.” Garo Ghazarian introduced the panelists and Armen K. Hovannisian moderated the panel. The speakers and their topics included Saro Kerkonian on “Justice for Genocide:

California State University, Northridge
The Armenian Studies Program
*Presents a Conference Dedicated to the Generations of
 1915 and 2015*
*As a Part of the United Armenian Council of Los Angeles’
 Armenian Genocide Centennial Commemorative Events*

**THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE:
 ACCOUNTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**
 Saturday, January 31, 2015 9:30 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.
 The Grand Salon, CSUN



Co-Sponsors
 *United Armenian Council of Los Angeles
 *National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR)
 *Knights of Vartan – Los Angeles County Chapters
 *Armenian Bar Association
 *Armenian General Benevolent Union
 *Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures, CSUN
 *Mousa Ler Association of California
 &
 An exhibit of Near East Relief posters by
 the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Mission Hills, CA

Opportunities and Challenges in United States Courts;” Edvin Minassian on “Justice for Genocide: Opportunities and Challenges in Turkey’s Courts;” and Karnig Kerkonian on “Justice for Genocide: Opportunities and Challenges in International Courts.” The conference concluded with a commentary by Richard G. Hovannisian.



CONFERENCE

“Manufacturing Denial: The Assault on Scholarship and Truth”

By Asya Darbinyan

DOCTORAL STUDENT, CLARK UNIVERSITY

The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and Worcester State University joined the Strassler Center for a two-day conference on October 24 and 25, 2014, that gathered social scientists, natural scientists, political theorists, and historians to discuss different forms of denial. The participants considered the factors that allow denial to persist in the face of objective facts and they discussed their concerns about how scholarship has become the battleground in a struggle which resonates far beyond academe. Presentations focused on genocide denial, scientific denial, and political denial. What connects these disparate examples is a willful disregard for facts motivated by politics, ideology, identity, or profit.

Worcester State University hosted the opening lecture by Professor Brendan Nyhan (Government Department, Dartmouth College), “The Challenge of Denial: Why People Refuse to Accept Unwelcome Facts.” Nyhan raised fundamental questions: Why are false and unsupported beliefs so common? Why is corrective information often ineffective? How do elites encourage or allow misperceptions? He used social science data to demonstrate that evidence is generally ineffective in changing the opinions of those committed to their beliefs. According to studies, public opinion responds best when elites speak in agreement. Professor Henry



Left to right: Dikran Kaligian, Emma Frances Bloomfield, Ken MacLean

Professor Jennifer Dixon (Political Science Department, Villanova University) began the second session with a presentation on rhetorical adaptation and international norms in Turkish state denial of the Armenian Genocide. Professor Alex Hinton (Director, Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights, Rutgers University) presented a paper on the S-21 Prison now preserved as the Tuol Sleng Museum of Genocide, touching upon the politics of memory in Cambodia and the issue of ignored genocide. Mark Gottlieb (Executive Director, Public Health Advocacy Institute, Northeastern University School of Law) researches legal approaches to reducing harm caused by tobacco industry products and spoke about mass production of doubt and denial by the tobacco industry.

The third session was dedicated to historians' ethical responsibility to convey the past accurately. History Professor Keith Watenpaugh (Director, Human Rights Initiative, University of California, Davis) discussed how students fearing to be labeled “polemical” might avoid use of the term “genocide.” Professor Ken MacLean (Strassler Center, Clark University)

explored how one defines evidentiary thresholds in compiling data. He looked at the case of Burma and how the competing rationales involved in building archives can result in the technical denial of mass atrocities. Emma Frances Bloomfield (PhD student, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California) asked about the definition of “truth” and spoke about the construction of stories in various spheres, such as climate change, evolution, and Holocaust studies.

In the concluding session, Professors Johanna Vollhardt (Psychology, Clark University), Richard Hovannisian (History, UCLA), and Massimo Pigliucci (Philosophy, City College, New York) summarized the topics and themes discussed by the participants. They talked about the causes and crucial consequences of denial. And they emphasized the need for continued interdisciplinary discourse in order to establish whether denialism should become a legitimate field of study that examines deliberate indifference toward factual evidence.

NAASR thanks the Strassler Center for permission to reprint this article from their 2014-15 annual report.



Left to right: Massimo Pigliucci, Johanna Vollhardt, Richard Hovannisian, Khatchig Mouradian

Theriault (Philosophy Department, Worcester State University) provided the formal response and emphasized the role of skepticism in approaching any new piece of information and the importance of articulating the limits of our knowledge.

Conference sessions held at Clark University visited a range of issues, including modern strategies and the rhetoric of denial, political uses of denial, and possible ways to counter denial.

In the first panel, Marc Mamigonian (Director of Academic Affairs, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research) described how “scholarly” denial of the Armenian Genocide proceeds by manufacturing controversy and creating doubt. Sara Brown (Genocide Studies PhD candidate, Strassler Center) discussed the role of women in denial of the Rwandan genocide. Some women falsify their testimonies during interviews with scholars, threatening the usefulness of genocide testimonies and preserving inaccurate information for future generations. Shawn Olson (Environmental Sociology PhD student, Utah State University) examined the rhetoric and strategies of denial in Climate Science, looking at politics and the policies of contrarians.



The Centennial Conference on the Armenian Genocide at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Concludes with Great Success

Lincoln, NE. On the occasion of the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide, on March 19-20 the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) hosted a two-day international conference entitled, “Crossing the Centennial: The Historiography of the Armenian Genocide Re-Evaluated,” at the Wick Alumni Center, Great Hall, 1520 R St. in Lincoln. Organized by Prof. Bedross Der Matossian from UNL’s Department of History, the conference was sponsored by the Norman and Bernice Harris Center for Judaic Studies, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS), the Department of History, the Faculty Senate Convocation Committee, the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Program, the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, and the Institute of Ethnic Studies at UNL.

The conference focused on four under-researched themes that have recently gained scholarly attention and analytical depth: humanitarianism and humanitarian intervention in the Armenian Genocide; women and children in the Armenian Genocide; comparative dimensions of the Armenian Genocide; and the impact of the Armenian Genocide on society, politics, literature, and culture. Seventeen scholars from Armenia, Cambodia, Canada, Holland, Hungary, Israel, and the United States participated in the conference.

On March 19, the Chair of the History Department, Prof. William G. Thomas III, offered welcoming remarks in which he emphasized the commitment of the History Department to teaching and research of the field of Holocaust and Genocide studies. Prof. Bedross Der Matossian then made opening remarks in which he gave a brief background about the Armenian Genocide and highlighted the importance of commemorating the centennial in the academic sphere. In his remarks Der Matossian criticized the latest trend of denialism surging in the academic sphere: “Despite the fact that over the course of the past two decades, the historiography of the

Armenian Genocide has evolved through the introduction of new methodologies, approaches, and more complex analyses of the Genocide that venture beyond rudimentary and essentialist arguments and representations, denial of the Armenian Genocide has also gained new ground by using the academic sphere.” He argued that in comparison to scholarship on the Holocaust, denial of the Armenian Genocide is the one area which is more developed in the Armenian case.

Following Der Matossian’s remarks, the first panel, entitled Humanitarian Intervention and Humanitarianism, began. Chaired by Prof. David Forsythe from UNL, it featured three papers. The first paper, entitled “Humanitarian Intervention and Ottoman Opposition to Extermination: A Neglected Aspect,” was delivered by Dr. Hilmar Kaiser (Cambodia). Kaiser detailed the unique situation of the Ottoman Fourth Army in the Armenian Genocide and the role of Djemal Pasha, as the area under their control saw a significantly lower death toll than other regions of the Empire. By 1918, relief workers, consular staff, and Ottoman oppositional circles had kept alive the majority of Armenian survivors within the empire argued Kaiser. According to him, notions of a unified Ottoman administration or CUP are obsolete. He suggested that a better understanding is needed to distinguish between CUP factions advocating repressive or genocidal policies. Kaiser’s paper was based on the latest findings from the Ottoman archives and western archives, while focusing on the period before the Der Zor massacres. The next paper, entitled “Armenian Refugees, Humanitarian Assistance and Hungary,” was delivered by Péter Pál Kránitz (Pázmány Péter Catholic University). In his paper Kránitz demonstrated how the Hungarian government took part in the process of the international protection and support of the Armenian refugees of the Armenian Genocide within the framework of the League of Nations and by its internal jurisdiction. He discussed how Hungarian diplomacy committed itself to improving

the efficiency of the Nansen passport system defining the quantity and the situation of Russian and Armenian refugees, and facilitating the transportation and integration of the refugees. Following Kranitz, Prof. Mark Toufayan (University of Ottawa) gave the last paper of the first panel. Entitled “Between Intimacy and Alienation: Armenian Property, Denationalization and the Passions of ‘Protection’ in French Mandated Cilicia, 1918-1923,” Toufayan’s paper discussed from a legal perspective the ambivalent relationship between French humanitarian efforts and the country’s economic interests. He argued that “far from resisting a form of economic imperialism, a politics of compassion and care for Armenian suffering in the aftermath of genocide was, in fact, central to population policies in the Near East by harnessing them to the political economy of European capitalism. At the same time, humanitarian discourse could be mobilized to reinforce economic inequalities between and amongst Armenians, French, and Turks on either side of the debates about the legality of the confiscations, thus entrenching, rather than opposing, colonialist and nationalist bourgeois utopian state-building projects.”

The second—and featured—panel was moderated by Prof. Jean Cahan, the director of the Harris Center for Judaic Studies, and included three speakers: Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian (University of California-Los Angeles) gave a passionate and a powerful talk entitled “The Centenary of the Armenian Genocide: What Have We Learned?” Hovannisian recounted his family history and the way in which he encountered the Armenian Genocide. He focused on his experience of growing up with Genocide survivors and discussed the developments that have taken place in the field of Armenian Genocide studies. While mentioning the positive developments, he concentrated on denial of the Armenian Genocide. “In the past I used to believe that denial was the last stage of genocide. Now I believe that denial is the first stage of genocide,” emphasized Hovannisian. Following Hovannisian, Prof. Michelle Tusan (University of Nevada-Las Vegas) presented a paper on “Humanitarian Empire: Britain’s Response to the Armenian Genocide” in which she examined the British response to the Armenian Genocide and its failed prosecution of the culprits of the Genocide. The last talk of the featured panel was given by Prof. Keith Watenpaugh (University of California-Davis). Entitled “Armenia, Armenians, the League of Nations and Modern Humanitarianism,” Watenpaugh’s paper dealt in a critical fashion with the idea of modern humanitarianism. He discussed the international response to the Genocide leading to the emergence of the modern idea of Humanitarianism. He argued that Humanitarianism and Human Rights are terms that are usually used together but in fact there is little human rights present in humanitarianism. Watenpaugh discussed how after the Genocide there was the urge to preserve the Armenian culture from the brink of extinction.

The second day of the conference featured three panels. The first, entitled “Women and Children during the Genocide,” was chaired by Prof. Patrice McMahon from UNL. The first speaker, Prof. Benny Morris (Ben-Gurion

University), gave a paper entitled “Women and Children in the Turkish Ethnic Cleansing of Armenians and Greeks, 1919-23.” In his paper Morris concentrated on rape and abduction to Muslim households of women and children during the Turkish campaigns against the Armenians (and French) in Cilicia and against the Greek communities, mainly on the Ionian coast and the Pontus. The second paper, entitled “Critical Examination of the Historiography of Women during the Armenian Genocide,” was delivered by Prof. Carina Karapetian Giorgi (Pomona College). In her paper Karapetian Giorgi argued that women’s lives and theoretical questions of gender have been sidelined, partly in that references are sparse and partly because those that appear are influenced by a series of implicit assumptions about Armenian women’s roles which are not critically discussed. She critically re-examined the ways in which Armenian women are represented throughout the literature as having homogenized and oversimplified identities.

The third paper was delivered by Anna Aleksanyan (Clark University). Entitled “‘Neutral Home’ and the Issue of Identity of the Surviving Armenian Women and Children,” the paper discussed the “Neutral home” that was established by the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople Zaven I Der Yeghiayan after the war where a special committee consisting of Armenian, Turkish, and American women were appointed to identify the actual nationality and identity of survivors. Aleksanyan discussed the difficulties encountered by this committee as many of the Armenian women did not want to reveal their identities. The final paper was given by Tuğçe Kayaal (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor). Entitled “A Critique of the Concept of the ‘Genocide Survivor’: Armenian Orphans in Aleppo Between the Years of 1915-18,” Kayaal evaluated the concept of being a “survivor” of the Armenian Genocide used referring to the Armenian Orphans in Ottoman orphanages of Aleppo between the years of 1915-1918. She indicated that it is important to ask questions whether it is possible to explain the motivation of the Ottoman state as “humanitarian act” by collecting these children in orphanages which were administered by the agents of the state. Based on the experiences of Ar-

menian orphans in Ottoman orphanages, Kayaal argued that the concept of “genocide survivor” should be re-conceptualized.

The second panel of the day was entitled “The Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust” and was chaired by Prof. Ari Kohen, the director of the Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Program at UNL. The first paper, entitled “‘Legal’ and ‘Official’ Plundering of Armenian and Jewish Properties during the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust within a Comparative Perspective,” was delivered by Ümit Kurt (Clark University). In his paper Kurt presented the processes of expropriation of the Holocaust and the Armenian Genocide victims within a comparative perspective. He examined how properties of Armenians and Jews changed hands under the guise of legality. In doing so, he discussed the similarities and differences between the two dispossession processes. The second paper was delivered

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by Prof. Stefan Ihrig (Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem). Entitled “From the Armenian Genocide to the Holocaust: A Connected Perspective,” Ihrig explored the comparative angle through the connection of the two genocides. He introduced a key historical event that linked both cases. This event was the forgotten German genocide debate of the early 1920s. Ihrig argued that for four years the German public discussed the Armenian Genocide, first because of Germany’s direct association with it and the urgent Entente allegations of war-crimes, and then because of the assassination of Talât Pasha in Berlin in 1921. The final paper of the panel was delivered by Prof. Harutyun Marutyan (National Academy of Sciences of Armenia). In his paper, entitled “The Institute of Righteous Among the Nations in the Armenian and the Jewish Cases,” Marutyan, by using the “Righteous Among the Nations” in the Holocaust as a guideline, critically evaluated the Turkish “righteous/rescuers” in the case of the Armenian Genocide. In his presentation Marutyan relied on two valuable collections: *The Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire: Testimonies of Survivors. Collection of Documents*, vol. 1-3, Yerevan, 2012 (about 600 testimonies, mainly recorded in 1916-1917) and Verjine Svazlian, *The Armenian Genocide: Testimonies of the Eyewitness Survivors*, Yerevan, 2011 (315 stories, recorded in 1955-2010).

The last panel of the conference, entitled “Aftermath of the Genocide: Politics, Culture, Society, and Literature,” was chaired by Prof. Chantal Kalisa, an expert on the Rwandan Genocide and director of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program at UNL. The first paper, entitled “Armenian Nation Building Through Sport: The Armenian Olympiad Before and After the Armenian Genocide,” was delivered by Prof. Tsolin Nalbantian (Leiden University). In her paper Nalbantian examined the activities and their associated Armenian press coverage of Armenian sports teams (especially the journal *Marmnamarz*) and athletic competitions in Istanbul and Anatolia in the early 20th century and in Lebanon and Syria in the 1940s.

She examined the use of athletics and the celebration of the fit Armenian in Armenian nation building over time and space. In doing so, she explored the variety of contracting and expanding local attachments constructed via the press in the Ottoman Empire and in the Lebanese and Syrian nation-states. The second paper was delivered by Prof. Heghnar Watenpaugh (University of California-Davis). Entitled “Art, Heritage, and the Armenian Genocide: Toros Roslin’s Zeytun Gospels between 1915 and 2015,” Watenpaugh’s presentation focused on the fate of the Zeytun Gospels during and after the Genocide, prior to the fragmentary Canon Tables’ arrival in the United States. In her presentation Watenpaugh traced the path of the manuscript during the deportations and explored Armenian perceptions of the Gospel of Zeytun at the time of their physical annihilation coupled with the destruction of their cultural heritage. Prof. Talar Chahinian (California State University-Long Beach), delivered the third paper, “Impossible Testimonies: Literature and Aesthetics in the Aftermath of the Armenian Genocide.” Chahinian focused on the response of the generation of surviving orphans, who regrouped in Paris in the 1920s and launched a short-lived, diasporan literary movement called *Menk*. Chahinian argued that through themes like incest and the figure of the failed witness, their literature addressed the paradox of representation inherent to the experience of catastrophe. The final paper of the conference was delivered by Dr. Seyhan Bayraktar (Historical Seminar of the University of Zurich). Entitled “The Armenian Genocide and the Politics of Denial: on Turkey, Civil Society, and EU Recognition Politics,” the paper explored the denial efforts by the Turkish government and the way that it has affected the process of Turkey’s accession to the European Union. She argued that despite the politics of denial there has been a memory boom around the topic since 2000. The concluding remarks were given by Prof. Lloyd Ambrosius from the Department of History in which he thanked all the participants for the illuminating and productive conference and hailed the conference as a great success that attracted a diverse set of audience and participants.

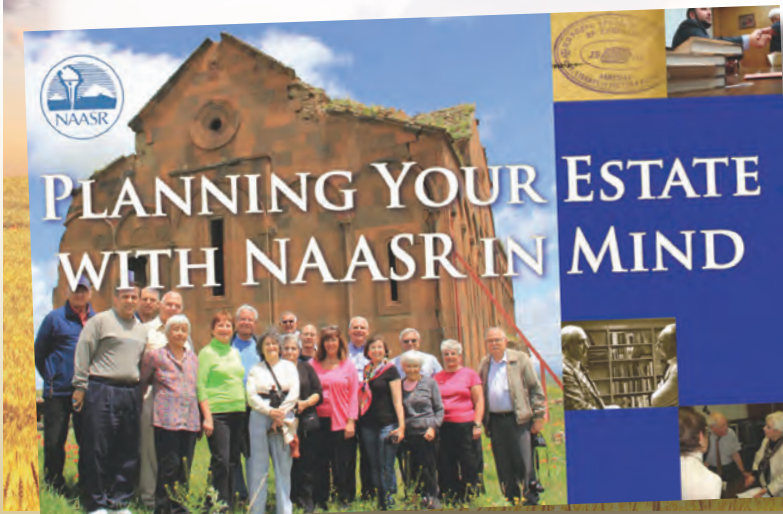
IS NAASR IN YOUR WILL?

There are many ways you can help NAASR and its programs for the furtherance of Armenian studies and research. One of the most significant is including NAASR in your estate planning.

We are grateful to all who have remembered NAASR in their wills. We especially want to acknowledge the

two most recent bequests that will strengthen NAASR for years to come: those of Dr. Elizabeth Gregory and Helen Sahagian, both Founding Members of NAASR. It is very meaningful to us that each of these remarkable women who were with NAASR at the beginning remained so deeply committed to our goals and purposes.

There are many possibilities for your estate planning—please make an appointment with NAASR to discuss the best plan for you or ask to be sent a copy of NAASR’s estate planning booklet. Call us at 617-489-1610, e-mail us at hq@naasr.org, or visit us at the NAASR Center in Belmont to discuss your options.



Witnessing Genocide in Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 2015

By Alexandros K. Kyrou

Reflecting on the moral purpose of acknowledging and remembering in the history of genocide, Elie Wiesel famously noted that, “for the dead and the living, we must bear witness.” As all genocide experts well know, the final stage of genocide involves the eradication of memory and the systematic effort to control the thoughts, conscience, and speech of those who would remember. This aspect of genocide—memoricide—is especially complex and pernicious, difficult to execute and not always obvious. It relies on an architecture involving mechanisms of totalitarian control, and oftentimes masquerades under the guise of freedom of speech and open debate. At its core however, memoricide as a final stage of genocide aims to eradicate memory, by erasing evidence of the existence of the people victimized by extermination and by silencing discussion that gives and sustains memory. Memoricide perpetuates denial by replacing irrefutable historical facts with debate about the veracity of those facts. It is important to recognize that the final stage of genocide demands a kind of vigilance and awareness of prac-



Moderator Hovhannes Ghazaryan and James Russell

tices and behaviors that frequently are missed and misunderstood by third party observers and in some cases even by the successors and foot soldiers of the original architects of genocide. These end-stage perpetrators may be generations removed and geographically separated from the historic act, but in some way, they have become complicit in the completion of genocide.

I have to believe that such a lack of self-awareness and failure to understand the mechanics of memoricide was what drove the events to which a large audience was witness at a recent panel discussion and commemoration of the centenary of the Armenian Genocide. The program, entitled “Armenia 1915-Auschwitz 1945: Small Nations and Great Powers,” which was open to the public, took place in late March at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The panel of scholars was comprised of three leading authorities in Arme-



Simon Payaslian and protestors

nian Studies: Dr. Simon Payaslian, Charles K. and Elisabeth M. Kenosian Professor of Modern Armenian History and Literature, in the Department of History at Boston University; Marc A. Mamigonian, Director of Academic Affairs for the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research; and Dr. James R. Russell, Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University. Dr. Payaslian focused his lecture on the interrelationship between the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust, and reviewed the importance of the Armenian Genocide to issues of historicity in comparative cases of genocide in the 20th century. Mr. Mamigonian followed with a brilliant analysis of the scholarly and public-relations methods used by the Turkish state and its advocates in the academic, public policy, and media spaces in the United States, for the campaign of genocide denial. Dr. Russell concluded the program with a powerful existential reflection on the Armenian Genocide through a masterful invocation of Armenian history, language, poetry, and the personal connectedness of his own life to genocide through the destruction of much of his family in the Holocaust.

Following the conclusion of the informative and evocative panel presentations, the audience, which had filled the 175-seat auditorium to standing room only, was invited to ask questions of the panelists. What followed was disturbing. Instead of the usual civil, courteous, and respectful exchange that characterizes such transitions to dialogue at most academic events in this country, an obviously well-planned and coordinated genocide denial protest erupted. A number of Turkish and Azeri students, sitting in groups of two and three, strategically positioned in multiple sections of the auditorium, simultaneously held up posters that, until that moment, had been hidden from view. The posters carried statements attacking the Armenian Genocide as a historical distortion, ridiculing Armenian loss of life, labeling Armenians as terrorists, and claiming that Turks, not Armenians, were the victims of genocide during the First World War. The obviously choreographed effort to disrupt the event, under the guise of free speech and debate, was punctuated by Turkish students and non-university Turkish activists taking the audience microphone—not to ask questions of the panelists, but to make inflammatory and derogatory statements about Armenian Genocide history and the Armenians as a people. As the young Turks in the audience became visibly swept up in their own mounting assertiveness and cacophony, several more protestors, without benefit of the microphone, loudly expressed their disappointment that the “Turkish point of view” was not represented on the panel and that the event did not involve an open debate to allow for the questioning of the veracity of the Armenian Genocide.

In contrast to the Turkish students’ provocative behavior, the panelists and the other audience members, most of whom were Armenian Americans, but also including academics from other departments and schools in the sponsoring university, academics from area universities, and interested members

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of the public at large responded with remarkable restraint. Representing several generations, Armenian Americans who had the opportunity to speak related personal stories of losses of family in the Genocide. These audience members made appeals to reason, the historical record, and human decency to end the disruption of the event and to allow the memorial and discussion

is, in fact, the final stage of genocide—its goal being the completion of the process of total annihilation of a people by denying and erasing their history and ultimately the memory of their existence after their physical destruction, memocide—that, as a result of the effort to derail the memorial and silence the panel, we were actually witnessing genocide in Cambridge. A brief silence followed my observation, leaving me to speculate over the possibility that the Turkish students had not considered this fact and its implications when they were preparing their protest.



Panelists Simon Payaslian, Marc Mamigonian, James Russell

to go forward without interruption.

In an effort to prevent the event from being completely hijacked by the provocateurs in the audience, the panelists spoke decisively to the unconscionable actions and apparent motives of the genocide denial protestors. Dr. Russell, in particular, upset Turkish students by characterizing Turkey as the equivalent of “Nazi Germany Light,” as he elaborated that the Republic of Turkey represents what Germany would be like today if Hitler had succeeded, as did Mustafa Kemal, in creating an ultranationalist state and society founded on the eradication of all minorities. As to the protesting students’ complaint regarding the absence of the “Turkish point of view” from the panel discussion, Dr. Russell responded to this grievance with a comparative rhetorical question: “Can you imagine a commemoration of the Nazi Holocaust and a bunch of German students would get up and say, ‘the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, how disgraceful, Germans were killed, we need both sides to be represented.’ I’m sorry we don’t have the SS represented here.”

Dr. Russell’s concluding comments were compelling. He urged the Turkish students to leave their homes in Istanbul, Izmir, and Antalya and go into the countryside in order to come face to face with the truth about Turkey. Dr. Russell informed the students that in the interior of Asia Minor—the heart of the vast Anatolian slaughterhouse where 1.5 million Armenians and another 1.5 million Assyrians and Greeks were systematically murdered between 1915 and 1923—they will meet pious local Muslims who will tell them what they told him when he first traveled years ago in the village countryside outside Kayseri in central Anatolia and encountered the witnessing and remembering of genocidal horrors: “our grandfathers told us that this is where the Armenian men were arrested and taken away, this meadow on the bank of the river is where the soldiers killed the women and children, this is where the church was.”

Deeply troubled by the disruption and insensitivity of the protestors, I requested the audience microphone and addressed the young Turkish nationalists. I informed the students that their actions should weigh heavily on their consciences because their organized protest against the memorial remembrance and their denial of the Armenian Genocide was itself an act of genocide. I communicated to the audience that inasmuch as scholars and legal experts of genocide have made it clear that systematic genocide denial

After the momentary pause, the Turkish protestors returned to their mantra of free speech and open debate, sidestepping the inconvenient fact that freedom of speech and open debate on the Armenian Genocide is limited in Turkey, that Turkish citizens who publicly acknowledge the Genocide have faced legal prosecution and imprisonment, and that some citizens of Turkey have been killed for openly discussing or writing about the Genocide. Of course, the reality is the Turkish students who were present at the memorial and panel event were not motivated by a commitment to free speech, they are, after all, apparently not troubled by its repression in Turkey. To the contrary, the objective of the disruptive Turkish students was to prevent American citizens from exercising, unmolested and without fear,

their constitutional rights to engage in freedom of speech and freedom of assembly in their own country. As Dr. Payaslian told the Turkish students, they have every right to organize their own events to freely discuss the Genocide, but they have no right to disrupt memorial events and try to prevent others from speaking freely. In an irony lost on the Turkish students, their actions were a striking example of one of the standard tactics (the manipulation and distortion of “free speech” to promote denial) used by the Turkish Genocide denial campaign targeting the American academy, a practice brilliantly elaborated moments earlier in the presentation of Marc Mamigonian.

If civilized society recognizes, as historians and legal scholars of genocide argue we should, that participation in deliberate, systematic, especially, state-sponsored, efforts to foster genocide denial constitutes an act of genocide, then it should have some of the same consequences for the perpetrators as it does for perpetrators of any other crime against humanity. Scholars,



Alexandros Kyrou during the Q & A session

students, and all individuals should be free to express any personal view on genocide or any other matter that interests them. Any American, for example, is free to be a racist, to express racist views, even to distort history in order to claim that, for instance, Southern slave owners were benevolent



A protestor held the highly ironic sign, "History Cannot Be Distorted"

managers of a tolerant multiracial plantation system that was tragically destroyed by ungrateful, seditious African-American terrorists who engaged in treason and aligned themselves with Yankee armies during the Civil War (for the Turkish narrative on the Armenian Genocide, replace "slave owners and benevolent managers" for Turks, change "multiracial plantation system" to multicultural Ottoman Empire, change "African-Americans" to Armenians, and substitute "Yankee armies" with Russia and the imperialist Allied powers during and after World War I). However, if such a racist were to conspire and organize with other racists to disrupt meetings of the NAACP across the country and to demand at every Civil Rights memorial or panel discussion in universities that the "American white supremacist perspective" should be represented at these events in the interests of fairness and open debate, there would be consequences for such actions. In the case of university students who engage in organized genocide denial efforts, university administrations should make it absolutely clear that while they support all manner of free speech, they certainly do not support genocide denial and they will take action against students who disrupt events that commemorate and inquire into genocide as an empirical phenomenon.

The actions of individuals who conspire and organize with others to deliberately cast doubt on the reality of the Armenian Genocide, especially in coordination with the Turkish state, should be understood for what they truly represent: a continuation of the Genocide they seek to erase from memory. There are no legal prohibitions against engaging in propaganda and historical distortion in this country, but there are consequences for genocide denial. Any reasonable person could expect that had a group of students disrupted a Jewish-American sponsored Holocaust or a Rwandan Genocide memorial and panel discussion at any university in this country with genocide denial rants, anti-Semitic posters, demands for open debate to question the historical veracity of the Holocaust, and race baiting, those students would be facing consequences for their actions. It is equally reasonable, to expect that such a standard of accountability and consequences be applied consistently to all

students, to all people, who would deny and perpetuate genocide. By ignoring and not applying any consequences to such actions we become complicit in their commission, while apologists and perpetrators of genocide are emboldened to act and speak with impunity.

By the time the program concluded, what should have been a respectful memorial, an opportunity to remember and honor the victims of 1915 "for the dead and the living," as Elie Wiesel, one of the great moral champions for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, would say, the event had been sullied by the Turkish students' disrespect and derision. Most of the people who came to the memorial and panel event did so to pay respect to, and learn more about, the victims of the Armenian Genocide. Yet, they had been prevented from doing so properly, meaning with the kind of dignity, solemnity, and peace that the victims of the Genocide, their surviving ancestors, and their memory are entitled to.

I left the event overcome by a feeling of profound melancholy. I was deeply unsettled by the young faces of genocide denial: clearly well-educated, privileged, and cosmopolitan elites; the children, and future leaders, of Turkey's ruling class, people whose advantaged station, as a class, is inseparable from the wealth, lands, and lives their ancestors robbed from millions of Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks a century ago. Above all, however, I was upset and outraged on behalf of the many Armenian Americans in the Cambridge audience, who, like all Armenians everywhere, are, as they were that evening, denied by Turkish nationalists and their apologists the right to mourn their dead and to remember their past free from harassment and insult, and were thus unjustly forced to continue to endure the pain of Genocide a century after its beginning.

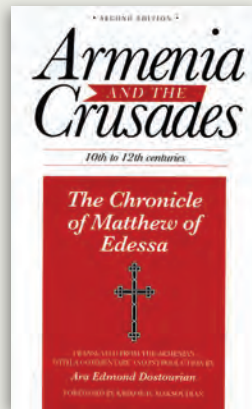
Dr. Alexandros K. Kyrou is Professor of History at Salem State University, in Salem, Massachusetts, where he teaches on the Balkans, Byzantium, and the Ottoman Empire. A version of this commentary ran in the Armenian Mirror-Spectator on April 25, 2015.

Armenian Heritage Press Issues 2nd Edition of *Armenia and the Crusades: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*

In October 2014 NAASR’s Armenian Heritage Press issued the revised second edition of *Armenia and the Crusades: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa*, translated with an introduction and extensive commentary by Dr. Ara E. Dostourian.

The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa has long been recognized as an invaluable source of information concerning the dramatic events taking place in the Near East between the years 952 and 1162 A.D. Byzantine emperors, Crusader knights, Arab potentates, and Turkish invaders march across the pages of this eyewitness account.

Dr. Dostourian translated this crucial primary source into English for the first time for his doctoral work at Rutgers University. It was published in 1993 as *Armenia and*



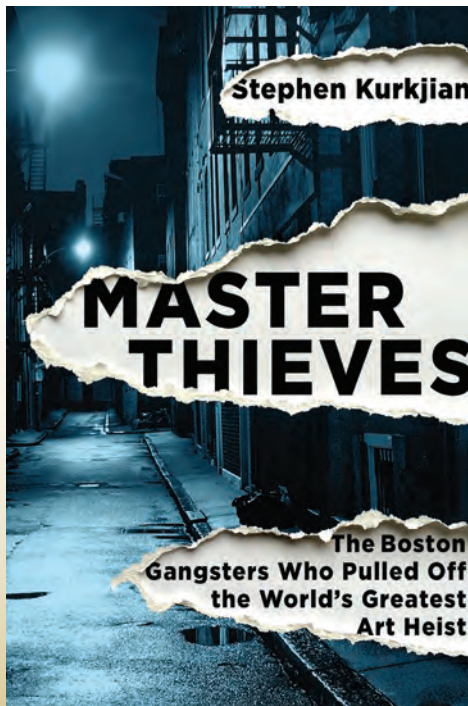
the Crusades: The Chronicle of Matthew of Edessa by NAASR and the University Press of America. The second, revised edition in paperback incorporates corrections by the translator as well as additions to the notes and bibliography.

Dr. Ara Edmond Dostourian is professor emeritus of history at the University of West Georgia and a former research fellow in Armenian Studies at Harvard University. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and language from the City University of New York, a Master of Arts in medieval history from Fordham University, a Master of Divinity degree from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA, and a Doctorate in Byzantine history from Rutgers University.

Book Publications by NAASR Board Members and Academic Director

NAASR Board Members Stephen Kurkjian and Dr. Gregory Ketabgian, as well as Director of Academic Affairs Marc A. Mamigonian, published books during the past year.

Kurkjian, the longtime and much-honored retired investigative reporter for the Boston Globe, issued the fruits of his years-long research on the 1989 Gardner Museum heist, *Master Thieves: The Boston Gangsters Who Pulled Off the World’s Greatest Art Heist* (Public Affairs, 2015). Hailed in the *New York Times*

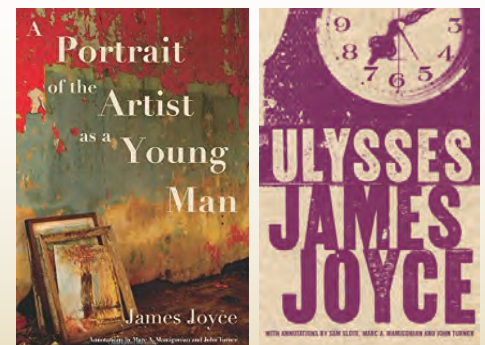


Book Review as “more than just a summation of all that’s publicly known about the case—from the thieves’ false mustaches to the F.B.I.’s sting operations—Kurkjian’s book is an impressive attempt to solve the crime by reconsidering the evidence,” the book is an exciting read that—who knows—might help lead to the recovery of the stolen artworks.

In *Leaving Kayseri: A Journey of One Hundred Years* (2015), Dr. Gregory Ketabgian has documented his father’s experiences at the onset of the Armenian Genocide while he was living

in Kayseri. He chronicles the family’s journey through the Syrian Desert to Deir-el Zor, their effort to survive in Aleppo, Syria, as well as his own childhood experiences growing up in a Muslim country and his eventual immigration to the United States. Ketabgian is a retired physician born in Aleppo to Armenian Genocide survivors.

Marc Mamigonian had two publications from his “other” field of interest, James Joyce studies, issued: annotated editions of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses* (both Alma Classics, 2014). *A Portrait* includes an introduction and more than 1,000 annotations by Mamigonian and John Turner, while *Ulysses* has an introduction by Sam Slote of Trinity College, Dublin, and more than 9,000 annotations by Slote, Mamigonian, and Turner. Mamigonian and Turner hope to refashion their extensive



annotations to Joyce’s posthumously published early work *Stephen Hero*, which they published in the *James Joyce Quarterly* in 2003, into a book in 2016.

A Few Words from Robert Thomson

ON THE OCCASION OF THE PUBLICATION OF *THE ARMENIAN APOCALYPTIC TRADITION: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE*: ESSAYS PRESENTED IN HONOR OF PROFESSOR ROBERT W. THOMSON ON THE OCCASION OF HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY, KEVORK BARDAKJIAN AND SERGIO LA PORTA, EDS. (BRILL: LEIDEN, 2014)

After leaving Harvard in 1992, with a memorable “send-off” in the Faculty Club organized by NAASR, I continued my teaching and research activities at Oxford University, finally retiring in 2001. The years since then have been happy and productive, with numerous visits to the USA and elsewhere to meet colleagues in Armenian Studies, attend conferences, and enjoy the company of our children and grandchildren in Virginia and California. Although I have done a little teaching and have presented papers at various seminars, most of my time has been devoted to research and publication of early and medieval Armenian authors. Retirement has given me the time to complete some projects associated with the celebration in 2001 of 1,700 years of Armenian Christianity, and in particular

to develop my interest in the Armenian tradition of Biblical Commentaries.

A chronological list of publications would not be very informative, so I shall group the major ones into three categories.

1. Armenian Commentaries on various books of the Bible: Hamam on Proverbs (written at the end of the ninth century),

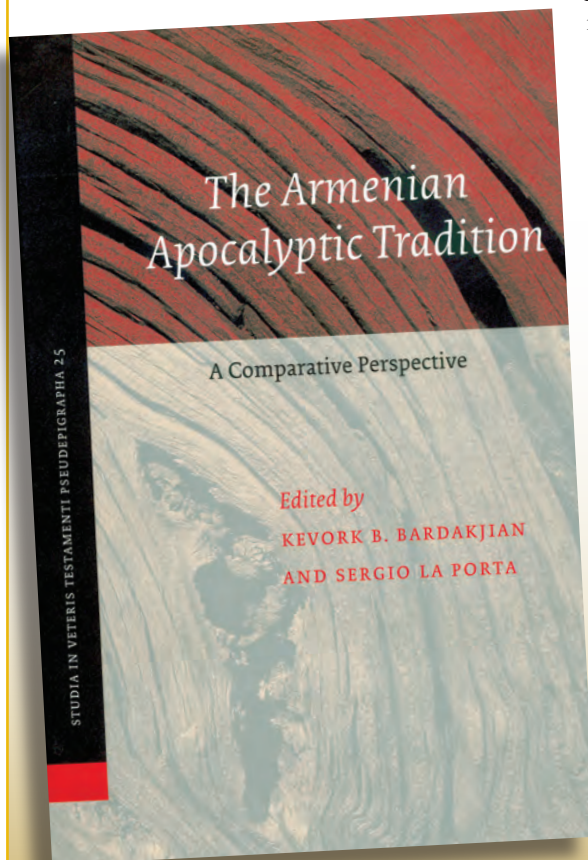


Nersēs of Lambron on Revelation (written in 1179), and Nonnus of Nisibis on the Gospel of Saint John. This last is of particular interest, having been composed in Arabic circa 820, and translated into Armenian about fifty years later.

2. A study of early Armenian views concerning the physical world and cosmology. This derived from work on the influential Homilies on Genesis by Saint Basil of Caesarea (fourth century), which were translated into Syriac and from Syriac into Armenian. My monograph traces the impact in Armenia of Basil’s views, that were based on pagan Greek and Christian ideas, from the time of Anania of Shirak down to the thirteenth century.

3. Revision and expansion of previous work. In particular, the *Lives of Saint Gregory* gives translations not only of the Armenian, but also of the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic versions of Agathangelos. These versions are important for preserving traditions about the conversion of Armenia to Christianity that are not included in the surviving Armenian text of that historian. In addition I was asked by St. Nersess Armenian Seminary to bring my study of the *Teaching of Saint Gregory* up to date; the original edition was my first major foray into Armenian Studies, published exactly thirty years previously. Similarly, I was requested for a revision of Movsēs Khorenatsi in light of recent advances in the understanding of that controversial History.

Like most retired academics I soon discovered that other people (erroneously) thought I now had plenty of spare time. Consequently, I have been inundated with requests for assistance or collaboration on various projects. In some cases I have been able to help, and have been led into areas I had not previously explored: e.g. translations of Aristotle, lives of Egyptian hermits, Georgian manuscripts kept on Mount Sinai, Armenian legal traditions in the diaspora, and knowledge of Arabic in Armenia in the first few centuries of Islam. Altogether, quite enough to keep the brain cells ticking over.



NAASR Board Member Anne E. Elbrecht

1940-2014

With sadness NAASR wishes to inform our members and friends of the death on September 24, 2014, of Anne E. Elbrecht of Davis, CA, after a long battle with cancer. Anne had served on the NAASR Board of Directors since 2007 and had been a NAASR member since 1992.

“She was a dedicated and involved member of the NAASR Board,” recalled NAASR Chairman Raffi P. Yeghiayan, “and was truly interested in the well-being of the whole Armenian Studies community.” NAASR First Vice Chairman Yervant Chekijian affirmed that she “was devoted to NAASR’s well-being and its role in perpetuating Armenian Studies.”

Anne was a graduate of Wheaton College and held a degree in Library Science from UC Berkeley. While working at the California State Law Library she met her second husband, Richard Elbrecht, who predeceased her in 2008. Later, the couple traveled together to historic Armenia to photograph remains of the Armenian culture that had existed there for two millennia. Many of these photographs were displayed at a series of conferences on historic Armenian cities organized at UCLA by Prof. Richard Hovannisian, and more than 150 are now on the website of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno, where they are available to scholars and the general public.

Anne also earned a Doctor of Jurisprudence de-

gree from McGeorge School of Law and a Masters degree in history from California State University, Sacramento. Her thesis on the Armenian Genocide was published as *Telling the Story: The Armenian Genocide in The New York Times and Missionary Herald, 1914-1918* (Gomidas Institute, 2012).

NAASR Board Member and longtime friend Shushan Teager recalled, “I met Anne and Richard Elbrecht on an Armen Aroyan trip to Syria in 2000. Their passionate interest in Armenians and things Armenian was extraordinary. Anne and Richard were NAASR members for many years.



Anne Elbrecht speaking at NAASR in 2012

In person, or by telephone, she was always an active participant at Board meetings. With her keen analytical mind, her input was always insightful and cogent. Like everyone else who knew her, I shall miss her very much.”

Nancy Kolligian, who served as NAASR Chair-

man when Anne was first elected to the Board, noted that “Anne took her role very seriously and quickly immersed herself in doing whatever she could to help promote and highlight the work of the organization. She came to as many meetings as possible, even when she became ill—and her strong will and determination never seemed to deter her from participating and sharing her ideas.

“Anne and I were colleagues but we also forged a personal friendship which I will always cherish. She was warm, kind, and very bright, and her interest in and knowledge of Armenian culture and history was impressive and remarkable.

She would always be thinking of ways to help NAASR, and we often spoke over the phone and talked about our thoughts about NAASR. Anne’s last call was a message asking me to call so we could discuss some ideas she had about NAASR. I will always regret that we never got to talk as she took a turn for the worse and was never able to speak after that call.

“May God rest her beautiful soul—she was a kind and good

person and someone I will always remember with great fondness.”

Anne is survived by her daughter Jessica and two grandchildren. Funeral services were held at the St. James Catholic Church, in Davis, on October 3, 2014.

Selected Necrology

In addition to those for whom obituaries have been presented in this issue (indicated with a * in the list below), a number of other valued NAASR members have passed away since the last Newsletter listing. We apologize for any omissions or errors and respectfully ask you to bring them to our attention for inclusion in a future Newsletter.

*Anne Elizabeth Elbrecht, Davis, CA [20-year member; Leadership Circle Member; Board of Directors, 2007-2014]

Arshag Gechijian, Belmont, MA [50-year-plus member]

*Erivan Hagopian, Deerfield Beach, FL [50-year-plus member; Board Member, 1978-2001]

Armen Loosarian, Silver Spring, MD [20-year member]

Alice A. Roat, Lincoln, MA [16-year member and volunteer]

Harold K. Vickery, Gloucester, MA

Bess P. Vickery, Gloucester, MA

Jacob H. Zakarian, Gloucester, MA [30-year member; Leadership Circle Member]

*Anahid Yacoubian, Watertown, MA [40-year member; Board of Directors, 2011-2014]

Erivan Garabed Hagopian

1930-2015

Erivan Hagopian, a NAASR member since 1956 and a long-serving member of the Board of Directors, died on January 22, 2015, in Deerfield Beach, Florida. Born on June 12, 1930, in Providence, Rhode Island, to parents Garabed and Mary Hagopian, he was educated at the University of Rhode Island and received an MS from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, earning honors from both institutions. He served in the U.S. Army, and after his service, married Sion Kevork Balian. They raised three children in Lexington, Massachusetts, and retired to Deerfield Beach, Florida. Erivan retired from Cabot Corporation and held numerous patents.

Prior to his service on the NAASR Board, Erivan had been an active member of NAASR's Boston Chapter, and as a Board member he was an energetic participant, serving on numerous committees.

Sandra Jurigian, long-serving Administrative Director and now Executive Assistant at NAASR, recalled what a pleasure it was to work with Hagopian during his time as a Board member. "He was thoroughly dedicated to the organization and its purposes and cheerfully accepted assignments and further committee work whenever approached," she commented.

Erivan Hagopian is survived by his wife, Sion (née Balian) Hagopian; sons, David Hagopian and wife Margaret, and Dr. Daniel Hagopi-



Erivan Hagopian (2nd from left) with Charles Sahagian, Nancy Kolligian, and Haig Deranian.

an; daughter, Lorie Hagopian; grandchildren, Matthew, Sarine, Mark, and Luke; brother, Dr. Miasnig "Lindy" Hagopian; and many nieces and nephews. Services were held at Masis Ararat Armenian Cemetery in Fresno, California, on February 7, 2015.

Anahid Yacoubian, Educator and NAASR Board Member

NAASR is saddened to inform our members and friends of the death on July 18, 2014, of Anahid Yacoubian of Arlington, MA. Anahid served on the NAASR Board of Directors from May 2011 until May 2014 and had been a NAASR member since 1972. She served on the Executive Committee of the Boston Chapter in the late 1970s, and had taught Conversational Western Armenian at NAASR since 2008.

She is survived by Marie Yacoubian, sister-in-law (Chicago); Norayr, Annie, Nareg and Sevag Yacoubian, nephew (Chicago); Hratch, Sylvia, Nathalie and Robert Yacoubian, nephew (Chicago); Shahe, Erika, Nina and Gina Yacoubian, nephew (Chicago); Nazig, Diran and Taline Karamanoukian, niece (France); Sossi, Nerces and Sirvart Yerissian, niece (UK); Maria, Antranik, Salpi and Haig Shehirian, niece (Syria); Silva and Lea Harms, niece (Germany); and her lifelong friend and companion Edward Zides of Revere. A memorial service was held on September 20, 2014, at the Armenian Memorial Church, 32 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, MA.

Anahid was a dedicated and enthusiastic teacher who was loved and respected by her students, and in 1994 she was named Teacher of the Year by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Bilingual Department of Education. She taught Social Studies and Armenian language in



the Watertown, MA, public schools for four decades. She was, in fact, the first Armenian language teacher in the history of the Watertown public schools, beginning in 1970.

Anahid Yacoubian was born in Aleppo, Syria. She was educated at Haigazian College in Beirut, Lebanon, and received Masters degrees in Education and Counseling at Boston State College.

Former NAASR Board Member Robert Bejoian studied with Anahid in the 1970s in Watertown: "I took her class from 7th grade on for the language lessons but she taught her students so much more. Anahid integrated Armenian history and culture into classes so that the American Armenian students could learn about Armenians living in Armenia and in other parts of the world. She gave her students an understanding on what it was to be an Armenian. I will always remember Anahid as a strong courageous lady who came such a long way to enrich and teach so many students over the past 45 years. She left us with so much more than what she took for herself. A student could not have had a better teacher than Anahid Yacoubian. I know we will all miss her."

NAASR Chairman Raffi Yeghiayan stated: "It is disheartening to lose someone as dedicated to the advancement of Armenian language teaching as Anahid, with her additional interest in Armenian history, and the clear objective to have the local non-Armenian community become aware of our contributions to American society. Anahid left an imprint on generations of students in the public schools of Watertown as well as in the courses she taught for adults at NAASR. She was a loyal member of NAASR and served on the Board admirably. She will be missed sorely. May God keep her soul illuminated."

Academic Director Mamigonian Publishes Article, Gives Talks on Denial

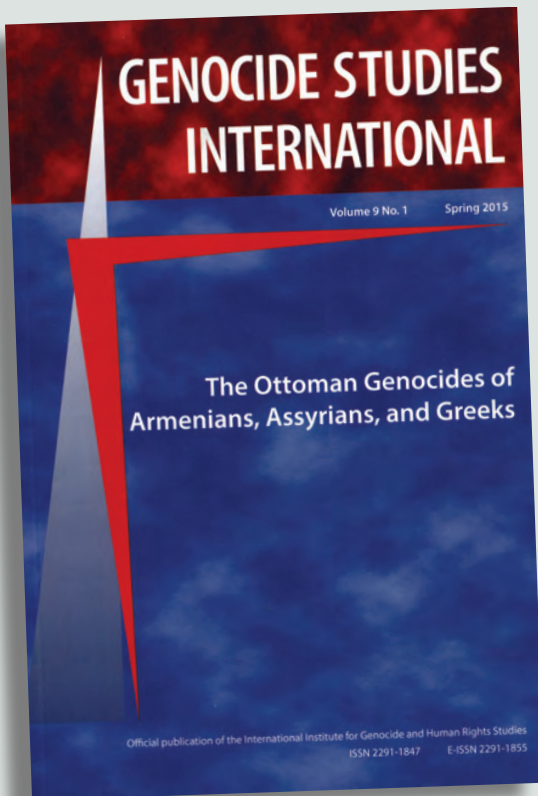
NAASR's Director of Academic Affairs, Marc A. Mamigonian, published an article in the April 2015 issue (volume 9, no. 1) of *Genocide Studies International*, entitled "Academic Denial of the Armenian Genocide in American Scholarship: Denialism as Manufactured Controversy," and gave several lectures based on the work in 2014 and 2015.

The article draws on an earlier essay, "Scholarship, Manufacturing Doubt, and Genocide Denial," published in the *Armenian Weekly's* April 2013 magazine. In an effort to broaden the discussion of denial of the Armenian Genocide, Mamigonian views this denial as sharing key rhetorical and structural aspects of other forms of denial, such as that practiced by the cigarette industry for decades to hide the relationship between smoking and cancer, or the efforts to deny the existence of global warming.

Richard Hovannisian, one of the first analysts of denial of the Armenian Genocide, says of the essay that "Marc Mamigonian offers a creative approach to Armenian Genocide denial by comparing it with the deceptive and harmful claims and tactics manufactured by the tobacco industry. At first sight, the association may seem a bit puzzling, but on reading the essay, one sees the common unscrupulous means used to reach the desired end, whether that be ideological and political as in the Turkish case or lethal economic gain in the case of the tobacco industry."



Marc Mamigonian with Garin Kaligian at the Responsibility 2015 conference, March 2015



The abstract for the article reads: From its origins in the World War I era, denial of the Armenian Genocide emerged in American universities during the Cold War. Today, a growing body of critical scholarship and documentation of the Armenian Genocide has rendered traditional strategies of silencing and denial increasingly untenable. Like the tobacco industry lobbyists of the 1950s, apologists for the "Turkish position" now labor to construct denialism as a legitimate intellectual position within a historical

debate. Such manufactured controversy is a time-tested means of lending academic credibility to Armenian Genocide deniers, whose contemporary brethren include the so-called skeptics of global warming. This article will trace, briefly, the early development of Armenian Genocide denial and will focus on more recent refinements and the penetration of denial into American academia. Concluding comments will address the fundamental challenge of denialism, debate, and the quest for intellectual integrity.

The overall approach to the issue provided the basic framework for the October 2014 conference at Clark University and Worcester State University, co-sponsored by NAASR, entitled "Manufacturing Denial and the Assault on Scholarship and Truth," at which Mamigonian spoke. Versions of the paper were also presented at the conferences "Remembering for the Future: Armenia, Auschwitz, and Beyond" (the 44th Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches) and "Responsibility 2015: Armenian Genocide Centennial Conference," the symposium "Armenia 1915-Auschwitz 1945" at Harvard University, and in lectures at NAASR and at UCLA.

Mount Auburn Offers Memories on Anniversary of Armenian Genocide

Note: the following article appeared in the *Boston Globe* following the April 25, 2015, “The Armenians of Mt. Auburn Cemetery” walking tour, led and prepared by Stephen Pinkerton, Friends of Mt. Auburn Docent; Ruth Thomasian, Founder and Director of Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives; and Marc A. Mamigonian, Director of Academic Affairs, NAASR. Very special thanks go to Stephen Pinkerton for initiating what is hoped to become a recurring event and for creating a database of the 2-3,000 Armenians interred at Mt. Auburn and to those who participated in the walk and shared their memories with us. Additional coverage in the summer 2015 issue of *Sweet Auburn: The Magazine of the Friends of Mt. Auburn* (<http://mountauburn.org/2015/sweetauburn-summer2015/>).

By Jennifer Smith

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

Flags with wide stripes in the Armenian colors of red, blue, and apricot marked some of the 2,500 Armenians buried between bare birch trees and blooming magnolias at Mount Auburn Cemetery.

A small gathering toured the cemetery on a crisp, sunny Saturday to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the killing of 1.5 million Armenians by Ottoman Turks. The group stopped beside gravestones of family members or famous figures, pausing to learn about who the dead were in life and to share in the close-knit community left behind.

“If we will not remember, it means that we are dead,” said Erna Shirinian, who frequently travels in partnership with organizations that support



Board Member Stephen Kurkjian speaking at the grave of his parents

Armenian culture. She flew from Armenia to recognize the centennial in Massachusetts. “For Armenians, it is also a very traditional thing to remember your elders and to know your history. It is something that helps us survive,” she said.

The tour, which lasted into the afternoon and was centered in a portion of the cemetery that falls

in Watertown, included stops at 15 gravesites. Sonya Nersessian said touring the grounds where her father, mother, and aunts are buried is like seeing a “microcosm of society.”

“The Armenians are buried here along with everyone else, as it should be,” she said.

Massachusetts, particularly Watertown, has a large Armenian community, many of whom are familiar to one another and relish the opportunity to connect with others who share their cultural history, tour attendees said.

Steve Kurkjian, a former *Globe* reporter, spoke next to his parents’ headstone. Like other Armenian gravestones, Anooshavan Kurkjian and Rosella Gureghian Kurkjian’s bears an ornate cross, a carved rosette, and sigils representing their great passions — in this case, an artist’s palette and a sheaf of papers.

Anooshavan Kurkjian left Armenia as a 3-year-old, on his mother’s back, to come to the United States. “This country was the soil and the fresh air and the rain,” his son said, standing beside the headstone, a small Armenian flag waving by his ankles. “He blossomed, like so many of our beloved parents and grandparents.”

Among the graves was that of General Drastamat Kanayan, known as General Dro, an Armenian national hero without whom “the state of Armenia would not exist,” said Marc A. Mamigonian, Director of Academic Affairs with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research. The general’s stepdaughter, Olga, was present for the tour.

Mamigonian joined Ruth Thomasian, founder of Project Save Armenian Photograph Archives, Inc., and Mount Auburn Cemetery docent Stephen Pinkerton in leading the tour.

“Even in death, people connect us through their stories and their lives,” said Thomasian, standing before the grave of John M. Mugar, who worked closely with his cousin Stephen P. Mugar of Star Market renown. The Mugar family has an active philanthropic history within the Armenian community.

Some of those commemorated had lived for a century or more, like Areka Janikian Der Kazarian, who died in 2013 at the age of 101. Beside her prominent headstone, Mamigonian said “we lost in her ... our last links back to this past that doesn’t really exist anymore.”

General Dro was the last stop on the tour. The



Carolyn Mugar sharing memories of her family

first had been the Rev. Torkom Hagopian. He was a humble man, a survivor who dedicated his life to the Armenian people, their faith, and their culture, said his daughter, Sonya Hagopian.

After a century of struggling to gain recognition of the massacres as a genocide, “This year, it finally feels like we are not carrying this burden alone,” Hagopian said.



The grave of Julia Ward Howe, abolitionist, feminist, author, and President of United Friends of Armenia

Job Announcement: Executive Director Position at NAASR

Background

As a result of its significant growth and expanded activities, NAASR is seeking an Executive Director to help ensure the 60-year-old Association's long-term efforts to meet the challenges of advancing Armenian Studies. Executive Director functions have long been shared among NAASR's Executive Committee, Board, and esteemed Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian, and the Executive Director will work to fulfill NAASR's mission in collaboration with them and to serve NAASR's membership nationally and internationally as the Association continues to evolve.

Founded in 1955, NAASR is the only nationwide organization dedicated to the advancement of Armenian studies and culture through America's foremost institutions of higher education and through a multifaceted program in support of research, scholarship, public programs, and publications. NAASR is a 501(c)(3) organization with a membership structure, and a budget of less than \$400,000. Please visit www.naasr.org for more information.

Position Summary

NAASR seeks a dynamic Executive Director who will be primarily responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of NAASR within budgeted parameters, including implementing and supervising in a collaborative working style current and new programs, securing funding from private and public sources, establishing and expanding relationships with donors and the community, hiring and supervising NAASR staff members, preparing financial reports and budgets, conducting outreach to the public (through the website, social media, reports, and electronic publications), developing and maintaining financial organizational stability, and expanding NAASR membership and affiliates nationally and internationally. The

Executive Director is also expected to work in conjunction with the Director of Academic Affairs and in partnership with the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee to achieve organizational goals and generate a long-term vision for the organization. The Executive Director reports to the NAASR Chairman, Executive Committee and Board, and works in Belmont, MA.

Core Responsibilities

- General Management, Administration and Supervision of Staff
- Fundraising, Development, Donor Cultivation, and Membership Expansion
- Fiscal and Financial Management
- Personnel Hiring, Evaluation and Termination
- External Relations, Communications and Social Media

Qualifications

- Undergraduate degree
- Commitment to NAASR's mission, with strategic thinking and visionary skills
- Minimum four years leadership experience in non-profit management with the ability to manage day-to-day operations, work collaboratively with a board and staff, and ensure financial stability and professional integrity
- Track record of successful relationships with donors, foundations, and corporate funders
- Successful experience in writing grant proposals, cultivating individual donors, working on planned giving, and managing events
- Experience in financial management, budgeting, assessing financial projections for NAASR's long-term viability, and ability to work with existing resources and develop new ones
- Extraordinary leadership and interpersonal skills to attract, retain, and develop talented and committed staff and volunteers, motivate staff and bring diverse people together

- Ability to direct activities in a collaborative style, consistent with NAASR's priorities and mission
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Ability to serve, along with the Director of Academic Affairs, as the public face of the organization, and to be able to engage audiences of varying backgrounds on NAASR's mission
- Knowledge of Armenian issues and organizations, and experience working with Armenian communities
- Strong analytic skills and ability to implement short- and long-term priorities of the organization
- Ability to work collaboratively in a team with staff, Board and Executive Committee, and ability to handle multiple tasks in an organized and timely manner
- Ability to evaluate financial projections to secure long-term viability of NAASR
- Computer literacy in Word, Excel, database software, and ability to learn skills to update NAASR website
- Availability to attend evening and weekend programs, meetings, and events, and promptly reachable via email and other means for urgent matters

Preferred

- Some Armenian language skills
- Masters Degree or Business Degree in Non-profit Management, or Fundraising Certification, or similar qualifications

To Apply

NAASR is conducting a nationwide search for candidates who meet the qualification requirements and have the capabilities to satisfy the job description. To apply, please email a cover letter, resume, writing sample, salary requirements, and names of three references to jobs@naasr.org. No phone calls please.

Salary is commensurate with experience. The position is located in Belmont, MA.

Priority consideration will be given to applications received no later than September 30, 2015, by 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time. The application process may remain open beyond that date until the position is filled. Feel free to distribute widely.

Best regards,

Sarah Ignatius

CHAIR, NAASR SEARCH COMMITTEE



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