

bardez partez

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THE BULLETIN OF
THE ARMENIAN
INSTITUTE

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2018



Dear reader, Միթե՞լի ընթերցող,

Welcome to our Bardez-Partez / Պարտեզ!

News and Views from the Armenian Institute

It has been another incredibly busy year here at the Armenian Institute, with 30-odd events throughout 2017, including the amazing concert by Levon Chilingirian, Alexander Chaushian and Karén Hakobyan at St James' Church, Piccadilly to mark the Institute's Sweet 16th Birthday.

Highlights for me have included the series on Armenian Art History at the Royal Asiatic Society, the book launch for the translation of Zabel Yessayan's works and the moving memorial to a staunch Armenian Institute supporter, Christopher A Walker.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the Arts Council for their grant which allowed us to put forward our programme "Connecting Communities: Creative Writing Across the Arts" (see pages 26-30).

Looking forward to the year ahead, we are planning a number of lectures and workshops so please do lookout for our emails. On that note, (sorry for the administrative task in the midst of our welcome) with new data protection laws coming into force later in 2018, we will be in touch with our Friends to ask if they are still happy to be contacted by us in order to give them news of events and the latest copy of this magazine. We kindly request that when you receive such notices you do come back to us either way. (The administrative part is now over).

This year's Bardez-Partez is one of our largest to date and welcomes familiar contributors and well as new ones. I do hope you enjoy being taken through the past and the present, all over the Near East, only to end up back in West London with our articles herein.

Arda Eghiayan

If you would like to contribute in the next issue please contact the Publishing Committee on info@armenianinstitute.org.uk.

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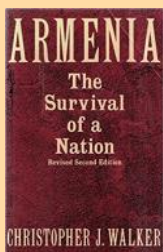
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April 24th is a date in every Armenian's calendar. Depending on where they are, some will go to church, some will protest at their local Turkish Embassy, others will place flowers at a memorial while others still will not mark the day in any special way. The question of what should we be doing on the day, caused quite an interesting discussion at the Armenian Institute offices in 2017.

As some of our readers might be aware, we organised the Medz Bazaar concert in the week following April 24th, and received a missive suggesting it was inappropriate to do so. Not just because Medz Bazaar sing some of their songs in Turkish, but because it was a lively event and people were dancing. While I would disagree that it was inappropriate on both these counts – firstly as the Turkish language is part of our heritage and particularly of the generation who suffered during the genocide, but secondly because singing, dancing and celebrating life demonstrates that we survived. I would even go further and say that we, as a people, should not be completely contained and restrained by this great tragedy that links all Armenians.

I admit, I may not be in much company in my position, but there is surely a wider discussion to be had – should we be commemorating, commiserating or celebrating on April 24 and the days that precede and follow – how long for? Maybe we should be doing all three? How do we do that? Is there a generational divide? Those of my generation growing up in quite a comparatively comfortable way, able to be Armenian, British and British-Armenian at the same time, and probably not facing too much discrimination either way, and not wishing to be constricted by too many traditions, may be more in the camp of celebrating our survival. In the steps of #turkeyfailed from last year or the '100 facts project' which wanted to celebrate the centennial of the Genocide with the facts and anecdotes that make being Armenian, maybe lively and boisterous is the way to go?

This is not to say we should not be commemorating loss – but what does that even mean? How do we commemorate otherwise – if one were to go to a wake, there is food, drink, music, conversation and memory. This is just one perspective – what is yours? Let us know. **Arda Eghiaian**

Thank you from the AI to our generous benefactors:

Richard M Anooshian

Diana and Panos Katsouris

Nyree Tanielian

Raffi Tanielian

Razmik and Violet Tatevossian

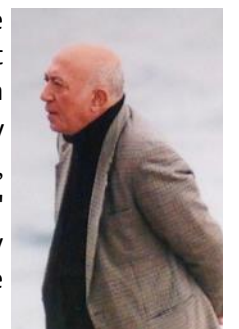
And also, a very big thank you to **Garo Medazoumian** FCA, who, once again, has given his professional time

freely to examine the annual accounts of the Armenian Institute and provide the Independent Examiner's Report to the Charity Commission!

Finally, thank you to our intern Nariné (right) who has been indispensable to AI throughout the year. We wish you all a wonderful 2018.



The AI sadly saw the passing of Krikor Didonian, a steadfast benefactor of the Institute from its inception. The second child, and oldest son, of Genocide survivors from Talas (Kayseri) and Silifke, in Ottoman Turkey, he was born in Nicosia, Cyprus. He was a recipient of a full scholarship at the Melkonian Educational Institute, a passionate lover of poetry, seduced early on by the romantic verse of his beloved Matteos Zarifian, and a poet at heart, who nevertheless pronounced his own pen mediocre early on and destroyed his own literary endeavours. A meteorologist and merchant navy man, the sea remained his home for more than two decades, during which time he criss-crossed the globe numerous times. Returning to land, he entered into partnership with his cousin, his namesake, setting up a successful chain of textile shops across London. He was a pillar of the London Armenian community, serving as treasurer of the AGBU London Chapter for many years, and a generous contributor, always behind the scenes. Fluent in seven languages, he was passionate for all things Armenian, especially literature, yet commanding a worldview that was never parochial, his lens remaining as wide as the world, maintaining an open mind and an openness to ideas and all cultures to the end of his life. A hispanophile, his favourite city remained Barcelona, to which he returned numerous times, decade after decade not least for its culinary pleasures. His was a colourful life, yet he remained essentially a private man, a humble romantic with a big heart, a quiet philosopher, a giver. The poem Հաշուեյարդար, by another favourite, Vahan Tekeyan, sums up his life perfectly: 'Հաշուեհարդար, ի՞նչ մնաց, կեանքէն ինձի ի՞նչ մնաց, ինչ որ տուի ուրիշին, տարօրինակ, այն միայն ('balance sheet' at the end of one's life - What has remained? What has remained to me from life? Strange, only that that I have given others, solely that'). A generous contributor in life, his legacy for the future also included the Armenian Institute for which we are grateful. **By Vazken Davidian**



A Jewel in the (Armenian) Crown by Belinda Kehayan

It happened again. It always happens. Virtually wherever I go in the world I bump up against an 'Armenian Connection' - usually in the most surreal of circumstances. Once it was a lift engineer shouting angrily into his mobile in eastern Armenian. This was happening in a high-rise, harbour-side office block in Sydney. I had literally come to the other side of the world only to hear my mother tongue - it felt like an aural hallucination. Another time, it was in Mexico, on a beach by the Sea of Cortés. An entire Hye family was ensconced on the beach-beds *exactly* adjoining ours. They were going about their holiday blissfully unaware that yours truly was earwigging on every word, while appearing to be sipping on a Mojito and 'reading' a glossy magazine.

The most recent example of being struck by the Armenian Connection was this last summer, in Bangkok. I was pottering around the hotel lobby waiting for my two teenage daughters to finish plastering on the make-up and join me. They were late. They are always late. To kill time, I decided to browse round the hotel shopping arcade. In fact, 'arcade' is a bit of a misnomer for what amounted to just three shops - one selling high-tech German luggage, another peddling Thai silk products and the other was a jewellery shop. The name above the window stopped me mid-step: Maison Artinian. Armenian names and jewellery are not an unusual combination. The name Tateossian is ubiquitous on luxury shopping streets the world over and the Boghossian brand now has pride of place in the Harrods jewellery hall. What I didn't expect is to find it in Bangkok, right in 'my' hotel. And here we are talking about a city jam packed with jewellery shops. Of all the gin joints....

Anyway, this episode got me thinking about Armenians and our affinity with the jewellery trade. It is said that Armenians are to jewellery what the Swiss are to watchmaking. Nice sound bite but our ancestors were making metal jewels centuries before the Swiss clapped eyes on a Rolex. Archaeologists have found the remains of metal foundries in the Armenian highlands dating back several *thousand* years.

Armenian artisans were well known and highly respected in the Persian, Russian and Ottoman empires for their jewellery skills. Some notable examples of pieces that have survived through the collapse of these empires and the subsequent revolutions are the 'diamond' throne of Tsar Aleksey Mikhailovich which was presented to him in 1660 by Zakar Sahratian, on behalf of Armenian merchants. The throne, encrusted with some 897 diamond gems, was made by Armenian craftsmen in Persia. Another example is the bejewelled gun of Sultan Mahmud I made by Hovhannes Agha Duz in the early 1730s (below). But the trade that brought many Armenians much recognition and wealth, also had a dark side. Their success generated jealousy and there are myriad stories of atrocities being perpetrated in cities like Van during the Genocide as Turkish soldiers searched for hidden gold...



Being a *voskerich* often runs in families and is a very portable skill, so each wave of Armenian refugees saw the establishment of a new Armenian jewellery business in yet another corner of the world. In the 1920s and 1930s, the survivors of the Genocide dispersed around

the world and begun to re-establish themselves. Many went to Syria and Lebanon. The Bourj Hammoud district of Beirut contained row upon row of Armenian jewellery shops. When this haven too became a war zone in the late 1970s, the artisans fled and took their skills to places like Paris, Geneva and as far afield as Canada and South America. In the 1960s and 1970s, Ethiopia's emperor Haile Selassie relied on his Armenian jeweller Bedros Sevadjan (see page 5) to produce exquisite and precious pieces fit to be presented by him to other potentates. An example of his work can be found today in the collection of Queen Elizabeth II in Buckingham Palace. Most recently, it has been reported that uber-model Kate Moss is to launch a contemporary jewellery collection in collaboration with Brazilian-Armenian jeweller Ara Vartanian. Wow! It seems like you really are never more than three feet away from an Armenian jeweller...even in Bangkok, it would appear!

Remembering the Armenians of Ethiopia by R. P. Sevadjian

At the end of February 2017, I gave a talk at Armenian Institute in London regarding the little-known Armenian community of Ethiopia. The community has been the stuff of legend, and those who have heard of it know it largely because of the *Arba Lidjoch* (marching band) which holds a certain fascination for the romantic mind.



St George Armenian Apostolic church, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Photo: Seb Parseghian

The community could be said to have been founded by Boghos Markarian, who arrived in 1866. He supplied goods and arms to the courts of Emperors Yohannes and later Menelik II, and was one of the first Armenians to settle in Ethiopia in modern times. Although there had been Armenians in Ethiopia as early as the thirteenth century, it was not until the early 1900s, when many left their ancestral homes in the Ottoman Empire and found a safe haven in Christian Ethiopia, that the community became significant in number. The Armenian Cemetery in Addis Ababa shows the breadth of origin of the Armenian immigrants to Ethiopia, starting with Constantinople, Aintab, Arapkir, Kharpert; then Adana, Van; then Marash, Sparta, Smyrna. By the late 1960s the community was over 1200 people.

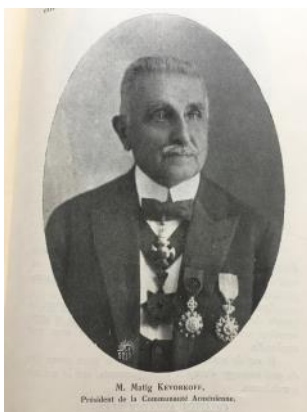
It is difficult to overestimate the contribution that Armenians made in their one hundred years in Ethiopia. From Hovsep Behesnilian and Sarkis Terzian, who made their fortunes through supplying arms to the Emperor Menelik II during his 1896 war against the invading Italians, to the numerous Armenians who held office throughout government departments such as the Imperial Mint, the Treasury, the Police Force (complete with secret service), Town Planning, and Municipality. There was a Deputy Governor of Province, an Officer of the Kbur Zebagna (Imperial Bodyguard) and a Deputy Mayor of Addis Ababa.

With the opening up of Ethiopia to foreign embassies and trade by Emperor Menelik—Ethiopia having been a closed society hitherto—Armenians, who had been the best dragomans in the Ottoman Empire, became the translators of choice at many embassies and consulates.

It can be said that it is the story of *Arba Lidjoch* or ‘Forty Childre’n which has captured the interest of Armenians in Ethiopia. Ras Tafari, later Emperor Haile Selassie I, brought forty orphans of the Armenian Genocide to Ethiopia in 1924 on an initial four-year contract to form a marching band. In 1930 under the leadership of maestro Kevork Nalbandian, the composer of the new national anthem for Ethiopia, the band played at the coronation of Haile Selassie I.



Levon Yazedjian—Chief of Police, Businessman and Artist. Photo: Alain Marcerou



The Ethiopian revolution of 1974, which deposed Haile Selassie I and installed a Marxist government, devastated the Armenian community. Younger Armenians who had already left Ethiopia for higher education, did not return. Many of those who were able, took their families and emigrated to other countries. The community was scattered to the four corners of the earth, just a few families staying on. It is estimated that there are currently fewer than 100 Armenians still living in Ethiopia. However, the legacy of the greater community still lives on today, particularly through the Armenian church, built by Mihran Mouradian, a merchant, and consecrated in 1935, and the modern school built by Matig Kevorkoff (pictured left) in 1923.



*Bedros Sevadjian 1955. Photo:
The Family of B. A. Sevadjian*

Introduction to the Work of Bedros A. Sevadjian

In addition to guns and government, the Armenian community in Ethiopia produced notable jewellers and silversmiths, including Bedros Sevadjian. Born on 21st May 1918, Bedros was educated at the Araratian Armenian Primary School and Tafari Makonen Secondary School in Addis Ababa. Having decided that the family business — saw-mills, tannery and shoe factory — was not for him, he apprenticed himself to Nigoghos Djidedjian, a famous jeweller at the Court of Haile Selassie I and a master of filigree work.

In 1938 Bedros left for Milan, Italy, where he studied silversmithing and jewellery. Upon his return to Addis Ababa he resumed work with Djidedjian, from whom he bought the business establishing 'B. A. Sevadjian' in 1946. At that point he decided to make the business more than just jewellery and received a standing contract from the government for manufacturing the 'buttons, symbols, crowns and stars for use on military uniforms', such work had been previously outsourced to French and British companies.

In 1950 B. A. Sevadjian was appointed 'Furnisher to the Imperial Palace' thus holding the Imperial Warrant 'By Appointment to H. I. M. Haile Selassie I Emperor of Ethiopia'. He also became assayer to the Imperial Mint. Both positions were held by him until the advent of the Derg Regime in 1974, after which the business and properties — factory and shop — were confiscated and ruined. Not to mention all the records and most of the important works. I am committed to researching the extraordinary work of my father. I have located more items and am piecing his story together.

Bedros Sevadjian produced many quality official items which were given by Emperor Haile Selassie I to visiting foreign dignitaries or taken as presents to countries visited by the Emperor. Among the most important were the silver wreath presented (below right) at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington in 1963, and the solid gold tray presented to H. M. Queen Elizabeth II on her visit to Ethiopia in 1965 (below left).

I am delighted that in 2017 we located the wreath and in June I travelled to Washington, together with my sisters and brother to see it. Five hundred and eighty Maria Theresa thalers were melted down to make the piece. It is about two and a half feet tall and weighs almost 14 kilograms. The wreath is in the form of two long stems of Ethiopian 'Tsegereda' roses (*Rosa abyssinica*), tied together at the base in a bow.



The Gold Tray. Photo: The Family of B. A. Sevadjian

The gold tray mentioned above was displayed in the exhibition 'Royal Gifts' at Buckingham Palace, from July to October 2017. Made from pure gold from the Adola Mines in the South of Ethiopia, it measures about 50 x 80 cm and weighs about 14 kilos.



*The Lincoln Memorial Silver Wreath.
Photo: The family of B. A. Sevadjian.*

©2017 R. P. Sevadjian is the author of *In The Shadow Of The Sultan* and its sequel *The Darker Shadow* (publication November 2017), historical novels for young adults (available from Amazon). Rubina writes the occasional piece for *The Armenian Weekly*. She is currently writing the last book in her trilogy about the Armenian Genocide. She is also researching the Armenians of Ethiopia and the work of B. A. Sevadjian and would be pleased to receive any information about them. Rubina will be talking on the last two subjects on 4th March 2018 at the Centre of Armenian Information and Advice (CAIA). In May 2018, she will be giving a paper on the work of Bedros Sevadjian at Haigazian University in Beirut.

The Armenian Legionnaires in World War I by Susan Pattie



Legionnaires Haig Panossian (left) and Ardasher. Courtesy of Armenian Museum of America.

One hundred years ago, Armenian men who had escaped the Genocide, as survivors or through the good fortune of earlier migration, were preparing to return to their homelands to fight in World War I with the Allies. Though out of danger themselves, they felt they could not stand by while their families, fellow Armenians and homelands were destroyed. Some men joined the armed forces of their new countries, while others joined a newly formed group, the Légion d'Orient, later called the Armenian Legion. This auxiliary branch of the French Foreign Legion was formed in November 1916 after long and complex negotiations between the Armenian National Delegation, led by Boghos Nubar, and the Allied Powers, Britain and France.

This story, little known outside the circles of the Gamavors' (volunteers') descendants, has great importance in Armenian history but also in the history of the Middle Eastern front of World War I, and the relations of the Allied Powers during that period. The Armenians were then a small, powerless people caught in a war that was not their own but which had provided cover for the destruction of their world.

Teams of Armenian leaders, including Nubar, Mihran Damadian, and the poet Arshag Tchobanian, went through the Diaspora recruiting men of all ages. The potential recruits needed references of good character and to pass a strict physical examination before applying to join in Marseilles, from where the successful applicants sailed to Port Said, Egypt. It was in Egypt that other Armenians joined the European and American contingents of the legionnaires. These volunteers included men from POW camps (having served the Turkish army when drafted) and residents from around the Middle East, Ethiopia and India. The largest single group of volunteers came from the refugee camp of Port Said where the British and French had sheltered the survivors of the siege of Musa Dagh. The men of Musa Dagh, also called 'Suediatsis' after a nearby village, were the first to go to Cyprus to prepare a camp for the training of the legionnaires.



Legionnaires from Musa Dagh. Courtesy of Karen Kludjian.



*Armenian Legion tents pitched at Monarga, Cyprus. 1917.
Michael Najarian Collection.*

Though the Légion d'Orient was contracted to fight only in Cilicia (Giligia), multiple changes in the course of the war and internal agreements prompted the Allies to send the legionnaires to Palestine instead. Following a long training period in Cyprus, the legionnaires fought bravely and successfully under General Allenby in the Allied Forces' campaign in the Middle East, playing a crucial role in the victory of the Battle of Arara in the Megiddo

Campaign on 19th September 1918. This battle proved to be a turning point in the Middle Eastern front and was shortly followed by the Mudros Agreement, where Turkey signed an armistice with the Allies.

Following the end of World War I hostilities in the region, members of the Legion faced a more protracted and complex struggle in Cilicia and performed many more acts of heroism. The legionnaires had enlisted on the understanding that they would be fighting against the Ottomans in their own ancestral lands, and should the Allies be successful, the Armenian legionnaires would be part of an occupying army in their homelands, laying the foundation for an independent Armenia. Like the legionnaires, many Armenians, placed their hopes of self-determination on the promises of intervention by the western powers, particularly France and Great Britain. This proved to be a naïve and treacherous belief as any hope of independence was dashed by the repeal of the Treaty of Sèvres in 1923. Today's minorities caught in the wars of others follow this same path, helping where they believe they will be repaid with security, perhaps even autonomy, but having their hopes dashed when circumstances change for the larger powers.

As the legionnaires entered Cilicia to meet the remnants of their returning people, hoping to rebuild their homes and lives, Mustafa Kemal was commencing the war of independence for Turkey. In the short period that followed, the legionnaires did their best to defend newly repopulated towns such as Marash, Hadjin and Urfa but were betrayed by the evolving policies of the great powers whose own priorities had changed. Though the French and the British had both encouraged, indeed insisted, on refugees leaving the relative safety of Aleppo and returning home to Cilicia, they did not provide the needed protection for long. Recognising the power of the new movement led by Mustafa Kemal, and having no further desire or home support to extend the war, in addition to dwindling resources, the Allies chose to establish post-war relations with Turkey. The French, whose Mandate covered the Armenian communities of Cilicia, departed abruptly, leaving the Genocide to continue.



*Legionnaires gather at the Adana restaurant of the Tourian family.
Courtesy of Anahid Tourian Eskidjian.*

The legionnaires' forces had grown sharply whilst in Cilicia with new members joining, including some 40 women. They themselves sustained many losses in battle and by attrition as men went off to find their own villages and towns and assist in their protection and rebuilding. Final demobilisation took place in September 1920. The legionnaires then spread around the new Diaspora, helping to build new communities, continuing their dedication and ideals in the creation of what William Saroyan called 'a new Armenia' wherever they were.

The Armenian Legionnaires: Sacrifice and Betrayal in World War I by Susan Pattie will be published in June 2018.

Bardez Focus: Travel in Armenia

Have you been to Armenia? Do you have family there? These are the questions I frequently get asked by new acquaintances when they find out I'm Armenian. I have to admit this feels like an improvement from 15 years ago when people used to ask me if Armenia was a country, but I still feel that I do not answer the question adequately for these outside observers. I have been to Armenia three times, 2003 and then in 2014 and 2017, but I am not like some of my friends who go every year, or often, and have a wonderful time doing so. While Armenia does rely tourism for their GDP, it was quite evident from my recent trip that the country is now trying to find new ways to encourage all travellers—not simply those from the Diaspora—to come and see what the country has to offer!

Keeping up with the Armenians – an Odar's Odyssey by Bill Hartley

September 28th, 2017. I'd arrived in a small landlocked country, deep in the Caucasus, encircled by aggressors and prone to periodic devastating earthquakes. Armenia, the perfect place for a long weekend.

It was a journey that had begun 45 years previously in south Manchester, where my closest school friend, Alan Simonian, was of Cypriot-Armenian descent. My subsequent adult assimilation into the London Diaspora had finally culminated in me joining another British Cypriot-Armenian friend, Belinda Keheyan, on her inaugural pilgrimage to the motherland.

So, there we were, following in the footsteps of Noah (and Kim Kardashian). A three-day immersion into the land of khachkars, Khachaturian and Churchill's favourite brandy. Having read Sirarpie Der Nersessian's seminal work, *L'Art arménien*, I knew that the 4th century cave monastery at Geghard and the pagan temple at Garni would be incomparable – which they were. But the real revelation was the undocumented sights. The nameless architectural legacies of the Soviet era, unlogged and unloved – fleeting glimpses through tour bus windows of bas-relief panels decorating derelict factories, of sculptural monoliths standing stark at the roadside – a treasure-trove of undiscovered architecture in crumbling concrete and characteristic red tufa stone.

Tantalised by these drive-by glimpses of more recent glories, I seized a couple of unallocated hours on our final morning, and set off self-guided. Within moments, I'd stumbled on the entrance to the Republic Sq metro station; a remarkable, scalloped-edged, octagonal aperture, framing a flower-like fountain of concentrically-stacked concrete shells in the sunken piazza below. Boldly – bizarrely – brilliant (see left).



In a visionary marriage of form and function, the terminal is configured like a ring-donut, with an access road circling its core, departure gates around its perimeter, and an air-traffic control tower rising from its centre. This is a one-off, world-class building - Armenia's equivalent of the TWA Terminal (the 1962 parabola-roofed icon at New York's JFK airport).

With similar serendipity, in the very final moments of my trip, I was confronted with one of Armenia's greatest sights. Zvartnots, famous for the majestic ruins of its 7th century cathedral, is home to a second, internationally significant, yet strangely unmourned monument: the derelict terminal of the 1980 Zvartnots airport building (see below).



It is a very great shame that, unlike the TWA terminal, it was not imaginatively reintegrated when the new 21st century terminal was built. Instead, it stands isolated, on the architectural equivalent of death row, whilst the preservation protests of the Union of Armenian Architects are drowned out by the scream of taxing jets on the adjacent runway.

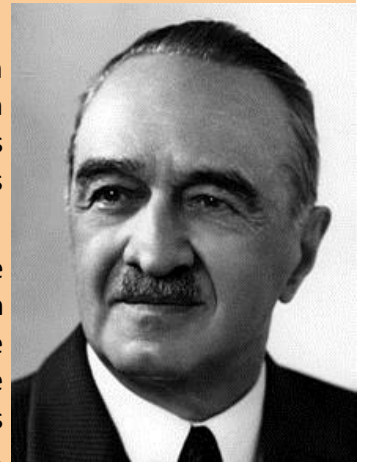
Three days after I'd arrived, I left Yerevan with a voracious hunger to return, and with an insatiable thirst, for both Armenia's architectural heritage – ancient and modern – and the brandy (which, at up to 70% proof, would certainly have floated Noah's boat).

With the 2,800-year anniversary of the habitation of Yerevan coming up, there is city-wide initiative to improve the city-scape, including erecting statues of notable Armenians; a project that has not escaped controversy.

Anastas Mikoyan – Soviet Armenian demon or darling? by Nareg Seferian

In 2014 it was announced that a statue of Anastas Mikoyan, the biggest Armenian name by far in the labyrinthine world of politics of the USSR, was to be erected in central Yerevan. However, stiff resistance from the public means that these plans have been shelved. While his life and times are undoubtedly fascinating, his legacy remains mired in controversy.

Born to an Armenian family in 1895 in what is today northern Armenia – in the village of Sanahin near the town of Allaverdi in the Lori *marz* – Anastas Mikoyan received a religious Armenian education in Tbilisi and Etchmiadzin. However, he was an early convert to atheism and socialism and among the first to join the revolutionary activities that ultimately broke the Romanov Empire apart. His brother Artem, in turn, had a successful career in the world of Soviet aviation, designing the MiG jets that partly bear the family's initial, while a number of his sons went on to be successful pilots.



It is telling that Mikoyan was the only Soviet politician who survived one way or another through the years of Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev, and died of natural causes at the age of 82. There were of course numerous ups and downs in between, and he had to manoeuvre across camps and factions, intra-party lines, bureaus, and functions before his forced retirement in Moscow in 1978. Indeed Simon Sebag Montefiore noted the words of one veteran in his 2003 work on Stalin, that "[t]he rascal [Mikoyan] was able to walk through Red Square on a rainy day without an umbrella [and] without getting wet. He could dodge the raindrops." There is a lot of intrigue and some mystery about how he managed it all, with plenty of urban legends and allegations mixed with glorification and bombast about the man.



Mikoyan is best remembered as a capable and celebrated Soviet diplomat, developing economic ties with the West, and for very skilful – if duplicitous – negotiations with Fidel Castro in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis, heading off events that might have turned into a catastrophic Cold War disaster. Such was Mikoyan's standing in the US, that he was selected by Khrushchev to be the USSR's representative at the funeral of John F Kennedy in 1963. Mikoyan was also responsible for bringing American foodstuffs, such as hamburgers, popcorn and

ice cream to Russia following a three-month sojourn in the States in 1935. His interest in food was so great that Stalin once joked that Anastas cared more for ice cream than communism; indeed Mikoyan kept the quality of ice cream under his personal control until his retirement.

However, while Mikoyan has been duly recognised for his political skill, he is also accused of organising mass executions of Armenians during the purges of the 1930s, in particular 1937, as well as of supporting the decisions to relegate Armenian-populated regions to Soviet Azerbaijan, besides opposing the discussion of the issue of the Armenian Genocide at the international level. It is perhaps unsurprising that descendants of those disappeared objected to his face peering out over the city.

Regardless of political leanings, however, there can be no denying that Anastas Mikoyan has captured the imagination of Armenians around the world. There was even a young US State Department official who broke protocol decades ago just to exchange a few words with him. Edward Djerejian, who later rose to the highest ranks of American diplomacy, recalls waylaying Mikoyan in a corridor in Washington during an official visit and impressing Mikoyan with his Armenian: "*Baron Mikoyan, inchbes es?*" [Mr. Mikoyan, how are you?] Mikoyan, curious, asked, "*Doo ov es?*" [Who are you?] and expressed his happiness that an Armenian could do well in the United States. Djerejian's response: "*Baron Mikoyan, you haven't done so badly in the Soviet Union.*"

Back to the Caucasus by Arda Eghiayan

After writing last year's article on the Transcaucasian Trail (TCT) I was very excited about volunteering to help with their summer building project – that was until I read the application form and realised my training of restaurants, pubs and picnics was not really going to assist anyone. So I did the next best thing – meet with one of the Transcaucasian Team – Vahagn Vardumyan – to discuss the background to the project, its developments and the general push for eco-tourism in Armenia.

Vahagn first became involved with the TCT project when James Scipioni of the UK-based TCT team, whom he had met in the frame of a previous wildlife conservation project in Armenia, contacted him. James explained that the TCT was planning to develop hiking routes along the Caucasus, and would Vahagn like to join and help with language, introductions and the website. This led to Vahagn joining Tom Allen and his team, driving over the Caucasus scouting over 1000km of terrain, enjoying the scenery and trying to avoid bears! Although Vahagn assured me, you were in more trouble if you came across a gampr dog (see Bardez 2017) or illegal-loggers.

In the summer of 2017, the TCT team began building parts of the trail through the Dilijan National Park (some parts of which have already become superior to the Park's own trails), with a host of volunteers under Hans Keifer, a trail-building expert from the US with Armenian roots. The days started at around 6am, with volunteers digging through the ground and removing debris until 4pm, before starting again the following morning. Vahagn said the ground was harder than expected and at times would force a change of direction so the route was constantly evolving, and it could take three hours to build one metre or a kilometre. An 85km section of the TCT is now waiting for hikers in the 2018 season, although the team need the rains to fall to test and pack the trails.

It is not just the building of the pathways that Vahagn, the TCT and other organisations working towards improving Armenian hiking trails (see below) need to consider. The next stage will include training local guides, updating sign-posts, building-up bed and breakfasts and local infrastructure to support hikers, but also

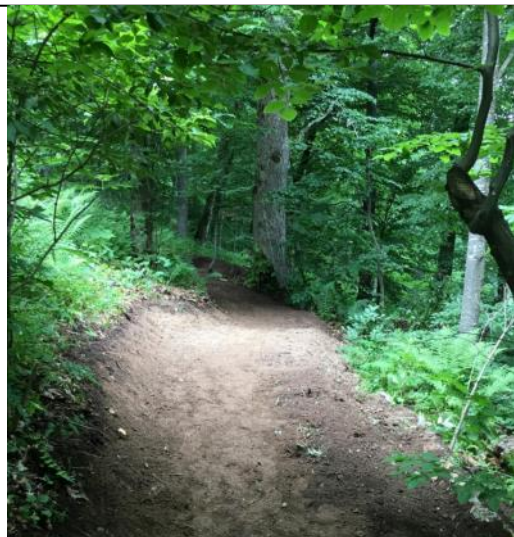
It is not just the building of the trails that teams have been working towards in the past few years, but the funding. In Autumn 2015, ONEArmenia started a crowd-funding campaign to design and create a mobile application that would make hiking trails in Armenia more accessible. The project was named HIKEArmenia and received over 200 contributions, as well as attracting other associations such as the Armenian Hikers Association in LA (which has now established a chapter in Armenia).

HIKEArmenia worked with the TCT team and others such as ARK Armenia, and released the app in Autumn 2016 featuring five trails in Armenia (this has since risen to seven) as well as local places to stay and guides. In 2017, the Hovnanian Foundation partnered with HIKEArmenia to accelerate funding into the various hiking projects with the goal of developing the hiking infrastructure and resources throughout Armenia up to world-class standards. HIKEArmenia's priorities include designing a state-of-the-art hiking resource centre in downtown Yerevan, creating a one-stop-shop website for hiking and eco-tourism, and worldwide promotion of Armenia as a hiking destination.

simply providing bins and toilets along the way, so that travellers and locals alike can be encouraged to keep the beautiful scenery clean for others.

Vahagn is hopeful that the opening of the trails will discourage the illegal logging that is currently going on in Armenia, with deforestation becoming a burgeoning problem. But also, if there is an increase in attention to eco-tourism and a growing hiking industry bringing in needed revenue, the government might be encouraged to focus on environmental matters that are beginning to challenge the population and landscape.

Currently, Vahagn is working with another organisation, IDeA Foundation, focused on refurbishing five other trails in Dilijan, including a mountain biking trail, and marking six further trails as part of the Initiative for the Development of Dilijan and Adjacent Communities grant programme funded by the EU. Vahagn has spent the past months cycling through the park and forest to map out routes and assess their current state – information he and his colleagues are processing to share widely with the eco-tourism community in Armenia shortly. Thankfully it is not just all work, Vahagn met his fiancé while working on the trails, and James has already spent a month in Armenian learning the duduk.



Transcaucasian Trail—a volunteer's experience

by Hagop Tchapanian

Following a “Fancy a week in Dilijan...?” message from one of the Transcaucasian Trail (TCT) founders, Tom Allen, I joined the trail-building team for four days. Although Tom sent a list of items to bring - tent, sleeping bag, waterproofs, hiking shoes etc., I had none of these things, just a small rucksack containing four days' worth of 'civilian clothes' and a pair of trainers.

Tom, his brother Ben, and their Armenian wives, Teni and Victoria, together with other volunteers had renovated an abandoned building into a fully-functioning head-quarters for the TCT, complete with hot water, kitchen and beds for dozens of volunteers. From HQ, it was a short distance via deep mud tracks to the temporary camp in the Dilijan National Park, situated on the top of a meadow in full bloom.



The camp was also blessed with two adopted dogs (a brother and sister), who kept us company and added an element of security.

Each day started around five or six in the morning. Volunteers would take it in turns to prepare breakfast. There was no refrigerator and no meat. All of the vegetarian food had to be kept in (wild) animal-proof

containers. After breakfast, Californian trail-building expert Hans would lead the team down to the Trail, carrying all tools by hand.



We would arrive at a site of complete wilderness - brambles, trees, nettles, bracken. Then we would work in a chain with the people at the front raking and clearing, followed by others with picks and shovels to cut the path. By the end of the day we had a trail that could be biked and hiked on. The working day would finish around 4pm. There were no showers, just large containers of water. Whoever was on rota to make dinner that night would cook and then we would eat and sit around the fire and talk or sometimes even do a pub quiz. The work ethic and great attitude of the other volunteers was unbelievable - with some labouring for weeks with only a few days off - including many with no Armenian ancestry. No one ever complained about the cold, the ticks, the food, being wet and the like. Indeed, the volunteers just seemed to enjoy the day chatting and joking whilst building a foundation for sustainable tourism.

If this has piqued your interest in hiking the trail, please see the website <https://transcaucasiantrail.org/> for details of a fundraising trek in June 2018. Tom Allen will be speaking about his experience at the Armenian Institute in Spring 2018. Details to follow.

A tale of two Armenian churches in Southern

India by Richard Mourad Anooshian

In February 2017, we had the good fortune to traverse across Southern India. Starting in Chennai (Madras) on the Bay of Bengal we travelled 1,500 km west, with our ultimate destination Mumbai (Bombay) on the Arabian Sea. Among the many extraordinary sites and memorable experiences were the visits to two Armenian churches.



The historian Sebouh Aslanian mentions that while there are some sources describing individual Armenians visiting India in the 12th century, the first significant Armenian settlements on the Indian subcontinent date back to the early 16th century. For the next 150 years, the Julfan Armenian merchants established and operated a remarkable, international trade network stretching from Cadiz to Manila. The Indian subcontinent represented a very strategic and integral part of this trade organisation, boasting settlements in Madras, Calcutta and Bombay (to name a few).

Chennai: The Armenian church of the Virgin Mary on Armenian Street is located in one of the oldest districts of Chennai. Constructed in 1712 and reconstructed in 1772, it represents one of the oldest surviving Julfan churches outside of Isfahan (right).



With no remaining congregation in Chennai, the church and its very well-kept grounds function as a heritage site. There are about 350 graves with Armenian inscriptions laid out throughout the church and surrounding courtyard. It is significant to note that the world's first Armenian periodical/newspaper *Azdarar* was published in Madras and the founder, publisher and editor, Reverend Haroutiun Shmavonian, is buried here.



In an effort to provide the reader with additional context, I would add that the first legal treatise advocating political philosophies of creating an Armenian Republic was published in Madras. Today, it is considered as the first Armenian Constitution and preceded the drafting of the US Constitution by a few years. The belfry is another interesting feature; it is adjacent to the main Church structure and houses six large bells bearing inscriptions in Armenian, English and Tamil. The bells, believed to be the largest and heaviest bells of Chennai, are rung every Sunday at 9:30 am by the very friendly and welcoming caretaker, Johnson.

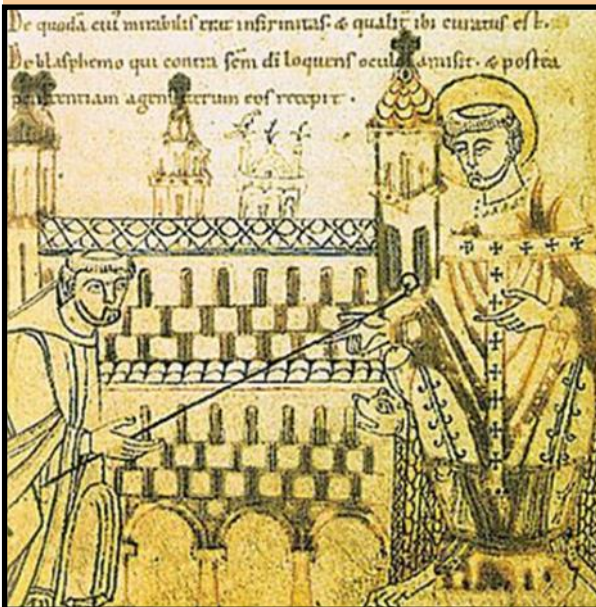
The church is funded by the Armenian Apostolic Church and maintained by the Armenian Church Committee in Calcutta. The opening hours for visitors are 9 am till 2:30 pm.

Mumbai: St Peter's Armenian Apostolic church was originally established in 1796 and later reconstructed in 1957. In fact, it was the English East India Company that invited the Julfan merchants to settle in Bombay. Once again, it is situated in an older district of Mumbai, tucked away behind the Ararat Building, owned by the church.

Today, the number of Armenians in Mumbai has dwindled to exactly one woman, and the church has no Armenian priest to conduct their services. Zabel Joshi is the last surviving registered Armenian in the city and mother to actress Tulip Joshi. She is the sole Trustee. The church is very well maintained and now functions as a Syrian Orthodox church. It is open to visitors by appointment. Visitors can contact the very amicable and knowledgeable Thomas Varughese in Mumbai.



These two churches are among the few surviving vestiges of a once thriving Armenian merchant community in India. Their survival is truly a testament to the community's success and they have a significant place in the Armenian global historical narrative. The one thing they require is interested and curious visitors. Over to the reader ...



The Armenians in the Bavarian Founding Myth

by Elmar Stracke

While it is a universally acknowledged truth that the world began in Armenia and with Armenians (ok, maybe not), Armenians do appear to have had a hand in the founding of Bavaria, as Elmar Stracke explains below.

The Armenian role in the founding of Bavaria was first recorded around 1080AD, when an anonymous monk recorded an opus called *Annolied*, praising the recently deceased Archbishop of Cologne, Anno II, in support of his canonisation. The verse, giving a general account of the history of the Bavarians, says '[t]heir tribe came long ago / from the magnificent Armenia / where Noah came out of the ark / when he received the olive twig from the dove. / The remains of the ark / are still to be found in the highlands of Ararat. / It is said that in those parts / there are still those who speak German / far towards India. (translation by Graeme Dunphy <http://www.dunphy.de/Medieval/Annolied>).

The *Vita Altmanni*, written shortly afterwards, provides more detail revealing that the Bavarians, led by their King Bavarus, travelled from Armenia to Bavaria where they were defeated by the Norixians (a legendary people from the historic Roman province of Noricum, modern South Bavaria). In the *Norix Chapters* from 1170, the Bavarians and the Norixians are even noted as being the same people who came from Armenia and were driven north by the Goths. There, they founded their new capital Norixberg, which later became modern Nuremberg. Under King Theodo, they defeated the Romans around 500AD and finally settled in the heartland of modern Bavaria.

A chronicle from the 13th century suggests that the Bavarians / Norixians were Greek settlers rather than from Armenia, however, the main Bavarian historian of the middle Ages, Aventin, reintroduces Armenians into Bavarian history. He wrote that Noah's son was a certain "King Teutsch" who descended from Mount Ararat to settle in the Western territories. His lineage becomes a fantastic *tour de force* of the contemporary Germanic tribes: Schwab was father to Vandal, who was father to Teuton, who was father to Hercules. Hercules had two sons: Norix and Baier; the latter was great-grandfather to Theodo was able to overcome Roman rule in the 6th century.

All of these stories follow a certain structure: The Bavarians came from somewhere, were defeated around 1BC (which seems plausible due to Roman expansion) and then returned around 508AD (which coincides with plausible movements during the Migration Period). However, as we do not have any written accounts for the first centuries of our era, it is hard to say where exactly they came from. One plausible indicator is the name. Bavarii seems to derive from Bo or Ba – an ancient name of a place which is also the root of Bohemia. The second part is either old German *warjaz* (settler, man – also the root of 'werewolf') or Latin *varii* (many). Indeed, in those chaotic times a large number of transient groups formed and dissolved in an area that was home to Celts, Romans, Makomanns, Alemanns and others.

But if the real origin of the Bavarians remains undeterminable, then why is the writer of the *Annolied* so determined to highlight Bavaria's Armenian origin? To support Bishop Anno's holy nature, he needed to show how the most important and powerful contemporary 'empires acknowledged his outstanding achievements and character. At the time, Bavarians, Saxons, Franks and Swabians were the predominant Germanic kingdoms. Yet, given the zeitgeist of the Middle Age, a strong biblical reference was necessary to justify their extraordinary relevance. In the Old Testament, the prophet Daniel dreams of four empires that rule the world, which were commonly identified as Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome. The author had to show that the tribes he chose inherited this divine blessing. Fortunately, chroniclers had already "established" that the Saxons descended from the Greeks and the Franks from the Romans. But what to do with the Bavarians and the Swabians? The Swabians were designated as having come from "the other side of the ocean", which might be impressive but not helpful. For the Bavarians, he needed to pick an origin that was old, well-known and Christian. The Persians, for instance, had already converted to Islam at the time. The Armenians, however, were a perfect choice as their link to Noah and the Ark was well established. With this move, he created a long-lasting link between the Bavarians and the Armenians. He also laid the base for an Armenian-speaking Wikipedia article on the pretty unknown *Annolied* which is more comprehensive than those written on BMW and Bavaria itself. And lastly, he contributed to Anno's canonisation in 1183.

Our woman in Armenia by Arda Eghayan

One of the key remits of the Armenian Institute is running language classes – both Eastern and Western – in the small room at the Nevart Gulbenkian hall. Some students attend for years, for others it's a short stint, but we do love to hear about what our students do next with their Armenian. One such person is Liz Barron, who came to the AI to pick up some Armenian basics with Gagik Stepan-Sarkissian, before she moved to Armenia for two years with the Peace Corps. I managed to catch up with her over a few glasses of chilled white wine this September to speak about language, life and blogging in Armenia.

Growing up in Belfast, and working at the BBC and across the pond, unlike most Peace Corps volunteers, Liz came to it later in life, and Armenia is her first posting. She jokes that despite the first volunteers having to defy the Peace Corps call for them to leave during the harsh winters following the 1988 earthquake, going to Armenia is now known as posh corps, as there are many western comforts awaiting volunteers.

Liz arrived in Armenia in March 2017, spending the first few months near Ararat Marz before moving to Goris where she will stay for the rest of her two-year stint. With her background in journalism, broadcasting, leadership and development, she is working with and providing training to numerous small NGOs on fundraising, financial diversification and social entrepreneurship, as well helping them with their English.



Liz Barron, Arda Eghayan and Belinda Kehayan in Yerevan

Armenia's 8th annual National Poetry Recitation Contest for school students all over the Republic will be heard loud and clear from early March until early May, 2018. There will be 10 regional contests and a national final at the American University of Armenia in Yerevan on May 5, 2018, with nearly 700 school students expected to take part.

The goal of NPRC is to enhance appreciation of English language and poetry, to develop critical and analytical thinking, to encourage self-esteem, confidence in public speaking, and to promote intercultural communication skills for Armenia's rising generation.

Anahit Badalyan, a finalist in 2016 from Syunik Marz, said, "[o]ur mountains embrace us and usually make us feel safe and warm but when I get on that big stage in Yerevan reciting a poem in the language of Shakespeare, I feel self-confident and free".

This year, there will even be a British judge for the national finals. William Sieghart, the founder of National Poetry Day will be in Yerevan to see 60 national finalists compete.

In summer 2018, the contest's organisers, Partnership and Teaching NGO, plan to launch an annual summer school for NPRC finalists. "I am excited because participants will get acquainted with the cross-cultural and mentality differences, values and norms that are typical of a foreign culture. This is

so important in terms of valuing and scrutinising our own culture and mentality", said Lilit Avetisyan, of the Partnership and Teaching NGO (left).

If you would like to support the summer school please email lilitptngo@gmail.com.



While the bulk of these NGOs are one- or two-women bands, they are all working towards civil society and educational reform, and with particular EU- and US-backed projects to help Armenians become more proactive in creating their future and holding government to account.

In addition, Liz publishes a blog – Marigold Moments – to help outsiders understand Armenia better (one of the three remits of the Peace Corps), and it is a vivid portrayal of life in Goris and beyond. She has found many similarities with her youth in Ireland, particularly the community life-style where everyone knows everyone – and their business – but also the festivals and rites that keep them together. Liz is relishing the more simple pleasures of freshly grown foods, clean air, sleeping on natural fibres and seeing the stars at night – a far cry from the hectic paced lifestyle of previous decades.

As well as this, Liz has been working with the Armenian tourist board to launch an English-language website to attract more visitors, and highlight more than the monasteries. Finally, she has also found the time and a huge amount of energy to support the National Poetry Recital Competition (see box). Started in 2010 by a fellow Peace Corps volunteer to help pupils with their English and public speaking, it has grown to involve students aged 12 to 17 in nearly 170 schools in Armenia.

So how did Liz find learning Armenian? She said that while the structure of the language is easier than English, there are some very difficult sounds (the tz and ts come to mind), and though she is comfortable with the lower case alphabet, the capitals are still confusing. In Goris, the locals speak a different dialect so there is still a language barrier, but she is very well understood in Yerevan.

I asked Liz what her impressions of the country were and what she thought might be some of the challenges and successes facing Armenia in the next 25 years. While she was cautious about offering insight, she said that Armenia had a lot in common with Ireland, which is a few years off celebrating its 100 years of independence from the UK, and not just the similarity between Khachcars and Celtic crosses. Both countries, have a rich history and ancient traditions, on-going border tensions and issues about the way they had been treated by oppressors, as well as a well-educated population, and valued family, community, religion and education. Armenia, like Ireland, will stubbornly persevere, particularly through the educated and determined women and girls, as the men will continue to move to Russia. Sooner or later Armenia will also have to come to terms with Turkey and hopefully initiatives like the Eurasia partnership project bringing together young Armenians and young Turks through sharing photos and experiences, is already creating a febrile environment for that.

Further, Armenia is poised to become a must-visit destination for those who love landscape, topography, geology and nature – as well as fine wine lovers. The opportunities to see beautiful rock formations, eagles and the odd bear abound, throw in a strong and historic culture of music, art, religion and language there is something for everyone, we just need to get the story out there.

Liz said that when she was first told she would be posted to Armenia, she had to look it up on a map, but she has fallen in love with the country – *“My knowledge is not deep but my love is deep”*.

Don't mess with my Toot Toot Posted on July 2, 2017 by Liz Barron

www.marigoldmoment.com

It is time to make toot vodka. Toot is the Armenian name for the mulberry – we have white and dark purple varieties here. The white mulberries, larval-looking but honied in taste, are the most prized.

Goris had a mulberry festival this weekend, a small civic attempt to draw tourists to our town. I went to the festival with Pat, a fellow Peace Corps volunteer, also from Maryland. Like me, she came to Peace Corps in her prime, and some decades after graduating college. Like me, she helps local organisations develop strategic thinking and management skills, and helps with branding, marketing, communications and sales plans. It can be uphill work in a country where local customers have no money, and where foreign buyers are unreachable. There is no access to Paypal or Etsy and the postal service is at best capricious. There is no way of taking money direct from the diaspora and no way of being sure that shipping will work. Everyone competes for the dollars of one million tourists who visit Armenia each year. Like me, Pat likes it here, although her two years of service are nearly over. She goes home next month.

The stall-holders do sell packaged mulberry products– vodka, wine, a syrup that is good for the throat, and jam. A litre of wine in an old Coke bottle will cost 1000 Armenian dram– about \$2. Half a litre of vodka in a water bottle costs \$3. No one has bothered to switch the labels from the original bottles. I fear for the toddler who reaches into his mother's shopping bag for a thirst-quenching glug from what looks to be a bottle of Jermuk's finest spring water. A mouthful of mulberry *oghi* is far from mother's milk.



Sitting on a haybale in the shade, Pat and I watched people eating mulberries straight from the trees and kept an eye on a game of *nardi* – the local name for backgammon. We ate pistachio nougat and baklava while she drank a tot of vodka and I sampled the local red wine. We got chatting to a gay couple from Australia. They had just come from Iran, a couple of hundred miles south of here, and they are on their way to Georgia, many hours of travel north, after a short trip to Nagorno-Karabakh, which is just down the road. “Try the beetroot with the sheep cheese” said the taller Aussie.

“And get your mulberry wine from the French guy over there.” Three teenage boys rode by on a hijacked donkey. Vodka may have been involved. An Armenian grandfather showed off his overdressed baby to this American grandmother. A Japanese-American with a man bun sampled the green beans, fish dolma and red currants. We ate cherries and talked to a Czech tourist. Ten-year-old boys in itchy vests of Armenian design got ready to dance. The duduk player blew out his cheeks one last time. His instrument, uniquely Armenian, sounds like a mix between a gazoo and irish pipes. A beautifully melancholy sound.



Trying to find a new hospital fundraising scheme - how about cigarette paper?

by Hratch Tchilingirian

Recently, while searching for an article, I came across a rather curious 1901 advertisement for “cigarette paper” produced by the Surp Pirgic [Holy Saviour] Armenian hospital in Istanbul (Constantinople) to augment the income of the hospital. Today, it would not only be scandalous for a hospital to produce or sponsor such a product, it would be unthinkable. Indeed, over the last century medical science and technologies, especially research on the effects of smoking, have advanced so much that reading such advertisements today is amusing. Another idea that would seem exploitative today is the claim in the advertisement that “orphans” under the care of the hospital were used for “quality assurance” of the product. Here is the translation of the advertisement that provides a glimpse of the cosmopolitan Armenian life in Constantinople (Bolis) more than a century ago.

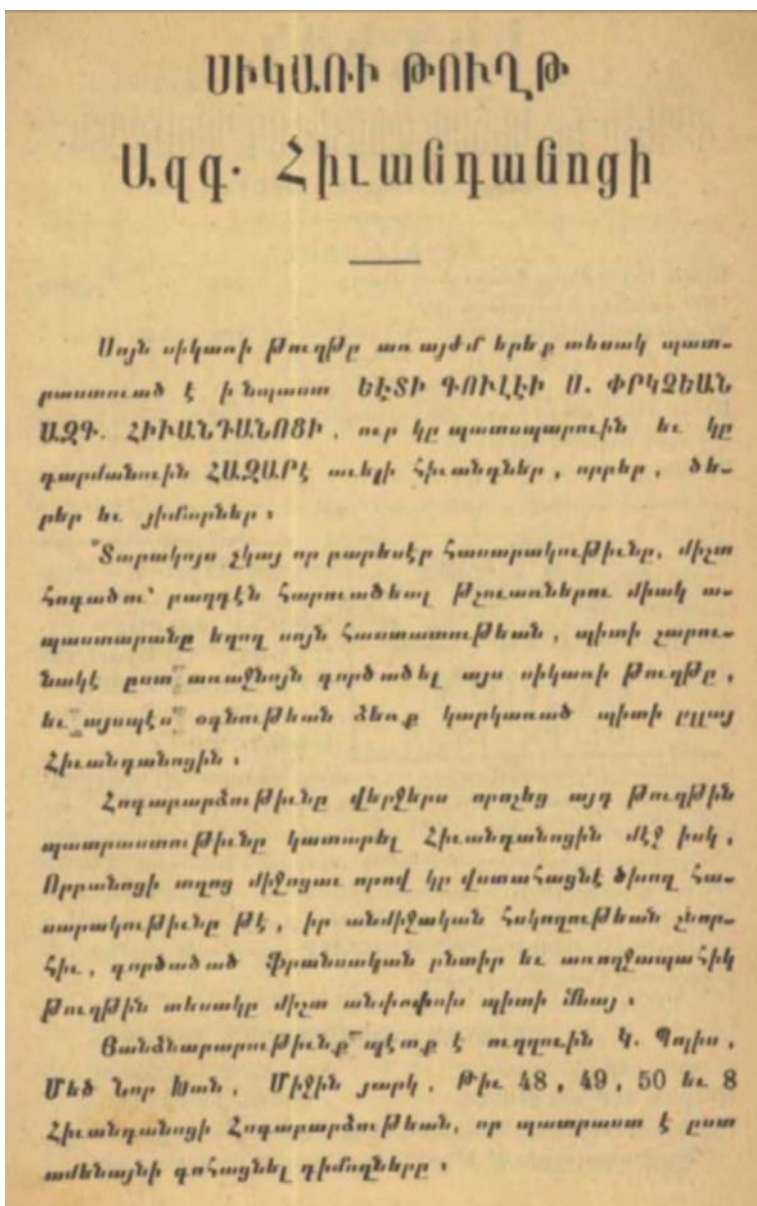
Cigarette Paper of the National Hospital*

“This cigarette paper is currently produced in three kinds by the Holy Saviour National Hospital in Yedikule (*Surp Pirgiç Azkayin Hivantanots*), where more than a thousand patients, orphans, elderly and mentally ill people are sheltered and treated.

“No doubt, the generous public, always showing care towards this institution that provides the only shelter to the destitute stricken by misery, will continue as before to use this cigarette paper, and thus, lend a helping hand to the hospital.

“Recently, the Trustees decided to produce those papers in the hospital itself. Through the children of the orphanage, [the hospital] assures the smoking public that under its immediate supervision, the quality of the utilised type of the selected and healthy French paper will always remain unchanged.

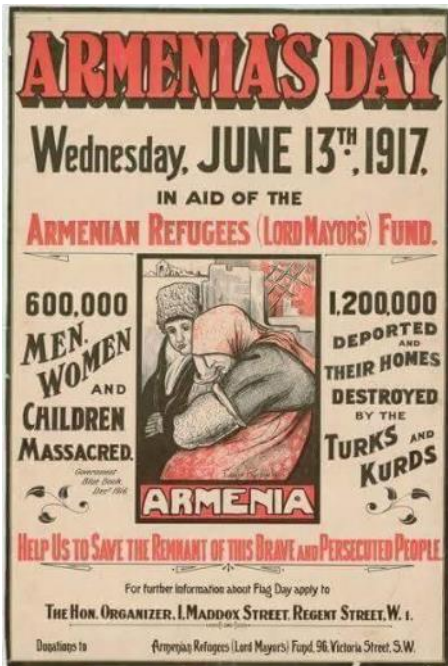
“Orders should be sent to Constantinople, New Big Khan, Middle Floor, No. 48, 49, 50 and 8 Trustees of the Hospital, who are ready to fully satisfy the demand of the applicants.”



* Published in 1901 *Extensive Calendar of the National [Armenian] Hospital*.

The Politicisation of the Armenian Diaspora in the UK 1913-1920 by Vahe Boghosian

Vahe was the head of the UCL Armenian Society, and wrote his undergraduate thesis on the Armenian diaspora in Britain before and during the First World War. He delivered a lecture on the topic earlier this year at CAIA Hayashen, and below is synopsis of his findings. If you would like to know more, the thesis is available from CAIA.



"Armenia." *Times* [London, England] 3 July 1916.

When one considers the 'classical' diasporas, they consider the Jews, the Greeks and the Armenians; merchant communities who thrived for centuries outside of their homeland. The advent of the modern Armenian diaspora following the Genocide has for many overridden the existence of the old diaspora, replacing the image of successful merchant communities with exiled stateless communities as has been evident post-1915. But what of the Armenian community in Britain before the modern Armenian diaspora? What did they do? How unified were they? How political were they? These and many more questions have seldom been asked or answered in an analytical way. My research on the 'Politicisation of the Armenian Diaspora in the UK 1913-1920' sought to shed light on these questions, while also developing our understanding of diaspora dynamics more generally, and the different mediums and processes through which this is done.

Trade diasporas are generally seen as apolitical entities, focusing on their work and adopting a pragmatic stance to business and politics. The Armenian Community of Great Britain generally displayed such properties before World War I, with a minority engaging in limited political activities and the majority attending communal functions for social and business purposes. Before WWI the community expressed itself

through these elites, they also tried to motivate and politicise the trade network before them, seeing little success in their attempt.

In understanding the Armenians in Britain and the changes the community went through during WWI, several sources were utilised, many of which had not been analysed in such depth or used in an integrated manner with other sources. The first source and the most prominent one is 'Ararat: A Searchlight on Armenia'. This monthly journal was the publication of the London Armenian community which continually published from 1913-1920, it is now digitised by the Centre for Armenian Information and Advice (CAIA) for all to access and explore. As one can imagine, such a rich source of such longitudinal nature was extremely useful in comprehending the Armenian community in the UK, as it not only included articles, but summaries of Armenian events in the UK. In some issues, there was even lively debate among the London-Armenians revealing the intellectual viewpoints within the community. During my research, other sources, such as the National Archive documents related to the British-Armenian community and Boghos Nubar Pasha's letter collection, shed more light on the dealings of the Armenian community. These sources revealed plenty about the Armenian Community, and the changes it went through during the war as British-Armenians heard news of the trauma their compatriots were living through. The source also reveals certain tensions among the very rich Armenians of the diaspora who believed their wealth made them entitled to political superiority.

Overall, the research revealed that during the Genocide, and the war more generally, many patriotic hearts were ignited of previously apolitical Armenians in the UK. The community transformed from one of tea drinking with a minority engaging in political activities, to the community *en masse* engaging in events towards the end of the war including protests and fundraising activities. Despite the hard work of the Armenian community in the UK, the change they desired to see after the war did not materialise and subsequently many engaged in a British lifestyle, leading many modern British-Armenians to believe that the community here was only established with post-Genocide immigrants. The research project was limited in its conceptual and chronological scope and aim. There is still much to learn about the British-Armenians, not just for the sake of history; but also to better understand diaspora entities, how they function, and how to best tackle the challenges diasporas face going forward.

Armenian Youth Association Football Team win League Title



A-Team: Alen Duvarciyan (captain), Adam Percival, Alex Alteparmakian, Arek Djerrahian, Ben Anderson, Flo Savvas, Garo Heath, George Burda, Gio Pilides, Gui Garcia, Ian Coetzee, Masis Sarakayan, Norayr Djerrahian, Pierre Pilides, Saro Djerrahian, Vatche Cherrchian, Rich Tooley, Matt Catlin, Matt Ohanian, Mike Tamou. Manager Nick Nicolaou. With the league trophy and a photo of Emilios.

The 2016/17 football season did not just see one Armenian lifting two trophies in Manchester, but a whole team of them – albeit in London. The first team of Armenian Youth Association FC (AYA) lifted the West Middlesex Sunday League title, fifty-odd years after their founding and followed that success with the Charity Shield in August. Led by Alen Duvarciyan on the pitch and Nick Nicolaou off, the team was undefeated in all 16 of its matches, and won the title with one game to spare.

AYA FC began playing in the Chiswick and District Sunday League in North London in the early 1960s, with a team comprised of Cypriot Armenians and non-Armenians, including Emilios Nicolaou, Nick's father, who had played professionally in Cyprus and would be key to AYA's longevity and success within the community. While some seasons saw a large roster of players fighting for a place in the team, others were much leaner with the manager being forced to join the fray just to make it up to ten players. Although, this is now a rare occurrence with the founding of a B team by Mark Bedrossian ten years ago (now managed by former A team player, Simon Haroutunian) and the newly founded AYA veterans' team (managed by Mark).

The football club celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2014, and while the actual Premier League Trophy made it to the gala dinner, the team had never won a title. They had come close in the early 90s, following cup success in the Chiswick league, but that prize had eluded them. With the move to the West Middlesex League, and more consistency within the team (some members having played every (most) Sundays for nearly ten years), 2016/17 proved to be their year.

The season quickly became a three-horse race between AYA, Langdon and NLO. With three games to go, NLO dropped out of contention, and AYA's final fixture against Langdon looked to be the decider – a game worthy of the moniker Super Sunday - but like Leicester FC in 2015 - the challengers to AYA drew their penultimate game, and AYA were heralded champions. To add the cherry on the *kanafeh*, that final game ended 4-1 to AYA – although unlike in the premier league there was no guard of honour for the players in white.

The game that gave AYA the belief that they might actually go all the way was a grudge match against the previous season's champions. Always a bit of dirty game, AYA came away with a 4-0 victory. With an inspirational captain, tight defence (the league's best) in Alen and Guy Garcia, and top goal scorers in Ben Anderson and Garo Heath, it was a well-deserved title.

The first team cemented their champion status by winning the Charity Shield at the beginning of the 2017/18 season; coming down from 2-0 at half time, to win 5-3, with a brace from Garo Heath at 3-3.



As for most Armenian teams and sports, the actual results can sometimes take second billing to the community spirit and friendships. With family members playing at different times – such the children of 1970s veteran Peter Pilides, Gio and Pierre, playing in the championship winning side – or brothers Levon and Sevag Bardakjian playing on both sides of the defence for a number of years. It was the AYA players who organised for 40-odd Armenians to go to Copenhagen to watch Armenia play a World Cup qualification match in 2014. And it would not be an Armenian team if the football did not somehow lead to at least one marriage – which happened on a team trip to Argentina. While there was no trophy to bring home, one player was lucky enough to bring home his future wife!

In 2015, AYA took an entirely Armenian team with them to the Pan Armenian games. While their success on the pitch was dampened by the extreme heat, the players and manager enjoyed a magical time in Yerevan and elsewhere (for many it was their first trip). The team also visited an orphanage for children with learning difficulties, which was very rewarding.

The current season, with the team having started strongly, has been a little bit more of a struggle, with injuries, absences and the difficulties in maintaining motivation, but there are still hopes of retaining the title. While the newly formed veterans' team has already won two out of their three matches. If you are interested in joining AYA please contact Nick on 07984 641 582 or niknicolaou@hotmail.com.



Chess: Two Levons, Two Champions.

2017 has been a great year for Levon Aronian, Armenian Chess Grandmaster, winning the GRENKE Chess Classic, Altibox Norway Chess, St Louis Rapid & Blitz, the World Cup and currently world number 2. Over the past decade, Levon has led the Armenian team to gold many times.

This photo was taken during Aronian's visit for the London Chess Classic with his namesake, nine year-old Dimitrios Levon Zakarian of Oxford who is already a seasoned champion. He won first place in the 2017 UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Under-9 category and first in the Under-10 category in the Apokoronas International Open Chess Tournament in Crete. He also led the Oxfordshire junior team to victory in the UK Junior Four Nations League, Division 2 in September 2017. We wish both Levons many more successes!

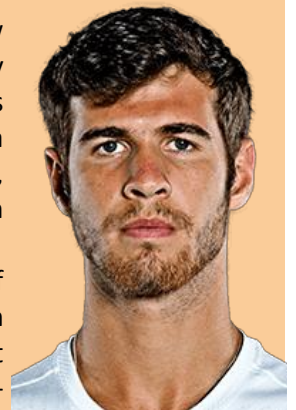
Read a very interesting interview with Levon Aronian by Mark Grigorian: <https://chess24.com/en/read/news/levon-aronian-we-should-be-like-wolves>



Tennis

The past year has thrown up two new hopes for Armenian tennis success - firstly the birth of Serena Williams and Alexis Ohanian's daughter, Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr. While only a few months old, we look forward to seeing if she follows in her mother's footsteps.

Secondly, the continuing improvement of Karen Khachanov; the Moscow-born Russian-Armenian. After winning his first ATP title in 2016, he reached his highest-ever ranking in 2017, number 29.



Following last year's recipe competition, Al is pleased to announce Liz Barron as the winner of Armenian Cuisine. Please see Liz's blog post and recipe below. Liz - a copy will be finding its way to you very soon!

From www.marigoldmoments.com, October 3rd 2017

'This cookbook WILL be mine. All I have to do is come up with an Armenian recipe that rocks. The trouble is, I don't come across much fancy Armenian food, not least because the simple stuff is so good. Most days at lunch this summer we have eaten chopped tomato and cucumber (fresh from a co-worker's garden) enlivened with purple basil and maybe some fresh dill, plus salt and pepper. On the evenings when I eat with the family

upstairs, we might have fresh steamed green beans, scrambled with an egg, or chicken broth with zucchini, carrot, onion, garlic and fresh parsley padded out with rice, vermicelli and potato. (What's not to love about a soup with three kinds of starch?) There is special occasion food of course—river trout at Easter, khorovats on birthdays, and tables groaning with all kinds of sweets and savouries at New Year (Nor Tari-the biggest celebration of the year). Much of this involves pastry, which I avoid in the kitchen, fearing all recipes involving dough. (I blame this on a scarring early-teen experience when I mistakenly made shortbread with lard, which I mistook for margarine).

I have decided to prioritise taste over glamour— always a rule to live by— and am submitting my version of Elsa's Famous Faux Pate. Elsa and her family were my first hosts in Armenia. I lived with them for three months in Ararat Marz when I was completing my Peace Corps Pre-Service Training. Elsa is the best cook in all Armenia.'

Elsa's Famous Faux Pate.

You will need:

5 fistfuls of red beans

2 fistfuls of walnuts

At least two cloves of garlic

A handful of dill

A food processor, meat grinder or, failing that, a potato masher, a paper bag and a hammer.

Salt and pepper or broth to taste

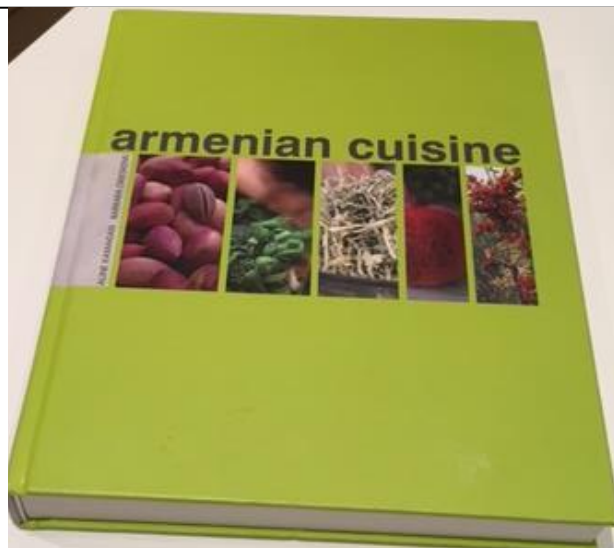
Bread to serve with the pate

What to Do:

Soak the beans overnight, or while you are at work during the day. Rinse the well-swelled beans and pick out anything floating. Put the beans in a pot with salted water and perhaps a bay leaf – or use a vegetable or chicken broth – and boil until soft. It can take up to an hour. Drain the beans but save a cup of the boiled broth. Mash the beans, adding back a little broth. Smash the walnuts into fragments no bigger than the size of a peppercorn. Smaller is even better.

Mince at least two cloves of garlic. Chop the dill finely. Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. If you need a little liquid to help it bind together, use a judicious amount of broth. Salt and pepper to taste.

Marvel at how much the mix looks like a coarse, dark French-style pate as you pile it onto a serving plate, or press it into a small bowl or two. Top with fronds of dill. Serve with warm toasted bread. Sit back and listen to your guests ooh and aah with pleasure.

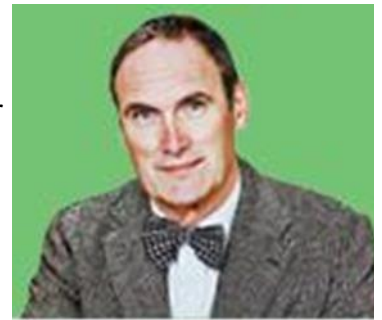


Food Wars by Arda Eghiayan

A new branch of the restaurant Yamabahçe opened down the road from me. Walking home one day, I peered into the window to see the menu; saganaki, basterma, sujuk and lahmacun all jumped out. A waiter asked if he could help; I said I was just reading the menu; he said it was just typical Turkish pide – I quipped back that most of the menu was Greek or Armenian.

This exchange got me thinking. On the one hand, it annoyed me that Alan Yau (of Wagamama fame) was telling the world that these foodstuffs were Turkish (while selling them next to an Armenian-owned Lebanese restaurant) but on the other hand, was I being a little too sensitive? After all the food was not the typical diet of Yerevan (although it is becoming that) and Turks and Armenians ate alongside each other for centuries – and then as my friend pointed out – should we not just be celebrating that I can get a good lahmacun cooked in a wood-oven on my doorstep?

I guess all three feelings co-mingle – rationally or otherwise. The late, great, A. A. Gill, when reviewing the Turkish-Cypriot restaurant Oklava (Sunday Times Magazine 31/01/2016), pointed out *“what you eat is as much a matter of politics, history and luck as taste and picky preference...But food doesn’t come blanched of memory or association. It may not be reasonable or logical, but very little of what you put in your mouth is.”* He also highlighted that it is not just me with sensitive views; *“the lahmacun, a thin, hot crisp-bread base with mincemeat on it – people with grudges point out that it is actually Armenian pizza.”*



The more I think about it, I realise that my attachment to these foods as being Armenian is more about trying to work out what it means to be an Armenian. After language and religion, surely it is food? Although, my attempts might be as fruitless as trying to define the oft-mentioned British-Values, the food always was key to my understanding. Whether that be the pride of introducing sou berek, bastarma and mante to my Irish friends while in the Armenian quarter of Buenos Aires, or learning recipes from my grandma and swapping food stories with my contemporaries. But I think the way forward is not to enter the next round of hummus-wars, but to enjoy the fact that the food of my youth and family is available to more and more people, and concentrate on making the Armenian contribution to the Ottoman Empire and Anatolia more visible.



Incidentally, my Turkish-speaking, Cypriot-born Armenian father had no such qualms. Having grown-up in a mixed community, he had no reason to create barriers where there needn’t be, and I find him at Yamabahçe most weeks.

Reader, you would happy to hear that I had a take-away lahmacun from the restaurant – complete with sliced onions and sumac – and it was fabulous; I’ll be going back.

P.S. My mother tells me lahmacun is actually Arabic as the name means meat and bread!



All photos courtesy of Zorah Winery

This article was first published by the Spectator Life website, [Life.Spectator.co.uk](https://life.spectator.co.uk). <https://life.spectator.co.uk/2017/11/how-armenias-winemaking-heritage-is-being-rejuvenated/> The Armenian Institute was kindly given permission to reproduce it in this year's Bardez.

How Armenia's winemaking heritage is being rejuvenated; Henry Jeffreys visits a country rediscovering its viticultural riches

Every 100 metres or so on the main road to Iran that runs through the Vayots Dzor province of Armenia there is a stall selling tomatoes, watermelons and Coca-Cola. I was with an Italian-Armenian businessman Zorik Gharibian and his wife Yeraz, and they suggested we stop at one. On closer inspection those bottles didn't contain Coke, it was red wine cunningly packaged to smuggle into the Islamic Republic of Iran. We went into the nearby house and there was the winemaker, Haykaz Karapetyan, cigarette in mouth making that year's wine in plastic bins. 'No chemicals,' he said. This was proper natural wine. It smelt good, like a young Beaujolais with the same floral quality. We then went into his cellar to try some older vintages. The 2015 had a distinct tang of vinegar. The 2012 tasted of old socks.

The Gharibians make wine too and from the same grape, Areni Noir, but it is rather different. Their nearby winery is called Zorah and their red, Karasi, costs about £25 in London shops. They are both diaspora Armenians, Zorik (top left) brought up in Italy and Yeraz in London and New York. They wanted to buy a vineyard in Tuscany but following a visit to the mother country in 1998 decided to make wine in Armenia. 'It was like I'd come home,' Zorik tells me. In 2000 they came across the region around the town of Areni (after which the variety is named) which turned out to be a viticultural paradise. It's phylloxera (a pest of commercial grapevines) free – though other parts of Armenia are not; there's plenty of sunshine but the grapes preserve their acidity. 'Freshness comes naturally because of altitude,' Zorik explains.

The landscape with its precipitous cliffs, caves and ancient monasteries would be the perfect setting for a new Indiana Jones film. The arid mountains are peppered with bright spots of cultivation, including Zorah's main vineyard thanks to a recently constructed irrigation pipe built with money from the World Bank. After they bought the land, experts in Armenia and back in Italy advised them to plant Cabernet Sauvignon. 'When we said we wanted to do something with local varieties people were laughing at us,' Zorik says. Italian oenologist Alberto Antonini, though, saw the potential in Areni Noir. After years of experimentation with different Areni clones, they planted the vineyard in 2006.

The first vintage was 2010. Straight away they knew that they had made something exceptional, but it hasn't been easy. In the early years they made wine in a garage. It took an age to build their new winery because in Zorik's words 'the locals still have a Soviet mentality'. Apparently in their province there is only one cement mixer. In order to make wines to their exacting standards, they import almost everything from Italy; the presses, the fermentation tanks, the barrels, even the bottles, labels and the boxes. The Gharibians had no idea how much they have spent on the project. 'In winemaking you don't do the maths,' as Zorik put it.



As well as local varieties, they wanted to use traditional Armenian winemaking techniques including ageing in amphora clay pots (karasi in Armenian). Initially they aged some of the wine in barriques, which impart flavours from the wood, but now they just use amphora and Italian botti (giant wooden barrels that don't add any flavour). You can taste the results. The recent vintages have a whole new vivacity. Zorah make a special cuvée, called Yeraz (after his wife, the word means 'dream' in Armenian), from an unirrigated abandoned vineyard 1600 metres above sea level and around a 100 years old. It's a good 45 minute drive up the mountain in a 4x4. Actually vineyard isn't quite the right word as the Areni vines are basically growing wild amongst boulders and walnut trees. 'So exciting when we discovered the vineyard. Zorik and Alberto were like kids in a sweet shop,' Yeraz says. The yet to be released 2014 is undoubtedly one of the finest wines I have tried this year.

From the Zorah winery you can see a gaping cave in the cliffside. Here archaeologist Boris Gasparyan has found evidence of winemaking from about 4,000 BC. He showed me around the partially excavated site, it is not open to the public, and pointed out the jars that looked uncannily like Zorik's amphora. He then pointed to other jars which contained traces of bones and blood probably from human sacrifice. Or a party that got out of hand.

Evidence of Armenia's ancient wine culture is everywhere. There are grape motifs on monasteries, churches and even on Soviet era buildings. I saw wild vines, *Vitis sylvestris*, growing by a river, and dotted around the country, by the side of the road, in restaurants and family houses, are amphora like the ones at Zorah winery.

Nobody uses them for making wine anymore. Nobody even knows how to make them so the Gharibians dig them out of people's basements. Armenia has lost touch with its vinous roots. Following World War One and the massacres by the Turks, Armenians scattered around the world or were reduced to this mountainous country which was then invaded by the Bolsheviks. Armenia 'caught between the hammer and the anvil', as the saying goes. It gives you some idea of how the Armenians suffered under the Ottomans that they aren't particular bitter about Russian rule. But it was disastrous for wine. 'Soviets broke the link completely,' says Zorik. Central planning designated Georgia for wine and Armenia for brandy. Zorah have an amphora made in 1957 but shortly afterwards people stopped making them and then their own wine.

There was more misery to come (something of a theme in Armenian history) in the shape of the 1988 earthquake, and, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh. It still feels like a precarious country. People half expect Turks, Mongols or Persians to come charging through at any moment. Nevertheless, Yerevan does have much of the trapping of a modern city with free wi-fi, craft beer and wine bars. At one, Wine Republic, I tried a selection of good simple wines from small producers including Van Ardi and Sarduri. Quality wine of this sort has only been made in Armenia recently. 'You couldn't drink this stuff five years ago,' Zorik says, pointing to a bottle. Wine bars, though, are only for the well off. Bottled wine is too expensive for most people.



The Gharibians aren't the only diaspora Armenians involved with the wine business. Vahe Keushguerian, originally from Lebanon with spells making wine in Italy, runs a wine consulting company based in Yerevan called Semina Consulting. They have recently set up a nursery to supply Armenian winemakers with native varieties. But his biggest project, Karas, is based largely on international grapes and despite the name does not use amphora. It was set up by Eduardo Eurnekian, an Argentine-Armenian who made his fortune in airports including Yerevan's. Superstar French oenologist Michel Rolland is also involved. The 2013 Reserve,

made from Petit Verdot, Montepulciano and Tannat, I tried was not one of his finer efforts being grotesquely overripe and over-oaked.

Zorik is fiercely opposed to non-native varieties. On my last night in Armenia I had dinner with the Gharibians, Boris the archaeologist and Marina Dallakyan and Iskuhi Manukyan from Yerevan University who are cataloguing indigenous grapes. They were appalled that someone is planning on planting Chardonnay to make wine for the Russian market. Their hope is that the international success of Zorah will inspire others to capitalise on Armenia's viticultural riches. It's a rich country in other ways with ancient monasteries (that anywhere else would be thronged with visitors), great food and fiercely proud friendly people.

After dinner Boris stood up and, glass in hand, made a toast that ended, much to my surprise, with a Robert Burns recitation: 'My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.' It reminded me of a line from a short story by William Saroyan about how Armenians carry their country within them and 'when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a New Armenia.' Zorik and Yeraz have done just this with Zorah. It could be the start of viticultural revival or, as Zorik says cheerfully, 'it could all disappear tomorrow.' It is Armenia after all.

Some Armenia wines to try...

Zorah Karasi 2013

Almost entirely amphora-aged and it really shows, floral and herby with tangy fruit. So vivid! A wine to fall in love with.

Zorah Voski 2014

A white made from bought in grapes, Voskehat and Garandmak. It's aged entirely in concrete to preserve the lemony freshness. It's just starting to take on a little nuttiness with age.

Highland Cellars Koor red 2014

Just one of the many wineries that Vahe Keushguerian works with. This blend of Areni and Sereni grown in Vayaz Dzor shows what can be done at a more affordable level with native grapes. It's juicy, fresh and delicious, like a Cru Beaujolais, and not a trace of old socks.

Sweet 16th Anniversary Concert review by Assadour Guzelian (*translation abridged form Armenian original below*)

The Armenian Institute celebrated its 16th anniversary with a wonderful concert at St James Piccadilly on 9 November 2017. Taking part were three renowned Armenian musicians: Levon Chilingirian (violin), Alexander Chaushian (cello) and Karén Hakobyan (piano).

One can say without hesitation that throughout the concert members of the trio exhibited exceptional synergy and a unique skill to relate to the music and harmoniously blend together all essential elements in order to successfully perform the given piece. While remaining true to their performing individualities, they were able to create the harmonic unity expected of a trio, the charming musical ambiance born of interlaced sounds, at times spirited and at times delicate and sweet.



The programme of the concert consisted of trios by Haydn, Babajanian and Beethoven, all three wonderful works which the Chilingirian-Chaushian-Hakobyan trio performed with accurate interpretation, balanced emotion and prowess unique to great artists.

ԲԱՑԱՌԻԿ ԼՈՒՍՈՒՄՆԵՐ ՄԵԼՈՒՏՈՒՄ

Հինգշաբթի, 9 Նոյեմբեր 2017-ին, Լոնտոնի St James Piccadilly եկեղեցի-համերգասրահին մեջ, Հայ Հիմնարկը (Armenian Institute) իր հիմնադրության 16-ամեակը նշեց սքանչելի նուագահանդեսով մը, մասնակցութեամբ համբաւաւոր երեք հայ արուեստագէտներու, յանձինս՝ ջութակահար Լեւոն Չիլինկիրեանի, թաւջութակահար Ալեքսանդր Չավուշեանի եւ դաշնակահար-կոմպոզիտոր Կարէն Յակոբեանի, որոնք թէւ միջազգային երաժշտական շրջանակներու մեջ ծանօթ են որպէս մենակատարներ՝ այս առիթով սակայն, հանդիսատեսին ներկայացան որպէս եռեակի (trio) անդամներ։ Միալ չհասկցուելու համար մատնանշենք, որ Լեւոն Չիլինկիրեան, թէւ որպէս մենակատար ունեցած է անհամար ելոյթներ, 1971-էն սկսեալ գլխաւորաբար նուագած է ի՛ր իսկ հիմնած "Չիլինկիրեան Քառեակ"ին հետ։

Իւրաքանչիւր արուեստագէտի կատարողական ոճն ունի իր անհատական կնիքը։ Աւելին՝ ամէն արուեստագէտ իր նուագած ստեղծագործութիւնը կ'ընկալէ ու կը մեկնաբանէ ըստ իր հասկացողութեան եւ զգացողութեան։ Ուրեմն, միշտ չէ որ անհատապէս յաջողութեան բարձունքներ գրաւած արուեստագէտը, նոյն բարձունքին կը հասնի, երբ ելոյթ կ'ունենայ որպէս նուագախումբի մը մէկ անդամը։ Անշուշտ Լ. Չիլինկիրեանի պարագան տարբեր է, քանի որ ան իր քառեակին հետ երկար տարիներ նուագելով՝ կուտակած է հարուստ փորձառութիւն։ Անտարակոյս, այդ հանգամանքը այս նուագահանդեսին բացառիկ յաջողութեան մեջ եւս ունեցաւ իր դրական դերը։

Արդ, կրնանք անվարան հաստատել, որ նուագահանդեսի ամբողջ տեւողութեան, եռեակի երեք անդամները ցուցաբերեցին բացառիկ իրարհասկացողութիւն, ինչպէս նաեւ՝ երաժշտութեան հետ մերուելու, խնդրոյ առարկայ ստեղծագործութիւնը յաջող կատարելու բոլոր տուեալներն ու պահանջները ներդաշնակօրէն իրար աղիւսելու հազուագիւտ ունակութիւն։ Անոնք կրցան, առանց իրենց կատարողական ինքնուրոյնութեան դաւաճանելու, ստեղծել եռակէ մը պահանջուած ներդաշնակ միասնականութիւնը, ձայներու՝ երբեմն կրքոտ, երբեմն ալ մեղմանուշ գիրկընդխառնումէն ծնած երաժշտական առիւթնող մթնոլորտը։

Յայտագիրը կը բաղկանար **Joseph Haydn**-ի, **Առնոյ Բաբաջանեանի** եւ **Beethoven**-ի դաշնամուրի համար գրուած **Թրիօ**ներէն, երեքն ալ հրաշալի ստեղծագործութիւններ՝ զորս եռեակը կատարեց ճշգրիտ մեկնաբանութեամբ, հաւասարակշռուած յուզականութեամբ, անկեղծութեամբ, ապրումով եւ ՄԵԾ արուեստագէտներուն միայն յատուկ՝ ՎԱՐՊԵՏՈՒԹԵԱՄԲ։

Հանդիսատեսը եռանուագի կատարումները ողջունեց երկար ծափահարութիւններով, իսկ Բաբաջանեանի պարագային գնահատանքի փոթորկոտ բացականչութիւններով։

Այսու, կը շնորհաւորենք Հայ Հիմնարկը, իր հիմնադրութեան 16-րդ տարեդարձին առիթով։ Կը շնորհաւորենք նաեւ Լեւոն Չիլինկիրեան, Ալեքսանդր Չավուշեան եւ Կարէն Յակոբեան եռեակը, որ այս առիթով իր տուած նուագահանդեսով, երաժշտասէր հանդիսատեսին պարզեւեց անսահման գոհունակութիւն. նուագահանդեսը ճիշտ բնութագրելու համար պարտադիր է օգտագործել ՀԻԱՍՔԱՆՉ ածականը. Ասատուր Կիւզելեան, Լոնտոն, Նոյեմբեր, 2017

Highlights of the Arts of Armenia Lecture Series at the Royal Asiatic Society Spring 2017

A Panorama of Medieval Armenian Art: The renowned historian Patrick Donabedian, Professor of Armenian Studies at Aix-Marseille University, presented a masterly overview from the beginning of the 4th Century and the adoption of Christianity to the present, on the very abundant art production in Armenia in three main areas: religious stone architecture and the sculpted decoration associated with it, painting of manuscripts (miniature or illumination), sculpture on minor architectural forms, like Early Christian stelas, and mediaeval khachkars.



The Magic of Writing: A Survey from Stone inscriptions, Illuminated

Manuscripts to Printing: Claude Mutaftian, scholar of mediaeval Armenian history, curator of major exhibitions in Paris, the Vatican and Marseilles, talked passionately and fluently about a subject which encompassed pre-Christian to modern times with images from these exhibitions. "The origins of the Armenian language first seen in Urartian cuneiform on stone inscriptions were followed in the 5th century by the creation of the Armenian alphabet sparking "the golden age of Armenian literature. Thousands of manuscripts were copied on parchment in the ensuing centuries. Calligraphy, decoration and miniatures by copyists were annotated by informative colophons and the first book was printed in 1512. Could the Armenians' passion for writing be linked to the threat of annihilation and the desire to bear witness and document?"



Armenian Merchants and Kütahya Potters in the 18th century: Yolande Crowe is a scholar and lecturer on the ceramics and architecture of the world of Islam. For a number of years she has concentrated on cross-cultural exchanges across Eurasia. She has almost completed work on an important private collection of Kütahya ceramics. "The sudden blossoming of a new decorative style on ceramic shapes in early 18th c. Kütahya needs some explaining. An attempt will be made at showing origins of designs by looking into Chinese, Persian, Indian and European influences. The presence of Armenian merchants on the Eurasian scene is not foreign to such influences on Kütahya potters a number of whom were certainly Armenian."

The Promise by Tatiana Der Avedissian

Like most of my friends, when I learnt about the upcoming release of *The Promise*, the epic film about the horrors of the Armenian Genocide, I was overjoyed that finally one of the greatest injustices of the 20th century would be screened in all its Hollywood glory and fuss; big budgets and the names to match from the director, Terry George, to the cast which included Christian Bale, Charlotte Le Bon and Oscar Isaac.



Over the years, there have been many films about the genocide, recounting the lives of survivors and documentaries detailing what happened. However, despite previous attempts this was the first major Hollywood film dealing with the subject. As an Armenian it felt like a triumph to have part of our history depicted on the big screen generating the attention it has been denied during the last 100 years unlike many of the other great tragedies of history; for the outsider it was a glimpse into an unspoken past.

The film is set during World War I, the beginning of the end of the Ottoman Empire. We are introduced to the main protagonists of the story, Mikeal Boghosian (Isaacs) an apothecary, the beautiful governess Ana Khesarian (Le Bon) and Chris Myers (Bale), an American reporter for the Associated Press, and pretty quickly a love triangle unfolds between the three while the story of the Genocide plays out. As the film progresses we learn about some of the atrocities committed against the Armenians and the fate of many of the victims.

The first time I watched the film, I was overcome by a sadness which I always feel when I read or watch anything related to the Genocide as it always makes me think about my grandmother. The second time I watched it I put aside the emotional ties and approached the film as if I was an outsider. This time I noticed the great effort to pull off a Titanic-esque feel for the film although unlike such blockbusters it fell short in many areas; there was not enough character development outside of the character of Mikael; Le Bon made an unconvincing Armenian while her open relationship with Bale is not consistent with Ottoman society of the time. Not to mention the chemistry between the characters is lacking, not for want of trying. While all three actors are especially talented artists, in this particular movie they did not create a compelling or believable love story.

More importantly, while the film covers off key incidents of the Genocide it does not offer enough information to an outsider about why the Armenians were persecuted by the Ottomans; the audience is filled with sadness for the death of characters at the end but never quite understanding the reason for all the suffering, leaving it open to criticism by those who continue to deny a Genocide ever took place. It sometimes felt as though George was so excited about this production (and rightly so), that he tried to fit too much in, eroding the impact we are meant to feel at the end of the film; sadness, indignation and the desire to go off and learn more about the subject. Despite its shortcomings, however, *The Promise* is overall a film worth watching and hopefully it might now encourage others to take the bold step and produce more big budget films on the subject: there is an audience out there but they deserve a strong plot and stronger characters.

19 January 2017

St Sarkis Armenian Church **THE MANY VOICES OF HRANT DINK: TEN YEARS ON**

The Armenian Institute commemorated the exceptional life and achievements of Hrant Dink, which ended in his cowardly murder on 19 January 2007 in Istanbul. The beautiful and intimate St Sarkis Church was the setting for an evening of words, music and image, with readings from the biography, *Hrant Dink, An Armenian Voice of the Voiceless in Turkey*, by Tuba Çandar, a collage of his words as well as recollections, reports and tributes of those closest to him with songs by soloists from Armenia, Turkey and Britain: Suna Alan, Aygul Erce, Anais Heghoyan and Aris Nadirian.



21 January 2017

Our Lady of Victories Roman Catholic Church **TRANSLATING ZABEL YESSAYAN FOR A NEW AUDIENCE** With Judith Saryan and Danila Jebejian Terpanjian
THE HERITAGE OF ARMENIAN WOMEN : CHALLENGES AND HOPES FROM MKHITAR GOSH, ZABEL YESSAYAN TO MODERN DAY ARMENIA By Anna Arutshyan

Inspired by the documentary *Finding Zabel Yessayan*, Judith Saryan and Danila Terpanjian partnered with the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) to commission and edit English translations of her work: *The Gardens of Silihdar* (trans. Jennifer Manoukian), *My Soul in Exile*, and *In the Ruins* (both trans. G.M. Goshgarian). This evening provided an exciting

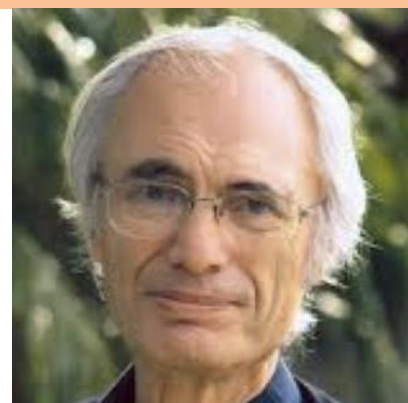
opportunity to learn more about Yessayan as Judith and Danila read from the books and talked about the process of translation and their engagement with Yessayan's work, while Anna Arutshyan spoke about the challenges that face Armenian women, then and now. A light supper was provided between the talks, allowing more time for discussion with Anna, Judith and Danila.

26-27 January 2017

UK PREMIERE OF TIGRAN MANSURIAN'S VIOLIN CONCERTO NO 2 *In the Presence of the Composer (Soloist: Levon Chilingirian)*

Born in Beirut (1939), Tigran Mansurian moved with his family to Armenia in 1947 where he received his education and musical training. His work includes numerous pieces for chamber music, voice, orchestra and ballet as well as scores for film, including *The Colour of Pomegranates* (Parajanov) and *We and Our Mountains* (Malyan). Traditional and classical Armenian music are combined in Mansurian's expressive compositions, bringing a personal, impressionistic approach to melody and color. *Requiem*, composed to commemorate the 1915 Genocide, received two Grammy nominations in 2017, in the Best Contemporary Classical Composition and Best Choral Performance categories.

26 January Guildhall String Ensemble directed by Levon Chilingirian
27 January Guildhall Chamber Orchestra directed by Levon Chilingirian
27 January Composition workshop given by Tigran Mansurian



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9 February 2017

London School of Economics **ARMENIAN TOWN HALL MEETING: THE CHALLENGES FACING ARMENIA AND ARMENIANS IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

Attendees participated in an open discussion about the challenges facing Armenians and Armenia today and the viable ways to come together and address those challenges. There are individuals and organisations already working on these challenges, but not all are aware of these and often they are disconnected from each other. The Town Hall meeting was an opportunity to connect, consider possibilities and inspire action together.

The evening began with short introductions by Dr Armine Ishkanian and Dr Susan Pattie, followed by a discussion. Armine led and moderated the discussion on poverty and inequality in Armenia and Susan focused on creating vibrant diaspora communities. A short report was produced and is publicly available on Armenian Institute website. Members of the audience were asked to discuss their experiences, knowledge of initiatives (successful and unsuccessful), share lessons learned, and think of ways to work more effectively.



11 February 2017

Putney **Tastes of Armenia (and its neighbours)** *The Armenian Institute presents an evening of food, wine and fundraising*

Cocktails – using Churchill's favourite Armenian brandy; Cooking demonstration – Chef Natalie Griffith of Natalie's Armenian Kitchen was in action; Food tasting – a lavish multi-course tasting menu; and wine tasting – Zara Serobyany of Ginvino presented Armenian wines specifically selected to pair with Natalie's dishes.

16 February 2017

N Gulbenkian Hall **IN PURSUIT OF THE ELUSIVE GOAT: Prehistoric Rock Art in the Syunik Mountains of Southern Armenia** By Tina Walkling

Armenia is home to a rich and varied corpus of prehistoric rock art, many sites being located high in the mountains at elevations above 2500 metres. Recently the Ughtasar Rock Art Project set up by an Armenian-British team completed a systematic survey of nearly 1000 carved rocks within their landscape context, the spectacular caldera of Ughtasar in the Syunik Mountains of southern Armenia. Here are thousands of figurative and abstract motifs pecked onto the dark reflective surfaces of glaciated basalt rocks and boulders. Perhaps most striking are the wild mountain goats with massively exaggerated horns which make up 65% of the figurative motifs throughout the study area.



18 February & 27 May 2017

N Gulbenkian Hall **ARMENIAN MUSIC DAY**

Levon Chilingirian, violinist and leader of the Chilingirian Quartet, introduced the young musicians to Armenian music and the day's pieces followed by rehearsals led by Chilingirian and assisted by young professionals. Pizzas were shared by all before the parents and friends arrived to attend a concert by the ensemble playing pieces by Komitas/Aslamazyan and Khachaturian.



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23 February 2017

N Gulbenkian Hall **THE ARMENIANS OF ETHIOPIA AND AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF B A SEVADJIAN** By R P Sevadjian

Rubina Sevadjian gave an outline of the once-vibrant Armenian community of Ethiopia, who, having had a presence in that country for more than a century, dispersed after the Revolution of 1974. The Armenians of Ethiopia were influential in modernising the country after the defeat of the Italians at the Battle of Adwa and the unification of the country under Emperor Menelik II. They continued to thrive under Emperor Haile Selassie I. B A Sevadjian was the jeweller and silversmith 'By Appointment' to Haile Selassie I. See pages 4-5 to read more.



Armenian community of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at St Mary's Church c1930. (Photo by kind permission of Alain Marcerou)

26 February 2017

Kurdish Cultural Centre **LAUNCH OF THE TURKISH EDITION OF WHO ARE THE ARMENIANS?**

The Armenian Institute was happy to be invited by the Kurdish Cultural Centre in Edmonton to present *Kim Bu Ermeniler?*, the Institute's children's book translated into Turkish and published in 2016. Susan Pattie spoke about the creation of the book and afterwards Nouritza Matossian presented her film about Hrant Dink.

2 March 2017

Royal Asiatic Society **ARTS OF ARMENIA** By Professor Patrick Donabedian

This lecture presented an abundantly illustrated overview of the mediaeval arts of Armenia, including architecture, manuscript illumination, sculpture, khachkars (stone crosses) and briefly the applied arts.



18 March 2017

Kensington Central Library **ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES OF THE NORTHEASTERN MEDITERRANEAN: MUSA DAGH – DORT YOL – KESSAB** By Professor Richard G Hovannisian

London Armenians were treated to a wonderful talk and slideshow by UCLA's Professor Richard Hovannisian, who had flown in for one night to talk about his latest book, *Armenian Communities of the Northeastern Mediterranean: Musa Dagh-Dort Yol-Kessab* (Mazda Press, 2016); focussing on communities on the southern edge of Armenian Cilicia, including cultural and historic information and analysis on Alexandretta, Antioch, Beylan and the Ruj Valley, as well as chapters on each community mentioned in the title, among them a chapter on Kessab by Armenian Institute's Dr Susan Pattie.

1 April 2017N Gulbenkian Hall **DANCE WORKSHOP FOR ARMENIAN INSTITUTE LANGUAGE STUDENTS** With Shakeh Major Tchilingirian

The Institute organised a dance workshop for its current and former language students. The workshop was led by Shakeh Major Tchilingirian, an acclaimed solo dance artist and choreographer. The purpose of this workshop was to introduce the participants to the symbolism and meanings encoded in Armenian folk dances. No previous dance experience, nor any prior knowledge was required. The single condition of participation was to communicate in Armenian only throughout the workshop; when necessary miming, facial expressions and hand gestures were allowed!

**1 April 2017**N Gulbenkian Hall **HISTORY OF ARMENIAN CARTOGRAPHY UP TO THE YEAR 1918** By Rouben Galichian

Galichian's latest book offers an almost complete study of the history of Armenian cartography from its inception up to 1918, including reproductions of many maps. Appearing in print for the first time are a number of maps, mainly from private collections, that have come to light through Galichian's extensive research. The final chapter of the book includes manuscript maps made between 1890-1968 which represent important contributions to the Armenian cartographic heritage.

**29-30 April 2017**Bush Hall **MEDZ BAZAR RETURNS TO LONDON;**
N Gulbenkian Hall **SONG-WRITING WORKSHOP WITH MEDZ BAZAR MUSICIANS**

Almost two years after their sell-out debut concert in London, Collectif Medz Bazar returned to London performing at Bush Hall to some 300 people. The concert featured songs from their new CD, Poshmanella, as well as old favourites.

Vahan Kerovpyan and Sevana Tchakerian led a workshop aimed at inspiring and coaching all song-writers.

Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND**4 May 2017**Royal Asiatic Society **THE MAGIC OF WRITING: A SURVEY FROM STONE INSCRIPTIONS, ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS TO PRINTING** By Professor Claude Mutafian

The first language spoken by the ancestors of the Armenian people was Uartian, written with cuneiform characters. Many stone inscriptions have survived, but the creation of an alphabet for the Armenian language in early 5th century led to a real revolution, known as "the golden age of Armenian literature". Thousands of manuscripts were copied during the following centuries. They are precious not only for the text, calligraphy and illuminations, but also for the important information given by the scribes in their colophons. Later on, printing was quickly adopted, with the first book published in 1512. This "passion of writing" may be partially explained by the course of history: constantly threatened by annihilation, the Armenians felt they should leave a witness of their existence.

**11 May 2017**Rich Mix **VARDAN HOVANISSIAN & EMRE GÜLTEKIN**

Haunting lyrical songs and music from across the cultural borderlands of Turkey and Armenia with Vardan on the Armenian flute, the duduk, and Emre on the saz, a Turkish version of the oud. In association with Dash Arts, Kazum and Nest Collection.

**25 May 2017**N Gulbenkian Hall **PERFORMING THE POST-SOVIET: MUSIC, FOLKLORE AND CITIZENSHIP IN YEREVAN** By Rik Adriaans

The fall of the Soviet Union has transformed the city of Yerevan not just in terms of its economic organisation and urban architecture, but also in terms of its musical culture. Whereas some professional musicians of Soviet state folklore ensembles these days perform mostly in restaurants, the rabiz genre that was an underground phenomenon in Soviet times has become a soundtrack for pro-government rallies. For the opposition-minded intelligentsia and young activists, rabiz music has become a symbol of failed transition and the moral corruption of new elites, while folk dance is often believed to empower the active, engaged and patriotic citizen. The lecture examined the role of music and dance in shaping new forms of identity and citizenship by discussing three case studies.

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3 June 2017

N Gulbenkian Hall **FOOD WORKSHOP FOR ARMENIAN INSTITUTE LANGUAGE STUDENTS** With Ani King-Underwood

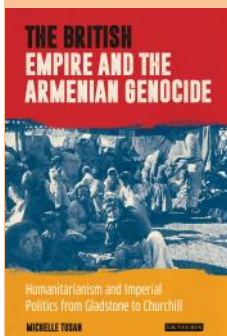
The Armenian Institute organised a workshop on Armenian cooking for current and past students of Armenian. The workshop was led in West Armenian by Ani King-Underwood, assisted by Sona Kalenderian. The only language used during the workshop was West Armenian. Students of East Armenian were encouraged to attend; if needed, help was at hand to 'translate' from Armenian to Armenian ...

4 June 2017

Centre for Armenian Information & Advice

COLLECTION OF OBJECTS OF MEMORY With Dr Vahe Tachjian and Dr Elke Hartmann

The Houshamadyan Project co-organised this event with the Programme of Armenian Studies, the Centre for Armenian Information & Advice and the Armenian Institute where old family archives were examined and digitised. Members of the Armenian community were invited to bring old family photographs, memoirs, religious objects, household items of all kinds from and materials pertaining to Ottoman Armenians inherited from their ancestors. By sharing family archives and family micro-histories with the Houshamadyan Projects, participants helped the Project in their research to reconstruct the various facets of Armenian life in the Ottoman Empire.



14 June 2017

The Wiener Library for the Study of the Holocaust & Genocide **THE BRITISH EMPIRE AND THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE** By Prof Michelle Tusan

This talk explored the British Empire's response to the 1915 Armenian genocide. Newly uncovered archival material on imperial policy dating back to the 19th century and war crimes trial held after WWI to punish perpetrators show why it proved impossible to stop the violence and prosecute those responsible for the atrocities despite the emergence at the time of the category of 'crimes against humanity' and one of the first ever international humanitarian campaigns. From Gladstonian idealism to Churchill's imperial realpolitik, the British response to the Armenian genocide reveals the high stakes and legacies of the failure of a global hegemonic power to lead the prosecution of the architects of one of the classic cases of genocide in the modern period.

15 June 2017

Royal Asiatic Society **ARMENIAN MERCHANTS AND KÜTAHYA POTTERS IN 18TH CENTURY** By Dr Yolande Crowe

The sudden blossoming of a new decorative style on ceramic shapes in early 18th c. Kütahya needs some explaining. This talk focused on the origins of designs by looking into Chinese, Persian, Indian and European influences. Dr Crowe emphasised the presence of Armenian merchants on the Eurasian scene were a major influence on Kütahya potters, a number of whom were certainly Armenian.



8 July 2017

Armenian Institute Library **WORKSHOP ON WRITING POETRY** with Peter Sutton

The workshop looked briefly at a range of formal poetry – sonnet, roundel, blank verse, villanelle, ballad, etc. – from different cultural backgrounds, and then at contemporary free verse. Participants were asked to pick out features that they like and dislike, in order to establish what we expect from a poem. They were then asked to write short poems (in English or Armenian), on both a given topic and a topic of their choosing, and to share some of what they had written.

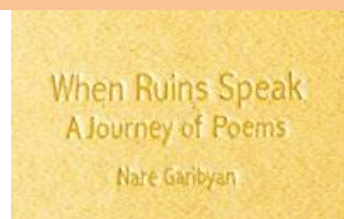


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8 September 2017

N Gulbenkian Hall **AN EVENING OF POETRY: WHEN RUINS SPEAK** With Nare Garibyan

Nare Garibyan, an Armenian-American poet, talked about her latest collection of 11 poems which capture her journey through Western Armenia (present-day Eastern Turkey) with 11 friends, in 11 days, in 2005. These poems bring together the group's attempt to discover their ancestral land and understand their heritage. Nare wrote her poems in the hope that it will encourage others to explore their own cultural elements, including the truths hidden in the dark corners. The evening included readings from her first collection of poetry When Ruins Speak, followed by a Q&A. Nare also shared a slideshow of photos taken from her trip.



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30 September 2017

Armenian Institute Library **GRAPHIC NOVEL YOUR LIFE: CREATING A GRAPHIC NOVEL FROM MEMOIRS** Workshop led by Rachael Ball



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Participants used poetic and literary sources to create their own individual, emotive and creative cartoon strips. Cartoonist Rachael Ball used her own and other cartoonist's work to explore the devices artists use to connect with their audience and to convey feelings of connections, relationships, loss and alienation.

8 October 2017

St Ethelburga's Church **VIGEN HOVSEPYAN IN CONCERT: ECHOES – REVIVED ARMENIAN FOLK SONGS**



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The Armenian Institute was invited to partner with Pomegranate Music and Dayl'ayl Productions for this event, bringing singer/songwriter Vigen Hovsepyan and his band to debut in London. They gave a beautiful, well-received concert to a select audience.



26 October 2017

N Gulbenkian Hall **MILITARY CONFLICTS AND RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM: CHALLENGES FACING CHRISTIANITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST TODAY** By Dr Hratch Tchilingirian

Christian communities in the Middle East are on the verge of virtual disappearance in the very lands where their faith was born. Against the background of the deep history and rich religious roots of these communities, Dr Tchilingirian discussed the critical challenges facing Christianity in the Middle East today, in the face of wars, religious extremism, sectarian conflicts, socio-economic decline and migration.

9 November 2017

St James's Church Piccadilly **CONCERT IN HONOUR OF THE 16TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN INSTITUTE**

Celebrating the 16th anniversary of the Armenian Institute. three exciting artists came together to play masterpieces of the chamber music repertoire. Levon Chilingirian (violin), Alexander Chaushian (cello) and Karén Hakobyan (piano) last played together at the Strathmore Hall in Washington DC at a national commemoration of the Armenian Genocide centenary. Their rare appearances together inspired a sparkling and vivid performances and display sheer enjoyment of the music and the collaboration. The programme included Haydn C Major Trio, Babajanyan Piano Trio and Beethoven Archduke Trio. See page 24 for a review.



22 November 2017

Kensington Central Library Lecture Theatre **IN MEMORIAM: CHRISTOPHER J. WALKER**

The Armenian Institute was proud to host an evening honouring the trail-blazing historian and writer, Christopher J. Walker (1942-2017). His widely-read and admired book, *Armenia: Survival of a Nation*, led the way in presenting a scholarly, broad sweep of Armenian history to the wider public. Christopher Walker continued writing and speaking about Armenians, taking every opportunity to raise issues of minority rights and concern about Genocide denial. This evening was dedicated to Christopher Walker and his work, featuring a lecture by historian Dr Rebecca Jinks and additional short words of appreciation by fellow writers and friends, followed by a reception.

2 December 2017

Armenian Institute Library **Christmas Open House**

Thank you to all those of you who were able to make it to ours. Mulled wine was drunk, nibbles were nibbled and some much needed funds were raised!





Photo courtesy of Paulina and Anna van Nugteren

Christopher J Walker (July 1942 - April 2017) had a passion for Armenian history and for justice. These came together in his dedication to ensuring that the world would hear of the Armenian Genocide and supporting efforts towards reversing its denial by the Turkish government. Walker's *Armenia: Survival of a Nation* (1980) had an enormous impact as the first truly accessible book in English on general Armenian history, highly regarded for its scholarship and research but targeting an audience beyond specialists and academics, aiming to find readers outside Armenian communities. Walker succeeded in both these goals and achieved a very wide readership. This contribution to broadening knowledge of Armenian history was greatly appreciated and Walker became a sought-after speaker.

His academic grounding was at Lancing College, West Sussex, and then Classics at Oxford University. Afterwards he worked at Sotheby's where fate introduced him to the Armenian world in spectacular fashion as beautiful manuscripts from the Jerusalem monastery somehow showed up at the auction house. By the time the manuscripts were

returned, Walker, lover of the classical world, had been introduced to another ancient people and also to Professor Charles Dowsett, Chair of Armenian Studies at Oxford, who had come to the auction house to give his expert opinion. Afterwards, Walker decided to become a freelance writer and began to focus on Armenian history. His other books include: *The Armenians* (with David Marshall Lang), London: Minority Rights Group (1975) *Armenia and Karabakh* (1991), *Visions of Ararat: Writings on Armenia* (1997), *Oliver Baldwin: A Life of Dissent* (2003), and others.

The Armenian Institute is grateful to Christopher J. Walker for his donations of many books and archival material from his personal library. In November, the AI organised an event to honour Christopher, celebrating his life and many contributions. Dr Rebecca Jinks spoke movingly of his work (to be published in 2018), noting his meticulous research, conviction and writing style. Tributes were given and memories shared by close friends traveling from Belgium, Pauline and Anna van Nugteren, historian Ara Sarafian, and community members Nouritza Matossian, Raffi Sarkissian and Hayastan Vartanian.

Christopher Walker will be sorely missed by the British Armenian community as he was a friend to many and admired by all. His contributions are widely and greatly appreciated and will continue to be part of the foundation of modern Armenian history-writing.

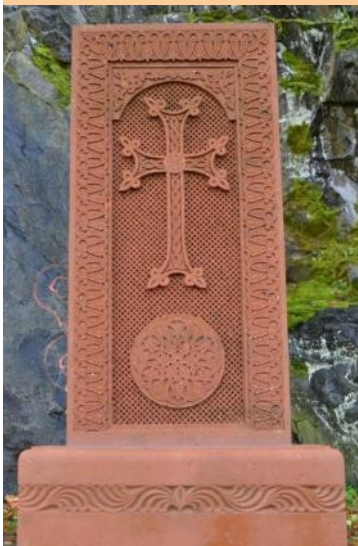
Magar (Marc) Balakjian (1938—2017), artist and printmaker, friend and Patron of the Armenian Institute, died this year at his home in Muswell Hill. He and his wife, Dorothea Wight (pictured), also a printmaker and artist, had formed an extraordinary partnership and left a great legacy in the London art world. Wight, upon graduating from the Slade opened Studio Prints in 1968, an editioning print workshop in Kentish Town, printing artists' work. As interest in artists' prints grew, she needed another printer and was joined by



Photo courtesy of Aram Balakjian

Balakjian, also a graduate of the Slade. The two later married and while continuing with the printing, also opened a gallery above the shop where they showed the artists' work they were making as well as that of younger artists. In the 1980s they also introduced "plate-making" to attract and assist painters and sculptors who were inexperienced in printmaking. In all aspects of their work, Wight and Balakjian were committed to producing prints that enabled and satisfied the artists. The Guardian notes that "Artists such as Lon Kossoff, Frank Auerbach, Lucian Freud and Ken Kiff – all demanding characters – appreciated Marc's attention to detail and his ability to anticipate their thoughts and intentions. He printed the most technically difficult plates to produce excellent results". (27/9/17)

Born Mardiros Yacoub Balakjian in Rayak, near Beirut, Magar or Marc as he was later called, graduated from the 'Djemaran' (Nshan Palanjian School). This provided him with a lifelong love of Armenian literature and poetry, something which he enjoyed sharing with friends in London. Initially Magar intended to become an architect but once exposed to etchings and printmaking, became devoted to studying old techniques, taking an undergraduate degree from Hammersmith College of Art and then studying print collections at the Victoria and Albert and British Museum. Later the work that he and Dorothea produced was acquired as part of the public collections of these same museums as well as many others. Their own highly regarded, prize-winning artwork was also exhibited in galleries around Britain and internationally. His finely-drawn pieces, often black and white and of large-scale proportions, were haunting and with great impact. Playing with light, his images were often of unknown packages, tied-up, blocked off, alone. Magar and Dorothea taught and gave public lectures on printmaking and remained committed to supporting the revival of printmaking in Britain. Dorothea died in 2013. Magar is survived by their children, Aram and Tamar.



Armenians in Norway by Hasmig Topalian

I first met Edita Balasanyan in December 2017 at the Armenian Church in Manchester. She was born in Yerevan, Armenia, but moved to Norway when she was very young. As she moved at a young age, learning the language and adapting to the new culture did not come as a shock. While her family kept up the Armenian traditions at home, over time, they have interwoven the best bits from Norwegian culture into their lives.

I was very interested to learn from Edita about the Armenian community in Norway. It's a small community, of around 1000 members who have moved mainly from the Middle East and also Armenia. There are a few Armenians who were born and bred in the country. Because of Norwegian geography, the community is dispersed around the country, and it is not always easy for the Armenians to meet. However, the Armenian spirit, culture and history is being well kept amongst all of them.

There is a khachkar in a park outside Rekstensamlingene, Bergen (left), while a second khachkar is going to be raised officially on 24 April 2018, in remembrance for Bodil Katherine Bjørn as she came from this city. Bodil Bjørn was a Norwegian missionary who was sent to the Ottoman Empire as a nurse. She was based in few places in Turkey but it was when she arrived in Mush in 1915, that she witnessed the terrifying massacres of the Armenians. She kept a diary and took photos of what she saw in the hope of future justice for the Armenian people. She later adopted an Armenian child and brought him to Norway. She named him Nansen.

It is also worth mentioning Narine Harutunyan, the organiser of the Armenian-Norwegian community who has done much work to keep and maintain the Armenians together in Norway. She, amongst few others, is involved in building an Armenian church in south of Norway. It's amazing and impressive to see such a small community building a church and raising two khachkars!

Revival of celebration of Armenian Bishop in UK!

Saint Blaise was an Armenian physician and Bishop of Sebastea (modern Sivas) at the beginning of the fourth century. He was acclaimed for curing ailments in humans and animals, particularly in relation to objects stuck in the throat. Martyred in 316 with iron combs, he became the patron saint of woolcombers. As one of the Fourteen Holy Helpers, St Blaise became one of the most popular saints in Western Christendom including in Great Britain, where, for example, he has a town named after him, St Blazey in Cornwall, and a well in Bromley, Kent, where the water was considered to have medicinal virtues. On St Blaise's festival day, February 3rd, there is a Blessing of the Throat ceremony at St Etheldreda's Church in Holborn, London, while there used to be procession on that day in Bradford until 1825 (that event drew over 1000 people). It is this latter tradition that has been revived in recent years.

14th Century wall painting of St Blaise in All Saints Church in Kingston upon Thames, UK (source Schmalck Wikipedia St Blaise)



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