

ARMENIAN VOICE



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CENTRE FOR
ARMENIAN INFORMATION
AND ADVICE

NEWSLETTER FOR THE LONDON-ARMENIAN COMMUNITY. SPRING 2017 No. 69

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FUNDED BY THE LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING & HOUNSLOW

CAIA MARKS 30th YEAR MILESTONE AT AGM



The CAIA marked its 30th anniversary at its 31st Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 19 November 2016 in Hayashen. The meeting included reports from the CAIA's activities and finances. The CAIA's 2015/16 Trustees Report and audited accounts are available to the public on the CAIA's website at www.caia.org.uk.

A special cake was cut by Chairman Richard Anooshian flanked by current and former Trustees at the end of the AGM. The delicious cake was enjoyed by all those present. (More photos at www.facebook.com/Hayashen)

Many thanks to everyone who has supported CAIA over the past 30 years which has enabled the charity to make a real difference in the quality of life for thousands of people.



CAIA on BBC One



CAIA was one of several London charities featured on BBC One in a five-part documentary highlighting the food waste in UK today. The documentary focused on the work done by Oxford Food Bank and The Felix Project in London who take the fresh food that supermarkets can't sell and deliver it to charities that make community meals, run cookery classes and use the ingredients in their cafes. The support of the Felix Project has been timely for CAIA at a time when funding for its Elders Lunch club has ended.

See a photograph from the documentary (above left) and watch CAIA's section in the first part of the documentary on 30th Minute via following link on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IY0Ufp4NDj4&t=1833s>

On 1 March 2017, CAIA was honoured to host the 1st Year birthday party of the Felix Project attended by over 100 invited guests such as the volunteers who help with its operations. (photograph above on the right)





On Friday 2 December 2016, David Farnsworth, Chair of the *City Bridge Trust* visited CAIA as part of his tour to organisations the Trust supports. He was accompanied by Media Officer Kristina Drake. Both were pleased to meet CAIA members, trustees, staff and service users. Following the visit Mr Farnsworth wrote to say *"Thank you for giving up your valuable time to see us today, I know how busy you must be. It was great to see and experience such a vibrant resource for the Armenian community, and community at large."* Kristina Drake also wrote to say that it *"was lovely meeting you all today and a very worthwhile visit, the work you are doing is amazing and clearly helping a lot of people."*

SMART NATION



On 16 December 2016 an exceptional book launch and talk took place at *Hayashen* thanks to the cooperation of CAIA and the *Gomidas Institute* (info@gomidas.org) Those present had the privilege to hear Mr Sassoon Grigorian, author of the visionary publication *Smart Nation: A Blueprint for Modern Armenia* which re-imagines and redefines Armenia's social, economic and political record since independence as well as its relationship with Armenians abroad and the wider world. *"Smart Nation"* is a must-read for anyone who cares to think and act about this. Sassoon Grigorian is a leading public policy professional in the technology space, notably commerce, payments and software sectors, and advises global businesses that have disrupted existing business models. With more than twenty years of public policy experience, Sassoon has worked for four *Fortune 500* companies; one of the world's largest public affairs consultancies; and served as a political adviser in government.

CAIA - SUPPORTING YOU FROM BIRTH TO ANY AGE



CAIA's Quality Marked advisory services on Welfare, Housing and Immigration Casework Level 1 are audited externally once every two years. CAIA's advisory services are available to Armenians and those connected to them by prior appointment on 0208 992 4621 / info@caia.org.uk

CAIA NEEDS YOU

Help CAIA to become the best charity it can be to meet the challenges Armenians face in the 21st century. CAIA is looking for new trustees/directors to steer its work forward in serving the most vulnerable and needy as well as to strengthen the cultural identity of UK Armenians.

We are keen to give the opportunity to young professionals to attend and observe how CAIA's Management Committee/Board operates to gain confidence and learn more about the vital governance role it has in for example:

- Ensuring that CAIA operates within the terms of its Constitution, and complies with charity law, company law and other relevant legal requirements;
- Giving strategic direction to CAIA via Business plan and setting policy and procedures
- Applies sound financial management to ensure the stability and solvency of the charity
- Ensuring that CAIA complies with its legal responsibilities as an employer and overseeing the recruitment / annual appraisal of staff members.
- Following through decisions and undertaking actions as agreed at Board meetings, where appropriate;
- Raise awareness of CAIA through external events / networking;

If the above interests you and:

- You are committed to the values of CAIA
- Are motivated by CAIA's work/or charities in general
- Willing to devote sufficient time to attend monthly meetings / governance related workshops
- Understand and accept the legal responsibilities of trusteeship;
- Able to make good and independent judgment calls and willingness to speak honestly and openly;
- Ability to think strategically and creatively;
- Ability to work effectively as part of a team;
- A commitment to equal opportunities.

Send your CV or for more information contact CAIA on info@caia.org.uk

100 YEARS OF THE BLUE BOOK



On Sunday 19 March 2017, Ara Sarafian, archival historian and the executive-director of the *Gomidas Institute* (London) gave an update of the critical edition of the 1916 British Parliamentary blue book, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-16: Documents Presented to Viscount Grey of Falldon by Viscount Bryce [Uncensored Edition]* (London: Gomidas Institute, 2000 and 2005). He pointed out that in 2005, the Turkish Grand National Assembly petitioned British parliamentarians to dismiss the 1916 British Parliamentary blue book – the first systematic thesis on the Armenian Genocide – as a forgery. The Turkish petition was shown to be contrived and failed. The British Foreign Office played a decisive role in this dismissal and the Turkish Parliament was allowed to go into quiet retreat. Most Armenian organisations were not aware of what happened at the time or ever since. Consequently, the Turkish petitioners were not brought to task as they might have been. The only organisation that responded to the Turkish onslaught in a decisive manner – and has remained on the case – was the *Gomidas Institute*.

CULTURE OF GIVING & APPRECIATION



Mrs Angela Rehanian, long time CAIA member (on the right) in December 2016 created the framed Crochet below in the Armenian language dedicated to CAIA's *Hayashen Community Centre* and founder Misak Ohanian. Crochet is a process of creating fabric by interlocking loops of yarn, thread, or strands of other materials using a crochet hook.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR XMAS & NEW YEAR BEST WISHES CARDS



KEEP THE PROMISE



For the first time, a big-budget, wide-release feature film complete with A-list, Hollywood celebrities and a renowned, Academy Award-winning director will depict the Armenian Genocide. This monumental film, *The Promise*, is released across the world in April 2017.

UK Armenians and non-Armenian are strongly encouraged to go en masse to their local theatres to support the film and help it reach the highest possible box-office sales so that in the future more films about Armenian history are made and not relied on the generosity of one individual as was the case with *The Promise*.

You can also help spread the word about *The Promise* on social media with the hashtags #KeepThePromise and #ThePromiseTheFilm.

Produced by the legendary Kirk Kerkorian's *Survival Pictures* and directed by Academy Award winner Terry George (*Hotel Rwanda*), *The Promise* features an outstanding international cast, including Oscar Isaac, Charlotte Le Bon, Christian Bale, Angela Sarafyan, and many more.

In the film, it is 1914. As the Great War looms, the Ottoman Empire is crumbling. Constantinople (Istanbul)-its once vibrant, multicultural capital-is about to be consumed by chaos. Michael Boghosian (Oscar Isaac) arrives in the cosmopolitan hub as a medical student determined to bring modern medicine to Siroun, his ancestral village in southern Turkey where Turkish Muslims and Armenian Christians have lived side by side for centuries. Photo-journalist Chris Meyers (Christian Bale) has come only partly to cover geo-political news. He is mesmerized by his love for Ana (Charlotte Le Bon), an Armenian artist he has accompanied from Paris after the sudden death of her father. When Michael meets Ana, their shared Armenian heritage sparks an attraction that explodes into a romantic rivalry between the two men, even as Michael hangs on to a promise from his past. After the Turks join the war on the German side, the Empire turns violently against its own ethnic minorities. Despite their conflicts, everyone must find a way to survive-even as monumental events envelope their lives. www.survivalpictures.org/the-promise. ■

ARMENIAN SENIOR CITIZENS

SENIORS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY



On Friday 16 December 2016 over 100 senior citizens and carers enjoyed a special Christmas Party at *Hayashen*. This was the 30th consecutive year that CAIA had organised such an event, the purpose of which has always been to demonstrate the respect of younger generation to their parents and grandparents, many of whom subsist on low incomes, are disabled and/or live alone.

The event was supported by dignitaries such as the Head of the Armenian Church in UK, Bishop Hovakim Manukyan and the worshipful Mayor of London Borough of Ealing Cllr. Dr Patricia Walker. Both spoke during the event, passing on their best wishes for the festive season. The CAIA is grateful for the kind donations from various individuals and goods in kind from businesses which ensured that everyone had plenty to eat and drink as well as receive small gifts. These included Katsouris Brothers for their *Cypressa* products, *Tesco West Ealing*, *JAKOBs* restaurant and *Tateossian of London*.

We are also grateful for the several volunteers who helped out with the operations of this event by helping with the decorations, serving food and help clearing up at the end.



SUPPORTING DEMENTIA SUFFERERS



Sara Wilcox from *Dementia Action Alliance* delivered an informative talk at *Hayashen* on 27 January 2017, about 'Types of Dementia, Paying for Care, Lasting Power of Attorney and Welfare Benefits'.

LOOKING AFTER YOUR HEART



On 10 March 2017, the CAIA welcomed Dr. Shahan Tamrazian to lead an interactive workshop about how to keep our hearts healthy, preventing heart attacks and getting help on time. 14 carers and cared for attended; during and after the discussion those present asked questions and demonstrated a high level of awareness about this important topic.

ENERGY SAVING



An energy saving workshop took place at *Hayashen* on 31 March 2017 as a result of collaboration between CAIA and SHINE who are a team of professional energy advisors working with vulnerable people across London, providing free advice and practical support to help people heat their homes adequately while reducing their energy costs. Sonia Dorrington from SHINE also offered help with utility debts, access to grants and discounts in relation to utilities on ways of saving energy or switching for better tariffs. The workshop was part of *Energy Best* consumer campaign run by *Citizens Advice* and its partners such as CAIA to enable consumer to get a better deal on their energy bills. For more information about this and SHINE please speak with Scarlet Sarksan at CAIA on 0208 992 4621. ■

UK ARMENIANS & WW1 PROJECT

The project has been progressing steadily over the past six months. We have now completed training volunteers, started collecting oral history interviews and conducting research, and currently are in the process of organising a photographic exhibition and putting together the project website, where the archive will be held (including research materials, background historical research, audio and video recordings, photographs, etc.).

Volunteers are the lynchpin of this project in various ways – research, interviewing, photography, website content creation, exhibition curating, etc. If this project motivates you please contact us. It is hugely rewarding as project archives will be linked to the *British Library* and any out of pocket expenses such as travel are reimbursed. Below are some snapshots from the project progress:



Documentary Photography Training

It was a cold foggy day as I walked over to the CAIA, one would imagine that such weather was unpleasant, however the light layer of fog added softness and a calm to the London morning. Had I seen it several hours later, I could have captured it. Thanks to a wonderful session with photographer Vahagn Gulakian, I can now record and remember such beautiful moments. The session, which concentrated on the basic photographic formula of (*Exposure=Aperture +Shutter Speed+ISO*) provided an in depth, clearly explained breakdown of how each aspect of the formula affected the quality and effect of the photograph. The class was filled with raised eyebrows of confusion, followed by the immediate smiles of understanding as Vahagn individually helped the participants understand and explore the workings of their camera.



Volunteers visited The National Archives in Kew in October 2016 where they learned about how to access available resources.



Video Production Training

We dedicated two Sundays in November to the art of video production, delivered by Adom Saboonchian, where we learned the basics on the first day – things like types of shots and which ones are best to use during oral interviews. Close-ups and medium shots were recommended – which otherwise are called ‘*American Shots*’. The term was coined by French film critics because of its frequent use in westerns: it was the shot where you could keep both the actor’s face and their gun in the frame. We also talked about lighting and sound recording, and did some trial shots. It was interesting to see the volunteers’ reaction when put under a spotlight (literally!) – some would be less comfortable, but some were completely at ease at being the object of filming. The second day started with more practical work and we had a full mock interview with the project coordinator Tatevik, who told the stories of her two great-grandfathers, both of them WW1 soldiers.

Oral History Training

Judith Garfield of *Eastside Community Heritage* conducted the second part of Oral History training, concluding our courses for volunteers preparing them for documenting and preserving heritage materials. We learned techniques of oral history interviews, dos and don’ts – starting from what time of the day is the best for conducting interviews to how to use your body language to make the interviewee comfortable. All those new tricks and techniques were used in the second half of the training for mock interviews, which everyone enjoyed.

Blog

While the heritage materials are being gathered, the project blog has been the place where we have kept everyone updated with our progress. We are grateful to all the guest bloggers who have shared their remarkable stories and family photographs. The blog also had an educational-academic angle for example with Dr. Alyson Wharton-Durgaryan supplying the fascinating story of Mark Sykes and Armenians, and Vicken Babkenian, the co-author of ‘*Armenia, Australia and the Great War*’ talking about *The Kut Prisoners* and the Armenian Genocide. Follow the blog at <https://ukarmeniansandww1.wordpress.com>



If you are interested in contributing to the project in any way or share your personal family stories please contact Tatevik at HLF_Project@caia.org.uk

We’re on *instagram* now!

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BEYMnrAJP-5/>

Follow us to stay updated about the **UK Armenians & WW1** project and to get involved!

Written by Tatevik Ayvazyan - Project Coordinator

ARMENIAN COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL GROUP



40 children, parents and grand-parents enjoyed a wonderful Christmas event on 12 December 2016 at Hayashen with food, dance and music.

Father Christmas also visited the event to bring gifts to all the children as the Hayashen Parents & Toddlers group marked the end of another successful year. Big thank you to all the parents and playworker Armineh Sargsyan for organising event and delicious food.

This was the 30th successive year that CAIA has organised such a festive celebration for young children, the first event being in 1987. Throughout the years a total over 2000 children have experienced the joys of learning, playing, singing and celebrating together, with many of them now fine adults/professionals with children of their own.

+

ACPG operates Monday and Thursdays each week from 10:00am-12:30pm and welcomes children under 5 years of age. The attendance fee is £3 per session payable on the day or £5 for two children from the same family inclusive of snacks.

HAYC GO KARTING FUN DAY



On 26 October 2016, HAYC took 50 young people for a Fun Day of Go-Karting at Brentwood. The day started from 9am with full of energy and excitement, travelling by coach with laughter, listening to Armenian music and why not a little bit of dancing. On our arrival we were greeted by the lovely staff at the centre that gave a health and safety presentation to the youth and special driving uniforms. The youth competed against each other several times safely and securely over the next several hours and couldn't wait for their turn. Everyone also shared pizzas together and ate a special cake to mark the birthday of our lovely youth Sacko. (Photo below) The day was a great way to celebrate his birthday with everyone present.

Everyone had an amazing and unforgettable day with their friends which culminated with the now traditional group photo. (Below) We thank everyone who helped with the success of the day, in particular the support of the BBC Children In Need.



INTRODUCTION TO ARMENIAN HISTORY, CULTURE & HERITAGE

The first speaker of CAIA's annual series of lectures about *Armenian History, Culture and Heritage* at *Hayashen* took place on 12 February 2017, with Vahe Boghossian speaking about *The UK Armenian Diaspora during WW1*. Vahe's presentation was based on his dissertation while at University. You can read a summary analysis by Vahe's on CAIA's blog at: <https://ukarmeniansandww1.wordpress.com/2017/01/19/the-uk-armenian-diaspora-1913-1919/>



Dr. Becky Jinks, (below) a Lecturer in *Holocaust Studies* at *Royal Holloway, University of London* explored *Karen Jeppe's* humanitarian work amongst the Armenian refugees in Aleppo after the genocide on 19 February 2017. Her talk focused on the rescue of Armenians living in Arab and Muslim households which *Karen Jeppe* undertook for the *League of Nations*, her work in the refugee camps of Aleppo, and her efforts to start agricultural villages to settle Armenian survivors permanently. All of this was discussed via extraordinary photographs and film displayed throughout her talk.



Alyson Wharton-Durgaryan, a Lecturer in the *School of History & Heritage* at the *University of Lincoln* spoke about *Armenian Architects and their role in the reconstruction of the Ottoman Urban environment in the late 19th Century* on 26 February 2017. During her 90-minutes *PowerPoint* presentation she discussed the work of Armenian architects in *Istanbul* and Eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire within the context of the social-political changes it was going through.



On 5 March 2017, *Sabby Sagall* (above), a full-time writer and former Senior Lecturer in Sociology at the *University of East London* spoke at *Hayashen* about the historical context and motivation of the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide. He is the author of the book "*Final Solutions – Human Nature, Capitalism and Genocide*".



On 12 March 2017, a documentary film made by John Lubbock, entitled *2015 - 100 Years Later* was screened followed by Q & A with the Director. The film made in April 2015, on the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide followed the work of UK-based historian *Ara Sarafian* in Eastern Turkey and his attempt to explore how reconciliation can be achieved through working with civil society groups and local people. The film can be viewed on <https://vimeo.com/159897601>



Doireann Cooney, the current *Caucasus Programme Officer* at *Conciliation Resources* working on an EU project aimed at contributing to the peaceful settlement of the conflict around *Nagorny Karabakh (Artsakh)* spoke at *Hayashen* on 19 March 2017. *Conciliation Resources* is a London-based charity which seeks to work with people in areas of the world affected by conflict to bring about peace. For more information visit www.c-r.org

This series "*Introduction to Armenian History, Culture & Heritage*" was supported by *Ealing Council's Adult Education Department* for which we are grateful. ■

HAYASHEN YOUTH CLUB

In October 2016, CAIA welcomed Elen Zakaryan as the new *Hayashen Armenian Youth Club (HAYC)* worker. Elen took over the excellent work carried out before her by Argam Shahenian.



On 18 November 2016, Martin Curtis, the Director of Residential Centres from *London Youth*, visited HAYC and gave an excellent talk about the residential centres *London Youth* run such *Woodrow High* and *Hindleap Warren*. The youth at HAYC were very excited, sharing their past experiences and fond memories from past residencials and asked some very interesting questions to Martin who was happy to reply to all of them. We are happy to announce that HAYC will be organising another residential in 2017.



HAYC held its annual Christmas Party on Saturday 10 December 2016, with over 50 young people taking part. The evening consisted of food, games and great dancing music by DJ Vartan.

The main aim of the party was to bring together dispersed young Armenians across London who do not normally have the opportunity to socialise, interact and celebrate together as they are always busy with schoolwork, part-time jobs and other family commitments. The success of the event was down to volunteers who helped with the decorations, food and helping clear up at the end.

On 13 January 2017, 13-year old Gregory Barseghyan volunteered to organise an acting workshop at HAYC. The young people had a wonderful time coming up with their own play in matters of minutes which was a lot of fun.

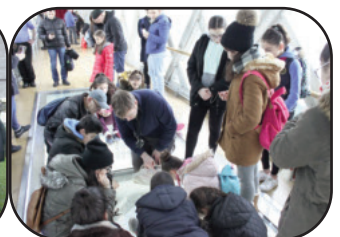
A movie night took place at HAYC on 27 January 2017. After a lot of discussion, the young people decided to watch *'Night at the Museum'* and afterwards over food had a great discussion about the plot, acting techniques and the characters. Some of the themes from the movie which impressed the young people included loyalty, friendship and teamwork during times of adversity.



On 3 February 2017, HAYC held a very entertaining, educational and interactive session thanks to guest speaker Taline Filipovic. Taline is a student at *Queen Mary University of London* where she studies Business Management. Taline talked via PowerPoint presentation to the youth about the Armenian experience past and present drawing on her own family history as to how they first settled in Ethiopia and subsequently in Croatia. The presentation ended with a very interesting quiz which the youth loved and participated enthusiastically.



On 15 February 2017, during half term holiday 25 young Armenians from HAYC enjoyed a guided tour of one of the most famous bridges in the world, the iconic *Tower Bridge* where they enjoyed the spectacular views and glass floor overlooking the river Thames and learned its history from an exhibition and original Victorian Engine Rooms. The trip was made possible thanks to a small grant from the *J Petchy Foundation* and entry tickets kindly provided by the *City Bridge Trust*. At the end of the afternoon the group was also rewarded with a surprise brief visit to *City Hall*. The youth visited the main *London Assembly* hall where the Mayor of London and Assembly members hold their meetings to make decisions impacting all Londoners.



HAYC VISIT TO THEATRE



On 22 February 2017 over 50 young people enjoyed *WICKED*, the West End musical phenomenon that tells the incredible untold story of the *Witches of Oz* at the *Apollo Victoria Theatre*. For many of the young people aged 10-17 this was the first time ever visit to a London Theatre musical which they thoroughly enjoyed.



On 24 February, the HAYC session took place in Hayashen Library when Elen Zakaryan talked about *Social Intelligence and Communication between humans and different primates*. The young people enjoyed the workshop and were eager to find out more. They particularly enjoyed watching video about an amazing story a gorilla called *Koko* who was able to talk in sign language.

GREGORY - A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL



13-Year-old Gregory Barseghyan was presented with a *Jack Petchey Foundation Award* for his outstanding achievements by CAIA Youth Worker Elen Zakaryan on 13 January 2017. Gregory was recognised for his achievements in participating in various drama clubs, excellent academic record at school and organising and leading a *Brain Gym* session at the HAYC in 2016. While attending 'Make a Play in a Week' youth drama course at Roundhouse, Gregory wrote, staged and acted in a sketch about the Armenian Genocide, raising awareness about the issue and connecting it with the current refugee crisis and our social responsibility about it. His hardworking and positive attitude is something to be very proud of and positive role model to other youth.

BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK AT HAYASHEN



On 17 March 2017, HAYC organised a special workshop as part of *British Science Week 2017*. A representative from "Science Wizards" demonstrated several enjoyable interactive educational experiments to an excited audience of 20 young people.



PHENOMENON OF MESROP MASHTOTS, AS A SYMBOL OF THE ETERNITY OF THE ARMENIAN NATION AND HIS ROLE FOR HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE

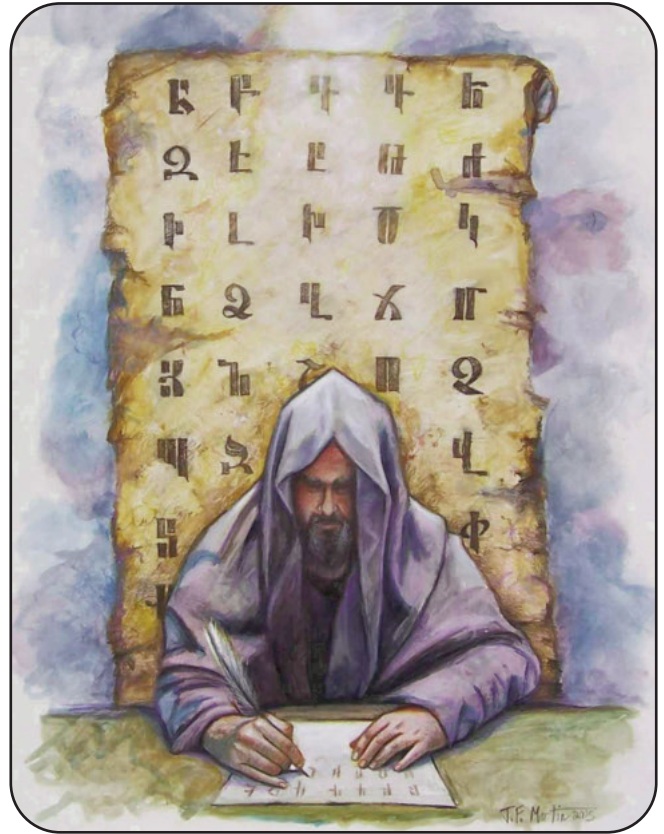
Armenia is an ancient country, the contemporary of Greece, ancient Rome, Babylon, with the ancient cultural roots, extending over thousands of years.

The famous Armenian writer, Gevorg Emin said: *"Centuries come and pass in the life of Armenian people. Yet centuries come without passing. They have remained as a cuneiform records monuments and destroyed fortress. By looking at them, it is possible for us to become familiar with the history of the Armenian Land and Armenian people."* It is not accidental, that English poet Lord Byron has compared Armenia to *"An open air museum, where one will be able to study the centuries old history of the Armenian people starting from the legendary ARK of NOAH, without using a textbook..."* Lord Byron has rightly stated that *"There is no country on earth filled with so many wonders than the Land of Armenia."* Or the greatest contemporary painter Rockwell Kent, has stated that *"If I were asked were on the planet most of the miracles happen, I would mention first and foremost the name of Armenia..."*, then he continued his thought *"One is astonished witnessing in a small corner of the world such magnificent monuments and talented figures who could be worthy of the pride and admiration of the entire world..."*

There are many wonders in this earth: the valley of pyramids, the coliseum of ancient Rome, *Hanging Gardens of Babylon*, *Statue of Zeus at Olympia*, and many others. In Armenia, among of many wonders, is *Matenadaran* – a Museum of ancient books and manuscripts that were collected from around the world. The Museum bears the name of the learned priest *Mesrop Mashtots*.

Sixteen centuries ago, at the beginning of the fifth century, in 405, *Mesrop Mashtots* discovered the Armenian alphabet. The invention of the Armenian alphabet was the most powerful factor in the national spirit; it strengthen the Armenian nation in the most difficult period. In 387, Armenia lost its independence and was divided between the *Byzantine Empire* and *Persia*. Loss of civil independence could destroy whole nation. The Armenian language did not have an alphabet. Before the fifth century Armenians had spoken language, but it was not written. The Armenian language and alphabet, were destroyed during the establishment of Christianity in Armenia. Armenian language, along with many other temples, scriptures, books and anything that reminded the early Christians of pagan past, was destroyed and, as a sign of 'paganism' regarded as unholy. Most of Armenian schools were using other language, such as Greek and Syriac. For preaching mass and worships, and for other Christian ceremonies, were using the Greek language which was regarded as the official language for the Royal Court. Armenia stand against the possibility assimilation and melting into Iran and *Byzantium*. *Mesrop Mashtots* saw the potential danger that could turn the Armenian nation into a disastrous situation. The discovery of the Armenian alphabet was the great need and would become the only unifying force for all Armenian nation against foreign assimilation and would make Armenia a distinct nation. *Mashtots* took the responsibility of revival of the common Armenian language.

In 394, the Armenian King *Vramshapuh*, who succeeded his brother *Khosrov IV* in 389, with the support of Patriarch *Isaac*, and with help of blessing of Armenian's *Catholicos, Sahak Partev*, a supreme head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, commissioned *Mesrop Mashtots* to create an Armenian Alphabet. *Mashtots* traveled in many regions to research. After much



searching and traveling, hereturned to *Vagharshapat*, commonly known as one of the historic capitals of Armenia, the spiritual center of the entire Armenian nation. After embracing Christianity, in 301, *Vagharshapat* was called *Echmiadsin*, after the name of the Mother Cathedral, the seat of the Armenian Catholicosate. When *Mashtots* returned to *Echmiadsin* with a copy of the divine alphabet, he was warmly welcomed, with great joy and honor by both the Armenian King *Vramchapuh Arshakouni* and *Catholicos Sahag Partev*. The invention of the 36 letters of the Armenian alphabet, was the most powerful factor in the spirit of the Armenian nation. It separated the Armenians from the other nations and made Armenia a distinct nation. In the twelfth century two more letters *O* and *F* were added: There are traditional name for each letter. In 405 *Mashtots* discovered the Armenian alphabet and became the founder of the Armenian bibliography, the first Armenian translator, and the founder of the Armenian schools. Many translations were made among which the translation of the Holy Bible from the Greek and Syriac into the new script, was the first. The *Mashtots*' translation of the Bible was so successful that the famous French orientalist *M. Lacrosse* has rightly called it *"The Queen of all the translations"* The first sentence in Armenian language written down by *Mashtots* after he invented the letters is said to be the opening line of *Solomon's Book of Proverbs*.

To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding...
Book of Proverbs 1:2

Further spread of the new alphabet, was laid for the Armenian philosophy, science and art. Following the discovery of the new alphabet, the golden age of classical Armenian literature began; the fifth century went down into the history of the Armenian nation as a Golden Age. *Mesrop* founded many schools, and himself taught the new alphabet. Many students of *Mashtots* became prominent writers, translators and historians. His most talented students and followers were *Eznik, Eghisheh, Movses, David and Vardan, Movses Khorenatsi, Koriun*, who wrote *Mashtots*' life, the book called *The Life of Mashtots* and many others.

The splendid discovery also resulted in the establishment in the fifth century of the Museum, internationally known remarkable edifice. Today The *Matenadaran Library* – Museum in the capital of Armenia, in Yerevan, is a huge depository of ancient books and manuscripts that were collected from around the world. It is not just another Library, it is a priceless collection of rarities, a symbol of Armenia, a pantheon of its thoughts, and a monument to its courage. Many books in *Matenadaran* include many works of ancient Greek, Armenian, Roman and other ancient nation philosophers and historians. Many of them are ancient Armenian translations and copies of the original works. Yet, they are remarkable, because the originals were lost forever and those translations are now considered to be the only source in the whole world. The Museum bears the name of *Mesrop Mashtots*. Linguist, theologian, hymnologist and statesman, *Mesrop Mashtots* is listed officially in the Roman Martyrology of the Roman Catholic Church. *Mesrop Mashtots* was born in 362 AD and passed away on February 17th in the year 440. He was buried in town *Oshakan*, where the cathedral was later built in his memory. His tomb in *Oshakan* to this day remains a place of pilgrimage for all Armenians over the world. They come to pay their respect to the great Armenian scholar, who created an Armenian Alphabet and thus, securing forever the eternity of the Armenian nation. *Mesrop Mashtots's* discovery of the 36 letters of the Armenian alphabet stood the test of centuries and became the bulwark of the nation unit and identity of the Armenian people. The Great Scholar gave the Armenian nation the most valuable of gifts: Armenian cultural independence, revival of the common Armenian language, and, thus, strengthened the national spirit. Armenia was the first country that adopted Christianity as its official state religion in the early fourth century, in 301 AD. At the beginning of the fifth century, in 405, *Mesrop Mashtots's* translation of the Holy Bible, proved a powerful factor in Armenia - laid the foundation of a national Armenian liturgy and strengthened the Armenian nation in the Christian Faith.

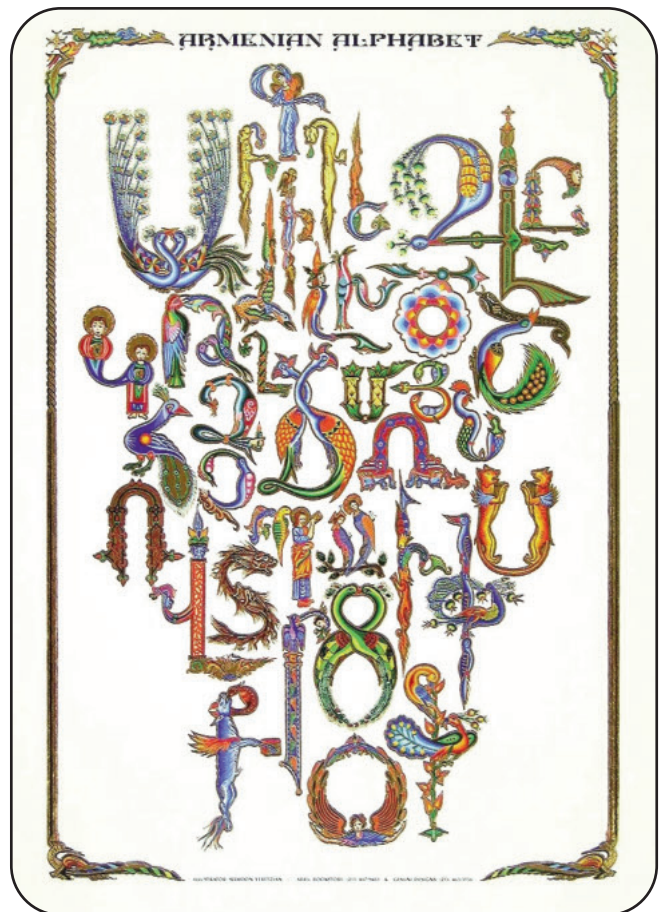


Mesrop Mashtots is one of the most prominent personalities not only for Armenians, but in the global world history: the distinguished, multi-talented scholar, Christian preacher and missionary, the founder of the new Armenian alphabet that allowed Armenians to preserve their unique culture and identity, the establisher and the beginner of the Golden Age in Armenian literature, founder of new educational institutions in Armenia and laid the foundation of Armenian liturgy. *St. Mesrop* devoted all his life to spreading Christianity throughout all of the peoples of the Caucasus. In the memory of *Mesrop Mashtots*, the Armenian nation celebrates his memory on February 19.

"St Mesrop found his right place in the kingdom of God in the heaven, with our Almighty Savior."

Koryun, *Mashtots's*, student.

- Lilia Grigorian ■



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If we ask you when you last shared your professional skills or passion as a volunteer, are you instantly overcome by a warm feeling and a rush of happy memories? Many professionals give of their time volunteering, positively impacting the lives of others. It turns out that volunteering is actually as good for you the volunteer as it is for those you help. And the older you are, the more benefits you will reap!

While many organizations provide volunteering opportunities to serve food to the needy, paint schools or plant trees, at *Armenian Volunteer Corps (AVC)* we offer many other options as well where you can share your professional know-how in areas such as archaeology, architecture, arts and culture, business, community development, environmental sciences, engineering, farming, healthcare, human rights, law and public policy, media, journalism, PR or marketing, research, social work, sports, teaching, youth outreach, zoology, and more.

Volunteering in Armenia with AVC is not only a real chance to share your experience and learn from others, but also a full immersion in daily life and a way to discover the hidden Armenia.

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As you plan your 2017 travels, why not consider a service experience in Armenia, be it professional or less formal. AVC will customize the experience to suit your background and interests.

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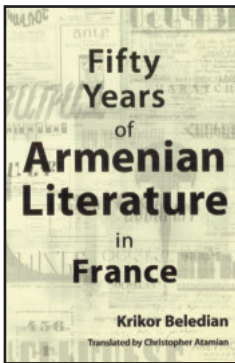
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BOOK REVIEWS

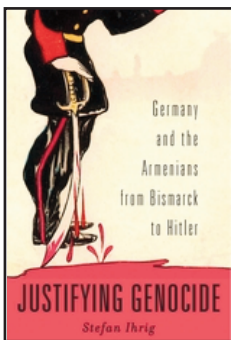
Fifty Years of Armenian Literature in France' Representation - by Krikor Beledian; translated by Christopher Atamian; edited by Barlow Der Mugrdechian
640 pp. \$20 paperback, ISBN 13: 978-0-912201-51-1),
Published by The Press at California State University, USA



This book is a groundbreaking study of the Armenian literary scene in the Armenian diaspora community of France, said Dr. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Armenian Studies Program director and professor at Fresno State. "This work is a major addition to the study of Armenian literature with its in-depth analysis of the various figures and periods in Armenian literature in France," Der Mugrdechian said. "Author and literary critic Krikor Beledian has lived in Paris since 1967 and has become intimately aware of the Armenian literary scene in France. He is an accomplished writer in his own right, as well as prolific critic."

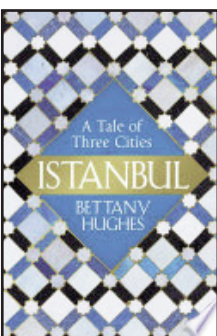
Justifying Genocide - Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler

Stefan Ihrig - Hardcover £27.95 ISBN 9780674504790



The Armenian Genocide and the Nazi Holocaust are often thought to be separated by a large distance in time and space. But Stefan Ihrig shows that they were much more connected than previously thought. Bismarck and then Wilhelm II staked their foreign policy on close relations with a stable Ottoman Empire. To the extent that the Armenians were restless under Ottoman rule, they were a problem for Germany too. From the 1890s onward Germany became accustomed to excusing violence against Armenians, even accepting it as a foreign policy necessity. For many Germans, the Armenians represented an explicitly racial problem and despite the Armenians' Christianity, Germans portrayed them as the "Jews of the Orient."

As Stefan Ihrig reveals in this first comprehensive study of the subject, many Germans before World War I sympathized with the Ottomans' longstanding repression of the Armenians and would go on to defend vigorously the Turks' wartime program of extermination. After the war, in what Ihrig terms the "great genocide debate," German nationalists first denied and then justified genocide in sweeping terms. The Nazis too came to see genocide as justifiable: in their version of history, the Armenian Genocide had made possible the astonishing rise of the New Turkey. Ihrig is careful to note that this connection does not imply the Armenian Genocide somehow caused the Holocaust, nor does it make Germans any less culpable. But no history of the twentieth century should ignore the deep, direct, and disturbing connections between these two crimes.



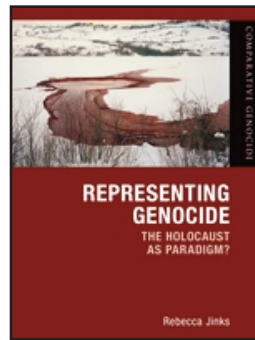
Istanbul: A Tale of Three Cities
Bettany Hughes - 816 pages Hardcover
ISBN: 9780297868484

Istanbul has always been a place where stories and histories collide and crackle, where the idea is as potent as the historical fact. From the Qu'ran to Shakespeare, this city with three names - Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul - resonates as an idea and a place, and overflows its boundaries - real and

imagined. Standing as the gateway between the East and West, it has served as the capital of the Roman, Byzantine, Latin and Ottoman Empires. For much of its history it was known simply as The City, but, as Bettany Hughes reveals, Istanbul is not just a city, but a story.

In this epic new biography, Hughes takes us on a dazzling historical journey through the many incarnations of one of the world's greatest cities. As the longest-lived political entity in Europe, over the last 6,000 years Istanbul has absorbed a mosaic of micro-cities and cultures all gathering around the core.

Representing Genocide -The Holocaust as Paradigm? Rebecca Jinks -Hardcover ISBN 9781474256940
Published by Bloomsbury Academic

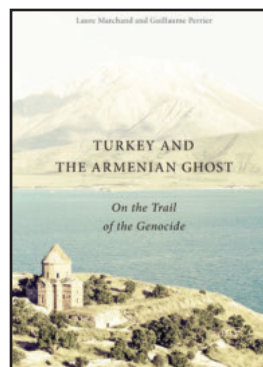


This book explores the diverse ways in which Holocaust representations have influenced and structured how other genocides are understood and represented in the West. Rebecca Jinks focuses in particular on the canonical 20th century cases of genocide: Armenia, Cambodia, Bosnia, and Rwanda. Using literature, film, photography, and memorialisation, she demonstrates that we can only understand the Holocaust's status as a 'benchmark' for other genocides if we look at the deeper, structural resonances which subtly shape many representations of genocide.

Representing Genocide pursues five thematic areas in turn: how genocides are recognised as such by western publics; the representation of the origins and perpetrators of genocide; how western witnesses represent genocide; representations of the aftermath of genocide; and western responses to genocide. Throughout, the book distinguishes between 'mainstream' and other, more nuanced and engaged, representations of genocide. It shows how these mainstream representations - the majority - largely replicate the representational framework of the Holocaust, including the way in which mainstream Holocaust representations resist recognising the rationality, instrumentality and normality of genocide, preferring instead to present it as an aberrant, exceptional event in human society. By contrast, the more engaged representations - often, but not always, originating from those who experienced genocide - tend to revolve around precisely genocide's ordinariness, and the structures and situations common to human society which contribute to and become involved in the violence.

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Turkey and the Armenian Ghost - On the Trail of the Genocide Laure Marchand and Guillaume Perrier,
Translated by Debbie Blythe. 260 Pages, ISBN 9780773545496

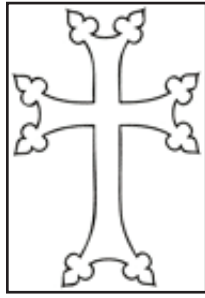


The translation of the award-winning *La Turquie et le fantôme arménien*, book by Laure Marchand and Guillaume Perrier visit historic sites and interview politicians, elderly survivors, descendants, authors, and activists in a quest for the hidden truth. Taking the reader into remote mountain regions, tiny hamlets, and the homes of traumatized victims of a deadly persecution that continues to this day, they reveal little-known aspects of the history and culture

of a people who have been rendered invisible in their ancient homeland.

A compelling portrait of the aftermath of the Armenian genocide and the enduring struggle to have it officially recognised.

CONDOLENCES



The CAIA extends its deepest condolences to the families and friends of its following members/service users and supporters who sadly passed away since the last issue of this newsletter.

They will be missed by everyone who knew and loved them.

+ *Hilda Bedrossian*,
+ *Seda Hovsepian*
+ *Manoush Danielian*
+ *Margaret Krikorian*
+ *Nelly Hovsepian*
+ *Alice Klendjian*
+ *Garnik Shahverdian*
+ *Giragos Saradjian*
+ *Veron Kaprielian*
+ *Vartanoush Nicholls (nee Omartian)*



Seda Hovsepian (First from left) and Hilda Bedrossian (third from left) during happy times at CAIA's Hayashen Seniors Club, enjoying the company of their friends.

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THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT!

PLEASE KEEP SHARING AND INVITING FRIENDS

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS

CAIA is grateful to all the following for the kind donations of financial support as well as in kind such as books, CD's, DVDs, photographs since the last issue of Armenian Voice. Their generosity is highly appreciated and most welcome. If by error we have omitted anyone please accept our apologies and let us know to rectify in the next issue.

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