



HAMAZKAYIN NEWSLETTER

2011



Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society

Published by Central Executive Board

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THE HAMAZKAYIN SOCIETY'S NEWSLETTER ON ITS NATIONWIDE ACTIVITIES

The Hamazkayin Society works diligently within all Armenian communities, without pomp and circumstance. Leaf through this brochure and you will get an overview of the enormous work accomplished worldwide in the fields of culture and education during 2011.

Film festivals, dance spectacles, theatrical performances, literary symposiums, conferences, lectures, musical concerts and art exhibitions illustrate the wide variety and nature of our activities. A substantial amount of work has been carried out in the publishing field, and the literary periodical *Pakin* has appeared without interruption. In the field of education, the *Djemarans* of Hamazkayin in Beirut, Marseille and Sydney have continued to educate and cultivate the young generations, achieving outstanding results. The Hamazkayin art and music schools have again demonstrated their characteristic dynamism.

The scope of Hamazkayin activities extends from Buenos Aires to Sydney, embracing America, Canada, Europe, the Middle East and Armenia.

In this issue of our annual newsletter we refer to the Structure of the Hamazkayin Funds as well. The funds are necessary for the continued effective functioning of the organization and for the further expansion of its activities. We have already restored all the funds that were used by force of circumstance during the Lebanese Civil War. We have appointed a board of trustees to administer the Structure of Hamazkayin Funds. It is important for us to provide new funds for this structure and to further enrich the existing funds.

Our annual newsletters will also address issues of national/cultural concerns, aimed at stimulating public discussions on relevant topics. The issue raised in this brochure is the prevailing existential question: "Who is Armenian?"

Our newsletters will appear on a yearly basis, aiming to inform the public about the Hamazkayin activities and to strengthen our mutual relations.

**HAMAZKAYIN ARMENIAN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE BOARD**



HAMAZKAYIN

A POWERFUL GLOBAL FACTOR IN THE ARMENIAN WORLD (THE YEAR 2011)

The many and various activities of Hamazkayin institutions, chapters and units make it quite difficult to present a comprehensive yearly review. In this section we try to make a concise list of the Hamazkayin cultural events that took place in 2011.

We apologize for any inadvertent omissions.

For a more vivid exposure to the vibrant cultural life Hamazkayin offers, we will highlight a selection of events in our publications.

The activities are grouped chronologically, under separate titles.

The Hamazkayin units and groups are mentioned in bold letters.



The activities of the Hamazkayin chapters in Syria and of the Syrian Armenian community hold a very important place in the prolific list of cultural events organized by the Hamazkayin institutions, chapters and units in 2011. Sadly, today the Syrian Armenians are living a severe civil and security crisis that is crippling their communal life and their cultural activities in general. May these hard times be over soon for the community to regain its normal life and its cultural dynamism.

THE ANI DANCE COMPANY

IN A DAZZLING TRIBUTE TO NORAYR MEHRABIAN

The **Ani Dance Company** of the Hamazkayin USA Western Region dedicated its 37th annual performance to the famous choreographer Norayr Mehrabian's 70th birth anniversary with great panache.

More than 1000 fans at the Glendale High School Auditorium enjoyed a program of 22 dances, mainly featuring the renowned ballet master's choreographies. Hosting the show, Krikor Ogarian weaved a tapestry of poems revealing the soul and meaning of each dance. The exquisite costumes added a touch of glamour to the multilayered pieces.

Bringing a new twist to a standard performance, Lori Tatulian conducted an interview displayed on a large digital screen - members of the audience were invited to answer or vote for questions on cultural competence, by sending instant messages via their mobile phones. At the end of the performance the survey showed that the majority of the audience was in favor of high quality cultural events.



Widely acknowledged for its enduring contributions to dance, the **Ani Dance Company** with its long-standing artistic directors and choreographers, Yeghia Hasholian and Suzy Parseghian-Tarpinian, is one of the major Armenian dance companies in the United States. It has also had the opportunity to work with famous guest choreographers from Armenia, such as the legendary Vanoush Khanamirian and Norayr Mehrabian.

Artistic director and founder of Barekamutyun National Dance Ensemble of Armenia, Norayr Mehrabian has worked with the **Ani Dance Company** since 1994, taking the group to higher levels of achievement. Since then the company has enjoyed a special relationship with him. The dance pieces he has especially choreographed for the company include Sako of Lori, Dele Yaman, They Took my Love Away, among countless others. In addition to sharing his genius with the group, Mehrabian has stated on many occasions that he considers the **Ani Dance Company** his adopted overseas company.

With approximately two hundred performances since its conception, the **Ani Dance Company** remains committed to promoting creative excellence and nurturing a new generation of dancers; maintaining its vast repertoire of traditional and contemporary dances; and bringing the magic of the Armenian dance to a distinguished audience.



THE POMEGRANATE FILM FESTIVAL

A STAR-STUDDED LINE UP OF FILMS AND SOLD OUT SHOWS

Stemming from the Toronto Chapter of Hamazkayin, this film festival is a unique event celebrating films by Armenian artists and on Armenian themes.



The 6th Annual Pomegranate Film Festival [POM]

Like its fruity namesake, POM VI was a fresh, dynamic, and prolific event, featuring a variety of 37 films from 14 countries.

The Pomegranate's appetizing series included thought-provoking documentaries, short films, feature-length films and 8 World Premieres.

With themes mainly focusing on the repercussions of the Armenian Genocide and on Armenian culture in Constantinople, the festival excited the minds of film lovers and stimulated vibrant discussions.

"With over two hundred films submitted, it was a hard process selecting thirty-seven amazing films for our program this year," says Jacob Porpossian, Director of Communications and Marketing for POM.

The much anticipated screening of the films at both the Regent and the Hamazkayin Theatre in early December, attracted more than 2000 viewers over 4 days. 14 directors and producers were present at the event.

Jury members Silva Basmadjian, Executive Producer of the National Film Board of Canada; renowned actress Arsinée Khanjian; and acclaimed cinematographer Norayr Kaspar had the tough job of selecting the 2011 award winning films in their respective categories.



POM 2011 Winners:

Best Feature Film: *King of the World* by Stéphane Kazanjian.

Best Short Film: *The Spaceship* by Emil Mkrttchian;
No Darkness will Make us Forget by Husein Karabey.

Best Documentary: *Son of the Olive Merchant*
by Matthieu Zeitinjioglou;

Voyage to Amasia

co-directed by Eric Hachikian and Randy Bell;

My Grandma's Tattoos by Suzanne Khardalian.

Audience Choice: *Here* by Braden King;

My Uncle Rafael by Marc Fusco;

The Snows of Kilimanjaro

by Robert Guediguian.

POM Goes Green

In 2011 the festival launched the Green Initiative and all emissions created by flying the guests to the festival were offset by a donation to the Armenia Tree Project.

pomegranate film festival

POM VI

december
1-4 2011

THE NAYIRI DANCE ENSEMBLE

DELIGHTS AUDIENCES AT JFK AIRPORT



The **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** with TSA officials at JFK Airport.

The **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** of the Hamazkayin New Jersey kicked off another year of entertainment, dance, and fun while teaching young Armenian children the value of Armenian culture through dance.

In the fall of 2011, the group had numerous invitations and several performances showcasing the talent of its young dancers. It entertained and delighted the crowds with traditional Armenian dances in beautifully designed and hand-made traditional costumes.

A crowning achievement of the fall program took place on November 30, 2011, when the **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** was invited to participate at the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) fourth annual Diversity Day. The event was held at the Department of Homeland Security at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York. Due to space restrictions, only 10 children from the group performed two traditional Armenian dances for the finale of TSA's program.

The **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** beautifully presented the Armenian cultural heritage to a capacity crowd of TSA employees and guests. In

appreciation of their graceful and stellar performance, the children received a certificate from the Federal Security Director and the Deputy Federal Security Director.

The **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** aims to uphold the traditional dance culture of Armenia. It is led by Tovman Haroutyunian, who was one of the main dancers in the Armenian State Dance Ensemble, directed by the famous choreographer Vanush Khanamirian. Since 1996 he has been teaching Armenian dances to young Armenians in New York, where he runs the Vanush Khanamirian Dance Academy.

With nearly 50 young dancers, the **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** has performed a wide array of traditional Armenian dances, including Kochari, Vartavar, and a beautiful rendition of Hovhannes Toumanian's story of Gigos. The **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** performed at various venues and on many occasions throughout the year. The children's skills, combined with the expertise of the director, provided for Armenian dance performances unsurpassed in their commitment to tradition and beauty, while at the same time being contemporary and innovative.

AN UNPRECEDENTED MONTH OF ARMENIAN THEATRE

THE HAMAZKAYIN STATE THEATRE BRINGS NEW VITALITY
TO THE ARMENIAN THEATRE SCENE IN LEBANON



April was an exciting month for Armenian theatre fans in Lebanon, where the Hamazkayin Regional Committee organized a series of performances dedicated to Sos Sargsian's 80th birth anniversary.

Celebrating the patriarch of Armenian theatre, the **Hamazkayin State Theatre** from Armenia, specially invited for the occasion, mesmerized the audiences with its high level of professional acting and theatrical stimulus. The first play of the theatre month was William Saroyan's *Salvation Island*, directed by Nicholai Dzacourian. An exquisite performance with superb acting, it gave the audience a fascinating insight into a world where humble people have their own ideas of happiness.

Next, Robert Lamoureux's *There is the Brunette*, directed by Vigen Stepanian amused the audiences with its adventurous scenes of romantic comedy; Eduardo de Filippo's *Christmas at the Cupiello's*, directed by Sos Sargsian, offered lessons on morality and human values through tragic and comic visions of life; Hovhannes Toumanian's *Houri the Dumb*, directed by Hrachia Gasparian, cast a magic spell on young audiences.

Prior to these performances, David Hagopian, a director of Hamazkayin theatre groups from Armenia, gave a lecture on "Where is Armenian Theatre Heading?"

He stressed the notion that "new ideas and new talents are born and developed by overcoming the pressures of theatre life."

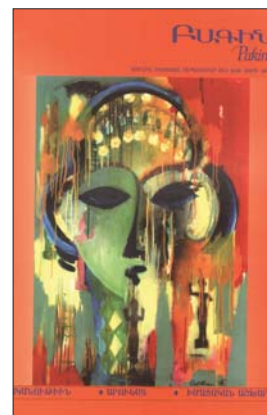
After the **Hamazkayin State Theatre** performances, the directors and actors from Yerevan held a public meeting with their counterparts in Beirut, to discuss "Issues Facing Armenian Theatre". The debate focused upon generational changes, lack of themes, good and bad productions, as well as national ideology in Armenian drama.

The "Armenian Theatre Month" ended with the staging of Levon Shant's *On the Road*, by the **Kasbar Ipekian Theatre Company** of the Hamazkayin Regional Committee. Brimming with youthful vigor, the actors delivered the play's nationalist message under the directorship of Robert Arakelian.



Moments of dream, laughter, tragedy and love...

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES - 2011



LITERATURE

SYMPOSIUM DEDICATED TO HAGOP OSHAGAN (ARMENIA)

“An investment in the mutual complementation of Eastern and Western Armenian realities.”

In collaboration with the Yerevan State University Faculty of Philology

The Hamazkayin Foundation (the Hamazkayin structure in Armenia) organizes:

A comprehensive evaluation of Oshagan’s literary and educational legacy based on contemporary criteria.

About 80 experts, literary critics, historians and educators participate in the event.

Oshagan’s works are assessed by various experts, among them:

M. Nishanian, B. Snabian, R. Piroumian, K. Bledian, S. Nicoghosian, M. Khachatrian, G. Aghabekian, S. Mouratian, S. Dvovyan, H. Saribekian, S. Abelian, L. Seyranian and N. Harutyunian.

An anthology of the lecture series is published and launched.

THE VAHE SETIAN PRINTING HOUSE AND DISTRIBUTION CENTRE (LEBANON)

- Announces Weeks of Armenian Literature; authors sign books at the renovated bookstore.
- Organizes a Children’s Book Fair and Sale of Educational Games.
- Directs a book publishing contest for intermediate classes.
- Holds school reading contests and distributes awards.
- Exhibits more than 200 Hamazkayin publications at the 7th Yerevan Book Fair.
- Launches the Western Armenian adaptation of Wounds of Armenia; followed by a reading contest.
- Holds a gala dinner celebrating the 80th anniversary of the press at Metropolitan Hotel.
- Receives an official invitation to join The Publishers Association of Armenia.

PRESENTATIONS AND READINGS AT THE EDITORIAL OFFICES OF PAKIN (LEBANON)

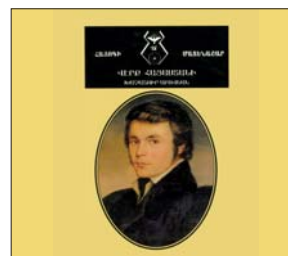
- George Apelian and his Martyrdom Forever 2: Brother, a Scoop of Water!
- Shoushig Dasnabedian and her volume of poems: Tree of Life.
- Serop Sherbetjian and his memoir: History of Armenians of Svedia.
- Sos Sargsian and his books: The Cry; The Kid.
- Ardavazt Peleshian and his films: We; Our Century; The Seasons.
- Hagop Balian and his book: Identity, Quality, Culture and Restoration.
- Robert Haddejian and his treatise: Our Mother Tongue on its Deathbed.
- Hrayr Jebejian and his book: The Armenian’s Path of Struggle for Existence.
- Vrej Klenjian-Tourian and his poetic oeuvre.
- Seta Krikorian and her collection of stories: From the Diary of an Armenian Woman.

CONFERENCE: CULTURE IN EXILE (MONTREAL)

- Explores the literature and experience of exile; the function of objects in exile; exile songs, art and films.
- The **Bedros Atamian Theatre Troupe** stages a scene from Richard Kalinoski’s *Beast on the Moon*.

LAUNCH OF THE ANTHOLOGY: TIGRAN THE GREAT (ARMENIA)

- The book compiles 40 lectures about the king’s role presented at the Hamazkayin symposium in 2005.



LITERATURE

LITERARY ACTIVITIES

- Launch of Movses Bchakjian's volume of poems: You and I, with a CD of recitations (**Armenia**).
- Book presentation: Armenians of Lebanon, edited by Aida Boudjikianian (**Montreal**).
- Reading and analysis of Ardem Harutyunian's poems (**Glendale**).
- Hamazkayin and the Tekeyan Association mark the centennial birth of Khachig Tashdentz (**New York**).
- The 95th birth anniversary of H. Shiraz is marked by recitations and accounts of his life (**Kamishli**).
- Lala Minassian discusses Misak Medzarents on the 125th anniversary of the birth of the poet (**Aleppo**).
- An appraisal of Hagop Barsoumian's The Armenian Amira Class of Istanbul (**Lebanon**).
- Memorial service, speech and a staged scene on the 60th anniversary of the death of L. Shant (**Lebanon**).
- Maroush Yeramian celebrates the life and literature of L. Shant, in memoriam (**Aleppo**).
- Book presentation: Torunlar in Armenian; a novel by Fethiye Çetin & Ayse Gül Altinay (**Paris**).
- Granish magazine introduces its literary policies at the Hamazkayin offices in Yerevan (**Armenia**).
- Launch of Vahan Zanoian's volume of poems: Outside the Border (**Lebanon**).
- Book presentation: Seuils (Thresholds); the French version of a novel by Krikor Bledian (**Lebanon**).
- Lola Koundakjian reads from her book: The Accidental Observer; A. Kzirian plays the oud (**Glendale**).
- Book presentation: Father Land, a poetic and visual meditation by Vahe and Ara Oshagan (**La Crescenta**).
- An evening dedicated to D. Varoujan includes a lecture by Arto Tavitian and readings of poems (**Cyprus**).
- "Gems from Baruyr Sevag": dedicated to the 40th anniversary of the poet's death (**Aleppo**).
- Zareh Sapsezian explores the life and literature of Levon Zaven Surmelian (**Orange County**).
- Literary texts are translated from Armenian into Spanish (**Montevideo**).
- "Reflections": a series of **Radio Gomidas** programs on Armenian literature and the arts (**Montevideo**).
- **Story Hours**: Children listen to stories with Armenian themes on a monthly basis (**Montreal**).
- The Bulgarian-Armenian **Vahan** weekly is being published since 1992 (**Plovdiv**).

LECTURES SPONSORED BY REGIONAL CHAPTERS

- "The Preservation of Western Armenian": Hagop Balian (**Glendale**).
- "Classical Armenian Orthography, a Prerequisite for the Restoration of Armenian Identity": Baruyr Hayrikian (**New York**).
- "The Changing Landscape of Historic Western Armenia and Cilicia";
- "In Search of Armenian Cilicia": Richard Hovhannisian (**London**).
- "Armenian Genocide: 1915-1923": Garegin Chookaszian; a presentation of documentary DVDs (**Paris**).
- "The Art of Illuminated Manuscripts in the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia from the 12th -13th Centuries": Levon Chookaszian (**Paris**).
- "Armenian DNA: Ancient, Unique (?) and Relevant"; co-sponsored with AGBU: Peter Hreshdagian (**Montreal**).
- "Literary Issues in Contemporary Armenian Diaspora": Hagop Balian (**New York**).
- "Meeting the Challenges of Armenian Upbringing": Dikran Yegavian (**Valence**).
- "The 96th Anniversary of the Heroic Self-Defence of Musa Dagh": Hagop Jambazian (**New York**).
- "The Archaeological Wealth of Byblos City": Gasia Harutyunian-Baghdasarian (**Lebanon**).
- "The Agony of a Nation": Marc Nishanian (**New Jersey**).
- "Youth in Armenia and Contemporary Armenian Literature": Lilith Galsdian (**Lebanon**).
- "Contemporary Armenian Literature and the Print Media": Yervand Ter Khachaturian (**Cyprus**).

MUSIC



PARSEGH GANACHIAN MUSIC COLLEGES OF HAMAZKAYIN

- Celebratory concerts mark the 25th anniversary of the college (**Aleppo**).
A final jubilee event starts with an exhibition about the history of the school.
A video presentation, a speech, musical performances and an awards ceremony follow.
“The Culture of Armenian Music in the Second Half of the 19th Century”: lecture by A. Jenterejian.
Armen Jenterejian introduces Alexander Spendiarian; students perform pieces from the composer.
- Midterm and Final auditions; concerts by the staff, the **Guitar**, the **Violin** and the **Chamber Ensembles (Lebanon)**.
- Guitar and piano students perform at the end-of-the-year concert (**Greece**).

CELEBRATING THE 125TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF PARSEGH GANACHIAN

- The **Hamazkayin Central Executive Board** releases a documentary about P. Ganachian (**Armenia**).
- The **Gargach Children and Junior Choir** sings “19 Little Songs” by the composer (**Lebanon**).
- A School Choir Festival takes place with 10 Armenian schools, each performing two Ganachian songs (**Lebanon**).
- The **Knar Choir of Adults** sings Ganachian with the Nor Dzaghig Children's Choir of St. Hagop Church (**Montreal**).

CHORAL AND MUSICAL PERFORMANCES

- The **Zvartnotz Choir** concerts include: choral arrangements of Sayat Nova's songs;
a joint performance with the Haygazouunk Ensemble from Armenia (**Aleppo**).
- The **Nigol Aghbalian Chapter Estrada Band** goes on stage with 30 musicians (**Aleppo**).
- The **Aghtamar Choir and Dance Group** perform together at the Russian Cultural Center (**Damascus**).
- The **Arekag Children's Chorus** sings at the Times Square commemoration of the Armenian Genocide (**NY**).
- The **Gargach Children and Junior Choir** dedicates a concert to the composer Alexan Mnagian;
Takes part in the Festival of Sacred Music to sing a program “For the Beauty of the Earth” (**Lebanon**).
- The **Ayk Youth Choir** in concert with its **Folk Music Ensemble** performs from a range of genres (**Lebanon**).
- The **Children's Choir** performs a program of Armenian songs at its annual concert (**Toronto**).

COMMEMORATIONS ORGANIZED BY REGIONAL CHAPTERS

- Khachig Yelmazian explores “The Life and Work of Gomidas”; conducts the Sahag Mesrob Choir (**Valence**).
- Hamazkayin honors Arsen Momjian, the violinist/director of the first folk music band of Montevideo (**Montevideo**).
- A program broadcast on the National Radio of Uruguay celebrates Aram Khachaturian and his music (**Montevideo**).
- Hasmik Khachaturian evaluates the music of Sayat Nova (**Chicago**).
- The 155th birth anniversary of M. Yegmalian is marked by Harutyun Kendimian and his musical program (**Chicago**).

CONCERTS HOSTED BY REGIONAL CHAPTERS

- Tata Simonian performs a dinner concert and a public recital (**Lebanon**).
- Iakovos Kolanian plays classical guitar (**Glendale**).
- Song of Songs: Armenian artists from Lebanon and Armenia come together to perform (**Lebanon**).
- The **Arev Ensemble's** traditional folk interpretations of music follow Viza's modern fusion rock (**Boston**).
- Harout Pamboukjian performs a dinner concert; gives a recital of popular and patriotic songs (**Lebanon**).
- Young musicians from Sydney play classical music (**Paris**).
- Ara Sarkissian's Musaner and Nor Quartet offer a contemporary take on traditional melodies (**Boston**).
- The Arshak Sirunian Trio mixes Armenian and Western elements in an evening of contemporary jazz (**Washington**).
- Norayr Kartashian demonstrates the music of Armenian wind instruments and signs his new CD: Woods (**Burbank**).
- When Jazz Meets Poetry: Macha Gharibian's My Triplet meets Arevig Mardirossian's recitations (**Paris**).
- Kevork Hajian (tenor) and Datevig Artinian (piano) perform Gomidas (**Sao Paulo**).

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES - 2011

DANCE



- The **Nayiri Adult Dance Group** of Athens stages: “An Armenian Traditional Wedding” in Sosti, with **Nanor** (teen’s) and **Maralo** (children’s) **dance groups**; Takes part in the World Festival of Traditional Dances in Eghio and Corinth; Performs at an event dedicated to the independence of the Republic of Armenia. The **Nanor** and **Nayiri Dance Groups** are hosted by Hamazkayin Thessaloniki (**Greece**).
- The **Hamazkayin Dance Festival** brings together the **Ani, Lori, Nayiri** and **Yeraz Ensembles** of the West Coast chapters and more than 250 dance students (**Glendale**).
- The **Sardarabad Dance Ensemble** of Aleppo takes the stage with 40 dancers (**Aleppo**).
- The **Shushi Children’s Dance Group** takes the stage with 100 dancers (**Aleppo**).
- The **Nayiri Dance Ensemble of Young Dancers** and the **Arekag Children’s Choir** perform: At a cultural gathering dedicated to the independence of the Republic of Armenia (**New Jersey**). The ensemble takes part at the Homeland Security Department’s Diversity Day at JFK Airport.
- The **Ani Dance Ensemble** performs with Ara Gevorgian and his orchestra; Features Les Bonn Diables Folk Ensemble, which performs Armenian and Québécois dances (**Montreal**).
- The **Erebuni Dance Ensemble** of Toronto performs with Ara Gevorgian and his orchestra (**Toronto**).
- The **Knar Dance Ensemble** performs with The Folk Instruments Ensemble of Armenia (**Lebanon**).
- The **Sardarabad Dance Ensemble** of Chicago takes part in the Skokie Festival of Cultures (**Chicago**).
- The **Hamazkayin Dance Institute** and the **Erebuni Dance Ensemble** give a joint performance (**Toronto**).
- The **Noor Children’s Dance Group** takes the stage with 5-10 year olds (**Fresno**).
- The **Yeraz School of Armenian Dance** stages: “The Armenians...An Epic Journey” (**Orange County**).
- The **Shiraz Dance Ensemble** performs at: “Odyssey: Road to Hope”: a Lions Club event dedicated to immigrant communities in Uruguay. “Armenia IV Concert”, organized by the Armenian National Committee of Uruguay. Ara Gevorgian’s World Peace Tour (**Montevideo**).
- The **Sipan Dance Ensemble** takes part at the Mediterranean Folk Dance Festival. Gives its annual performance; accompanies the Fayha Choir of Lebanon in concert (**Cyprus**).
- The **Nayiri Ensembles of Young and Adult Dancers** present their annual performances (**San Fernando**).
- The **Ani Dance Ensemble** (Montreal), the **Arev Armenian Folk Ensemble** (Boston) and the **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** (NJ) take part in the Festival of Dance and Music Ensembles organized by the Hovnanian School (**NJ**).
- The **Erebuni Dance School and Ensemble of Greater Boston** holds its first Open House (**Boston**).
- The **Ani Dance Company** performs in tribute to Norayr Mehrabian’s 70th birth anniversary; Takes part at an event dedicated to the independence of the Republic of Armenia (**Glendale**).
- The **Arax Dance Troupe** performs traditional Armenian folk dances (**Detroit**).
- The **Gakavig Children and Teens Dance Group** of Ainjar performs in Bourj Hammoud (**Lebanon**).
- The **Gayane Dance School** and its 250 young students rehearse for their upcoming biannual performance (**Lebanon**).

MOVIES

- Screening of the documentary: From Ararat to Zion by Edgar Baghdasarian (**Toronto**).
- Screening of the film: The Cross-Thief’s Memoir by Hrach Keshishian (**Chicago**), (**Lebanon**).
- Screening of the films: Little Stones; February 19 by Tamara Stepanian (**UAE**).
- The 6th **Pomegranate Film Festival** features 37 films by Armenian directors from 14 countries (**Toronto**).
- A series of Armenian language films are shown at **Navasartian Centre** (**London**).



THEATRE

- **The Razmig Children's and Youth Theatre Group** presents two plays: The Legend of Arata, Our Guilt (**Aleppo**).
- Directors who have worked with Hamazkayin are honored at an evening dedicated to World Theatre Day (**Aleppo**).
- The **Bedros Atamian Theatre Troupe** stages Ara Arzrouni's The Tin Cans (**Montreal**).
- "Armenian Theatre Month" kicks off with plays in celebration of Sos Sargsian's 80th birth anniversary (**Lebanon**):
The Hamazkayin State Theatre presents William Saroyan's Salvation Island, Robert Lamoureux's There is the Brunette, Eduardo de Filippo's Christmas at the Cupiello's, and Hovhannes Toumanian's Hour, the Dumb. David Hagobian talks about the question: "Where is Armenian Theatre Heading?"
Directors from Armenia and Lebanon discuss "Issues Facing Armenian Theatre".
The **Kasbar Ipekian Theatre Company** presents Levon Shant's On the Road.
- The **Arek Children's and Youth Theatre School** graduates perform children's plays and mimes (**Lebanon**).
- The **Arek Children's and Youth Theatre Group** presents The Tree of Hope (**Lebanon**).

PLAYS HOSTED BY REGIONAL CHAPTERS

- The staged reading of Hrant M. Markarian's Silence in a Circular Rainbow in English (**New York**).
- Vardan Petrossian's one man show: Jokes of Destiny (**Lebanon**).

HAMAZKAYIN EVENTS

- "An Evening of Love Songs and Poems" brings together Armenian artists from Canada and Lebanon (**Montreal**).
- The **School Dance Festival of the Knar Ensemble** showcases 18 Armenian dance groups (**Lebanon**).
- An evening dedicated to the Armenian Genocide showcases the Hamazkayin song and dance groups (**Lebanon**).
- "Armenian Cultural Day": Artists exhibit their works; the **Araz** and **Arax Dance Troupes** perform (**San Francisco**).
- Concerts celebrating the independence of the Republic of Armenia feature Ara Dabanjian's The Element Band, with welcoming performances by the St. Stephen Armenian School children, the **Arekag Children's Choir**, the dance Ensembles of St. Thomas and St. Sarkis Churches (**Boston, New Jersey, Washington**).
- "Young Talents in Culture": Over 60 students mark the Year of the Child with songs, music, dance and art (**Glendale**).
- "You Will Spring to Life in Armenian": Poetry night with Silva Yuzbashian (**Glendale**).
- "An Evening with the Armenians of Istanbul" features a lecture, slideshow, dance, drama, recitation, food (**Glendale**).
- "The City of Ani: Celebrating the 1050th Anniversary" with readings, photography and a film (**London**).
- "When Saying Armenia..." with poems, music, songs and dance by the **Erebuni Dance Ensemble** (**Toronto**).
- Star of Hope, the Armenian song and dance ensemble of young artists from Rostov give 2 performances (**Montreal**).
- "New Year's Eve": A celebration with the **Nayiri Dance Ensemble** and the **Sayat Nova Choir** (**San Fernando**).
- Horizon, AMG and Shant broadcast a New Year's Eve program featuring the **Sayat Nova Choir**, the **Ani** and **Yeraz Dance Ensembles**, and performances by Armenian music school students (**Glendale**).
- Student contests in poetry recitation, spelling, calligraphy and painting (**Kamishli**).
- **Radio Gomidas** serves the community with Armenian programs for the 76th year (**Montevideo**).

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES - 2011

ART



EXHIBITIONS AT THE HAMAZKAYIN LUCY TUTUNJIAN ART GALLERY (LEBANON)

- Shoghig Oulashian and Kevork Oulashian: *Paintings*.
- Sirvart Fazlian: *Watercolors*.
- Missak Terzian: *"Re-Birth", oils and acrylics*.
- Krikor Agopian: *"52 Years of Evolution", acrylics*.
- Lucy Tutunjian: *Oil paintings*.
- Mireille Goguikian: *"Myrrh, Blueberry and Vanilla", mixed media*.
- Arev Bedrossian: *A collection of "Colors from Armenia"*.
- Anna Shahnazarian: *Oil paintings*.
- Hrair: *"Nostalgia", retrospective in oils*.
- Gago: *"Movements in Nature", bronze sculptures*.
- Lucy Tutunjian: *A New Year exhibition for charitable purposes*.

ART SCHOOLS OF HAMAZKAYIN

Toros Roslin Art School (Lebanon)

Holds midterm and final exhibitions; organizes an art competition with entries from 23 Armenian schools.

Roupen Nakian Art School (Ainjar): A collective exhibition showcases student art.

Arshile Gorky Art School (Aleppo)

Holds an annual exhibition; receives awards at the Second Childhood National Festival of Art.

Entries win at a painting contest: "This is How I See You Armenia", by the RA Ministry of Diaspora.

Sanahin Chapter (Montreal): Painting Classes start in November.

EXHIBITIONS ORGANIZED BY REGIONAL CHAPTERS

- Hagop Jamgochian: Paintings (**Damascus**).
- Garen Petrossian: Paintings (**Montreal**).
- Photography exhibition and an awards ceremony (**Lebanon**).
- "Yerevanian Vernissage": Artists from Armenia exhibit their works at Vasburagan Hall (**Lebanon**).
- "Armenian National Costumes" are showcased at "Traditional Costumes of the Mediterranean" (**Cyprus**).
- "Armenian Art Exhibition": 24 artists from greater LA showcase their work (**Pasadena**).
- "Altar: Art Exhibition". 68 Armenian and foreign artists celebrate the Armenian Independence (**Glendale**).
- A photography exhibition promotes young talented Armenians (**Pasadena**).
- Tigran Harutyunian: 5th private exhibition of paintings (**Glendale**).

EXPANSION

THE HAMAZKAYIN MOUSHEGH ISHKHAN CHAPTER IS FOUNDED IN THE UAE

The Hamazkayin Central Executive Board opens its first chapter in Sharjah, designed to meet the needs of the local Armenian community.

The official inauguration of the 20 member strong chapter is followed by a series of cultural activities.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES - 2011



EDUCATION

THE MARSEILLE DJEMARAN (FRANCE)*

The construction of the school gymnasium started in January 2011; it is expected to be completed in 2013. High school sections go “under contract” with the French Ministry of Education. The school announces 100 percent success rates in the French Baccalaureate and Brevet exams. Djemaran takes advantage of the “Come Home” program initiated by the RA Ministry of the Diaspora, sends 18 high school students to Armenia, where they stay with host families.

THE ARSHAG AND SOPHIE GALSTAUN DJEMARAN (AUSTRALIA)*

The National Assessment Program places the primary section in the top 10% of primary schools in NSW. The college celebrates its 25th anniversary. A walkathon by 250 supporters raises funds; a gala evening showcases student performances. The school takes high school students on a trip to Armenia.

** In our future publications we will feature in more detail.*

THE ARMENOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF HAMAZKAYIN IN ALEPPO

The 3rd generation of graduates, 8 students receive their degrees after completing a 3 year program (2010). The institute runs a program focusing on the Armenian language and culture for students in **Kessab**. The 150th birth anniversary of K. Zohrab is marked by Hagop Cholakian’s speech and readings by students.

FINANCIAL AID

The **Hamazkayin Central Executive Board** donates computer hardware to the Karvajar School (**Karabagh**). The **Hagop Garabentz Scholarship** is awarded to 6 students at the YSU Faculty of Philology (**Armenia**).

FORUM

*A cultural and educational trip to Armenia.
A chance of embracing Armenian roots and legacy.*

The 18th Hamazkayin Forum

brings together 34 students from 11 different countries. During their two week stay in Armenia the participants:

- Get acquainted with life in the motherland,
- Visit museums, historical sites and monuments,
- Enjoy cultural events; take part in artistic workshops,
- Attend lectures on history, art, literature and culture,
- Meet cultural, intellectual, political and public figures,
- Spend memorable times and establish friendships,
- Publish their daily newsletter,
- Take part in panel discussions bridging the differences between Armenians from various countries.



MELANKTON AND HAIG ARSLANIAN DJEMARAN

“THE BEST ARMENIAN SCHOOL IN THE DIASPORA” STRIDING INTO ITS NINTH DECADE

The role of the Hamazkayin Melankton and Haig Arslanian Djemaran (Lyceum) is pivotal in the Armenian Diaspora. For more than 82 years the spirit of Hamazkayin has led this educational institution to grow and to develop into what it is today: to be hailed as the best Armenian school in the Diaspora.

Always drawing on its heritage, yet conscious of the changing demands of the present and the future, Djemaran seeks to “raise good human beings and good Armenians; generations of young people possessing general knowledge and a sense of Armenian identity.”

The founders of Djemaran have acted on this impulse of self preservation; teachers have been guided by these core values and have tried to meet challenges, building confidence and success.

It is no wonder that, when an old footage of Djemaran appears online, depicting school life as it was more than half a century ago, with its kindergarten, class hours and commencement ceremonies, its staff and principal, graduates all over the world start sending it around...

It takes great effort to manage parents' expectations and prepare their children for life, to keep up with international academic standards, and in the meantime to inspire generations with a strong sense of their Armenian identity.

Currently Djemaran has approximately 700 students, and its quality of academic achievement is reflected in its significant national exam results. The fact that Djemaran is primarily funded by tuition payments from parents and continues to thrive with the support of dedicated donors, shows the unique potential of this institution.

What follows is a feature based on interviews with Djemaran administrators, parents and graduates. It aims to capture the vision and resilience of this Hamazkayin institution, striding into its ninth decade.



ARMENIAN EDUCATION

The founding of Djemaran reflected the characteristics of a culture that emerged in the newly forming Armenian Diaspora and the spirit of a new era outside the motherland. The key objective of the founders was “to cultivate tomorrow's generation of intellectuals who would take on the responsibility to preserve Armenian identity, language and literature, as well as to develop Armenian culture.”



Today, increasingly exposed to global influences, what kind of a culture and spirit does Djemaran carry in the context of contemporary Armenian life?

“Eighty two years have passed since the foundation of Djemaran. Naturally, the newly forming Diaspora had different needs. Armenians in the Diaspora are no longer driven by the instinct to survive and to preserve their identity. Communities have adapted to local conditions; economic and social integration are realities that cannot be ignored,” says Dikran Jinbashian, the principal of M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran.

“Schools are created to serve the needs of a community, yet the way they function contributes to this positive development; they ensure the economic, social and cultural advancement of a given community.”

“Parents who send their children to Djemaran have the right to expect that they will receive a comprehensive education, that they will get the diplomas as stated by law, that they will develop into alert, independent and responsible individuals, capable of analyzing different aspects of life.”

Dikran Jinbashian, principal of M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran.

As Simon Vratsian, a former principal of Djemaran and a former Prime Minister of the First Republic of Armenia had stated in a report back in the 1960s, the problem of “serving two masters” is at the heart of preparing students for official exams and for university admission, on the one hand, and pursuing the aim of Armenian upbringing, on the other. Compromises are inevitable. “In current circumstances, it is impossible to ignore the demands of society to prepare students for a national diploma and for university admission. The need to follow the National Curriculum is already an imperative demand. This cannot be achieved without cutting back on the subjects that are linked to Armenian concerns, reducing some of them, or sometimes omitting them entirely,” says Jinbashian.



The Hamazkayin M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran is located on the slopes of Mezher hill near Antelias (Lebanon). The two school buildings, the Dr. Adrineh Karakashian Sports and Cultural Centre and the Norsigian Kindergarten of Armenian Relief Society occupy more than half of the Djemaran estate sprawling over an area of 26000 square meters. These structures are surrounded by orchards and outdoor playgrounds in open green spaces.

The classrooms in Djemaran are bright, sunny places, filled with natural light. Educational facilities include: libraries, a digital library, laboratories, a computer classroom, TV, video and slide show rooms, a theatre, an auditorium, a chess room, sports courts, exam halls, party venues, playgrounds, etc. Several musical instruments, pianos, computers, TV sets, projectors and maps are available to students and teachers.

(To learn more about the history of Djemaran, its educational and administrative structure, school life, activities and policies visit: www.djemaran.edu.lb)

Even so, Djemaran still holds fast the golden mean as a way to counter the effects of modern life. With an orientation firmly based on a proper Armenian upbringing, it turns out to be the “Best Armenian School” in the Diaspora. Thus, when in October 2010, the RA Ministry of the Diaspora and the World Armenian Congress deemed Djemaran worthy of this award, their main focus was on the place of Armenian language, Armenian history and Armenian proficiency in the school curriculum.

“We try to limit our obligatory deviations from initial objectives by maintaining acceptable standards in teaching the most important subjects,” explains Jinbashian, who is the principal of Djemaran since 2002. “Djemaran still offers a significant number of class hours in Armenian language and Armenian history. The Armenian language forms the basis of learning in the school curriculum: in the elementary we teach 6-9 classroom hours of Armenian per week; 5-6 hours in the intermediate classes and 3-4 hours in the secondary. Armenian history is taught for 2 hours per week in all classes, up to grade 11. Armenian is the medium of instruction for mathematics, science, history, geography and civic education, at least up to the 5th grade. In the higher grades we teach classical Armenian (kra-par), ancient Armenian literature, history of the Armenian Church and Armenian civic education. The Djemaran Student's Association for students in grades 10-12 (which has its own elected committee and operates according to its own regulations) still functions to this day. The Chahagir (Torchbearer) and Gantegh (Lantern) periodicals are edited and published by students.”



In line with its objectives, Djemaran seeks to awaken “the presence of Armenia and the Armenian nation in the hearts of students”; “the sense that Armenia and the Diaspora complement each other”; and “a sense of dual identity (Armenian and the citizenship of the country of residence)”. This desire is natural. However, students attending Armenian schools embody the distinctive realities of the Diaspora and the problems that arise from them; they are exposed to different perspectives and influences. In educating young Armenians and raising their self-awareness, Djemaran tries to bridge the differences through indirect ways.

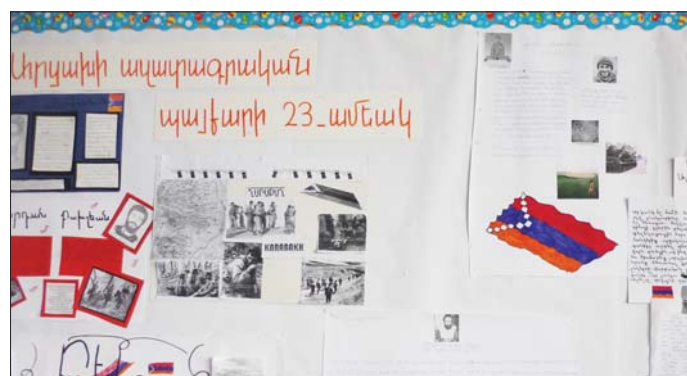


The M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran (formerly Nishan Palandjian Djemaran) is a comprehensive educational institution that provides education to students from pre-school up to pre-university levels.

In order to obtain the school diploma, students must spend a minimum of three years with Djemaran in the secondary level; they must have a general average of 10/20 or more in the three secondary years, and a general average of 12/20 or more in Armenian studies. Those who do not fulfill any of these conditions, receive only a high school certificate.



There is a major gap in Armenian education, due to the absence of scholarly textbooks in Armenian history that meet educational standards and contain contemporary subject material. Dikran Jinbashian, the principal of Djemaran selects a few Armenian history textbooks from the shelves lining the walls of his office; recent editions which he has culled mainly from his travels to Armenia. We cannot find a single textbook that meets our demands, he says, pointing out common flaws, and stressing the urgency to prepare Armenian history textbooks for intermediate and secondary levels in Djemaran.



“Armenia, Diaspora, dual identity and the other issues are not discussed in separate studies. Naturally, the lessons we offer and the events we organize should educate students as citizens of the country they live in, but at the same time, children should also belong to Armenia. The different manifestations of this perspective occur in various ways and are defined in various forms. However, they are of little importance in conceptual terms,” notes Jinbashian, who also teaches Armenian civic education to grade 11. “And since we traditionally respect the difference in opinion, we do not impose ideologies. We think that patriotism and civic awareness should arise from knowledge and recognition. Therefore, we try to enrich the content of the subject matter we teach, and also to improve and develop our teaching methods.”

Thinking back about the vision of the founders and the role of graduates in Armenian national affairs, the principal of Djemaran makes the following assessment: “In the past, half of Djemaran graduates used to pursue a teaching career. Now they choose more “modern” subjects to study. But Djemaran graduates are a powerful presence in public life and they have influential roles. Djemaran



graduates are distinguished by their refusal to accept conventional views, by their independent thinking, and by their responsible commitment. This is not an absolute and universal “culture”, but is a quite widespread trend.”

“In answering the question: to what extent are Djemaran graduates dedicated to the “Armenian Cause” or to “preserve the Armenian identity, language and literature, as well as to develop Armenian culture?” we can say that there are significant differences between generations: in terms of political commitment the percentage is quite remarkable (50-60 per cent); for the rest the percentage is much modest, about 15-20 per cent.”

GRADUATES ON THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH DJEMARAN

"I was fortunate to be a student of L. Shant and N. Aghbalian, my great teachers, who founded the First Independent Republic of Armenia, and who brought Armenia into Djemaran; they shaped our character and created a unique family atmosphere, the spirit of Djemaran, and it is not defined by buildings, but by independent thought and persistent endeavors."

Alice Kazanjian (Graduate of 1945)

"Palandjian Djemaran, inspiring institution, exemplary teachers (M. Ishkhan, Mrs. Yoland, K. Shahinian, H. Kurkjian, H. Dasnabedian, M. Meguerdichian...), free atmosphere, the foundation that builds the man, an Armenian hearth."

Arda and Raffi Karakashians (Graduates of 1978)

"I have felt a nostalgic atmosphere in Djemaran. Perhaps this nostalgia for the past was brought on by different circumstances, but it was an interesting one. I am grateful to Djemaran, but I wish I could have experienced the atmosphere created by its founding vision and its continuity."

Hrag Demirjian (Graduate of 2010)

UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT OF DJEMARAN GRADUATES

(2009, 2010, 2011)

Haigazian University-----	18%	Notre Dame University-----	4%
American University of Beirut -----	14%	Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts (ALBA)- -	3.5%
Lebanese American University-----	14%	Other universities-----	2.5%
Lebanese University-----	10%	Studying abroad-----	3.5%
The Holy Spirit University of Kaslik-----	7.5%	Not certain-----	19%
University of Saint Joseph-----	4%		

EXAMINATION RESULTS

MAJORS

Business	21%
Social Sciences	20%
Science	14%
Arts	11.5%
Architecture	6%
Not certain	27.5%

Class Of	French Baccalaureate + Lebanese Baccalaureate %	Brevet %
2009	85.71	89.1
2010	92.98	87
2011	91.8	91.9
2012	95.7	86.6

ORIENTATION DAY



Djemaran hosts an Orientation Day for upper secondary students (grades 11-12) every year in October. Young alumni talk to students about their own career majors and experiences.

Djemaran also arranges meetings with representatives from leading universities in Lebanon.

These meetings are intended to provide senior secondary students with information about admission requirements.

THE NORSIGIAN KINDERGARTEN A NURTURING NEST FOR ARMENIAN CHILDREN



Kindergarten years are crucial to a child's development. They make a permanent impact on the education of the future generations. What are the standards that guide the Norsigian kindergarten of M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran to inspire confidence and quality education?

"The kindergarten of Djemaran has been a good one from the start. We owe this to Lousin Malikian and Karmen Der Garabedian, who had good pedagogical training. They did not only teach language, science and math, but were able to devise a good early childhood education program which reflected the Armenian national spirit," explains Dikran Jinbashian, the principal of Djemaran. "This tradition still lives on in Mezher, and it is easy to see how: the kindergarten, with its beautiful architectural design, is created for a few hundred children; it is perched on the slope of the hill and sprawls over an area of 6000 square meters, providing a wonderful environment with its one story buildings, playgrounds and gardens."

Jinbashian goes on to state that the kindergarten program is delivered by qualified teachers; more than 50 percent of the teachers have university degrees. They implement scientifically based programs, supported by sound pedagogical principles. "These programs have been transferred into Armenian and have been adapted to the language and cognitive world of Armenian children," stresses Jinbashian.

THE NEW MODERN KITCHEN



A new modern kitchen for The Norsigian Kindergarten of M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran was built in 2010, thanks to donations from Mr. and Mrs. Vrej and Salma Sabounjian, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Sdepan and Tamar Der Bedrosian.

At the opening ceremony Dikran Jinbashian, the principal of Djemaran described the Norsigian Kindergarten as "among the best kindergartens in Lebanon."

CHARACTER BUILDING EDUCATION A STEADY PROGRAM



Djemaran provides a coeducational program which contributes to healthy character development and helps to build responsible citizens. It includes different levels and various subjects, such as friendliness, cooperation, empathy, etc. Within the coeducational program an educational day is organized, offering a pleasant learning atmosphere.

ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-SMOKING CAMPAIGNS

During the scholastic year 2011-2012, Djemaran started an anti-bullying campaign. Students in elementary grades described their thoughts, feelings and experiences through writings and drawings, which were displayed later, for the entire student body to see.

In the previous year, there was a joint anti-smoking campaign: classwork for students in grades 1-12 focused on the anti-smoking message for a month; subsequently, this led the administration to declare Djemaran a smoke-free environment.

A SPORTS DAY AND AN ENVIRONMENT DAY

During the scholastic year 2011-2012, Djemaran held a Sports Day to inspire a better understanding of the sporting spirit and to nurture it. Students from K-12 took part in sporting activities.

In the previous year, Djemaran had organized an Environment Day. Students carried out a cleaning campaign and learnt about the importance of keeping the environment clean.

"These programs are made possible by the voluntary contribution of teachers, parents with expertise in relevant fields, friends of Djemaran and specially invited guests," says Hourì Yapoujian, the education director of Djemaran.



A RICH DATABASE OF INSTRUCTIONAL PLANS

In the current scholastic year Djemaran is focused on a project which aims to create a database of detailed and comprehensive instructional plans. "Teaching hours have been reduced for subject coordinators, so that they work more efficiently in their respective subject areas," says Dikran Jinbashian, the principal of Djemaran. The subject coordinator is responsible for asking teachers to outline the lessons for the overall school year; to develop an instructional plan for each lesson in advance; and to submit their plans periodically. "This is a difficult task. However, a wide range of instructional plans, a database will be established over the years," explains Jinbashian. He also points out that instructional plans can be modified over time, and adapted to different teaching methods. "The vast majority of this project will be completed in the near future," he says enthusiastically.

FIRST ARMENIAN SCHOOL TO PROVIDE ORTHOPEDAGOGY IN LEBANON



Schools usually have a psychologist, a sociologist and an orthopedagogue on their staff. Djemaran already had an educational psychologist and an educational social worker since some time. During the scholastic year 2011-2012, the school also established a team of two expert orthopedagogues.

Orthopedagogy is the science of identifying students who have difficulties in concentrating and learning. It involves special teaching procedures designed to help learners with special needs; to improve their reading, writing, expressing and counting skills as much as possible.

Orthopedagogical practice is applied in line with the school's curriculum. "It is true that these services impose additional financial obligations on educational institutions. However, it is undeniable that students with learning difficulties benefit from them, especially if diagnosed at an early age," says Houri Yapoujian, the education director of Djemaran.

STUDENTS HONORED WITH AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE



Distinguished students in each section of the school receive special recognition awards at the end-of-the-year ceremony.

Students with outstanding achievements either in science, literature, Armenian language or Arabic and those who have the highest total average scores are honored with awards.

There is a special award for the student with a positive contribution in public activities and achieving the highest total average score; for the best contributor to Chahagir; for the student who demonstrates flawless behavior and commitment to the field of human services; for the exemplary sportsman and sportswoman.

TEACHING APPROACH



International advisors on education now generally believe that the current educational system in the developed countries is outdated because it was conceived in the 18th and 19th centuries, in the intellectual culture of the enlightenment and in the economic circumstances of the Industrial Revolution. Djemaran is aware that “like all systems the educational system also gets old and should be occasionally restructured,” says Houri Yapoujian, the education director of Djemaran.

“As time passes, certain long-established values are replaced by new ones. Simultaneously, the science of education explores new approaches to teaching and learning, so that students with different abilities are valued for their differences,” she explains. “For this reason, educational programs are often revised (as in the developed countries); the choice of teaching material and of essential skills is determined by the needs and challenges of modern life.”

THE DJEMARAN CURRICULUM



The Djemaran Curriculum is inspired by the French National Curriculum. It follows the Lebanese National Curriculum, and places a strong emphasis on the teaching of Armenian language, Armenian history and Armenian culture.

In this sense, would Djemaran describe itself as open to changing methods or to adopting new approaches that revolutionize the teaching-learning process?

“Next to providing Armenian education, Djemaran also follows the National Curriculum of Lebanon, and this, by evaluating and enhancing the students' ability to think critically, as well as their creative capabilities. Djemaran still adheres to the methods that teach students “how to learn” and which enable them achieve their individual potentials,” says Yapoujian. “Preparation for the French Baccalaureate degree opens up new horizons for students in secondary school, in terms of perceiving the world and developing the ability to understand and analyze by making correlations.”

Making sure that knowledge is not received passively, but actively built up by learners, as well as promoting a climate for balanced freedom and critical understanding, remain the primary focus of the Djemaran education policy.

“We can definitely say that there are persistent efforts in Djemaran to develop active teaching and learning methods, in order to guarantee the active participation of students. Our teachers occasionally take part in teaching enhancement programs and in pedagogical seminars. The Djemaran curriculum was redesigned to stimulate motivation. We deliver the National Curriculum by re-focusing education on enquiry and by allowing students to explore the “what”, “why” and “how”, rather than expecting them to provide ready answers,” says Yapoujian, who is also the science coordinator in Djemaran.

Class sizes in Djemaran are kept to an average of 20-25 students, which is beneficial for the quality of student-teacher interaction. “In the 2010-2011 academic year we provided small classes of 15-17 students in the 1st elementary grade, in order to stimulate the learning process and make it more effective,” adds Yapoujian.



Thus, what happens to the development of a child's potentials, after attending Djemaran for fifteen years? “When teaching methods are designed wisely, they stimulate the student's abilities to perceive, to think and to work, and the unique capabilities of each child come to the fore,” explains Yapoujian. “Teaching methods should be designed and diversified to optimize the acquisition of knowledge by students of different learning types; and this further complicates the teaching process for educators today.”

Despite efforts to perfect teaching methods and approaches, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is on the rise around the world. The reason, according to some educators, is that the education system fails to engage children and teenagers, who are inundated with information from every platform that acts as a data collector. Yapoujian believes that “the existence of Attention Deficit Disorder is ... one of the harmful effects of modern society.” And Djemaran “offers some treatments to students with ADHD. However, the true solution lies within the family and the value system of society.”

Obviously, digital devices make it easier for youngsters to think and understand. Does the school envision a future of technology-based education and a new level of interaction between students and teachers?

“Technology- based instructional methods are already being gradually introduced in Djemaran.



These efforts will grow in the coming years, to provide a solid base. However, the effective use of digital whiteboards depends on the right use of this technology and on the extent to which it is used,” says Yapoujian, who acknowledges its advantages, such as “enriching” the quality of communication between students and teachers, and saving “the time lost” in the classroom while trying to correct mistakes or to keep control. However, “the learning process depends on the ability of the teacher to stimulate thinking, rather than equipping classrooms with state-of-the-art digital tools,” she concludes.

Hence, what are the requirements for a teacher to be employed in Djemaran? Yapoujian explains that Djemaran gives priority to those applicants who have bachelor's degrees and teaching certifications in the subjects that they will be teaching. “The teaching candidate's prior experience is also important, as well as the self-confidence and enthusiasm for the teaching profession he or she demonstrates during the job interview,” as she notes.

Students in Djemaran are encouraged to study the arts and to take part in a wide range of cultural and sporting activities. The school participates in a number of inter-school competitions and sports tournaments; organizes educational visits for students of all ages; hosts artists, intellectuals, national representatives and educators. These provide an opportunity for students to widen their horizons beyond academic education. As Jinbashian, the principal of Djemaran has stated on a previous occasion, these extra-curricular activities were an important factor in choosing Djemaran as winner of the “Best Armenian School” award.

PARENTS ON THEIR EXPERIENCE WITH DJEMARAN

"Djemaran gives students confidence to make their own decisions and to express their own ideas. Our children always feel proud to be identified with Djemaran. In a way Djemaran gives them a sense of being family, and they owe this in part to their teachers."

Nelly Aghasarkissian

"I have attended Champville and I could have sent my children there. However, I chose to send them to Djemaran, without any pressure from anyone. I was confident that Djemaran would provide them with a comprehensive education for their full development as Armenians and as human beings. Djemaran provided all these and developed their capacity for independent thought."

Sdepan Der Bedrossian

"My expectations are fulfilled. Djemaran provides Armenian education, and this, without compromising the National Curriculum requirements, and with high success rates in the Lebanese and French Baccalaureate exams. Djemaran is a unique phenomenon where all three come together."

Dr. Berj Dakesian, MD

THE IMPRESSIVE CULTURAL AND SPORTS HALL
NAMED AFTER DR. ADRINEH KARAKASHIAN

The construction of a sports and cultural hall in Djemaran was completed in 2010, thanks to a generous donation of \$200,000 from Dr. Adrineh Karakashian, MD., as well as other contributions from the Arslanian family (school benefactors) and Mr. and Mrs. Nazaret and Baydzar Karakashian, \$100,000 and \$50,000, respectively.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the new hall, Dr. Karakashian noted: "Your life is enriched by giving; by transmitting selfless joy you feel emotionally satisfied."

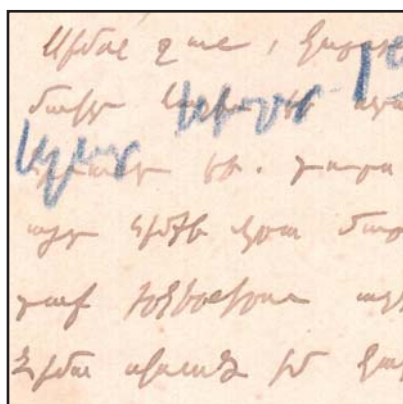
The Dr. Adrineh Karakashian hall meets Djemaran's needs and is used as a sports ground, an events venue and a conference hall.

COMBING THE AMPLE HAMAZKAYIN ARCHIVES TO TRACE THE HISTORY OF DJEMARAN

History is usually remembered in brief titles, while feelings, thoughts and pains experienced in daily life, weave their own version of events out of the silence of archives.

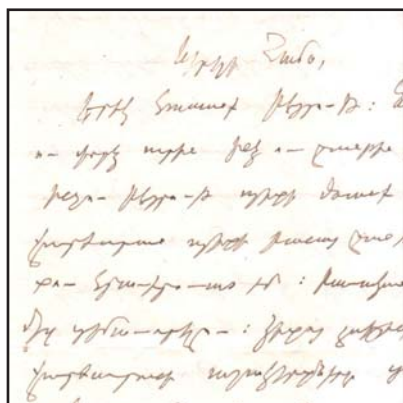
The Hamazkayin archives were reclassified in 2011. A search for material related to Djemaran reveals candid confessions, curious stories, as well as the pragmatic commitment of Armenian prominent intellectuals.

(The quotes below are from the Hamazkayin archives; we reproduce them without any change).



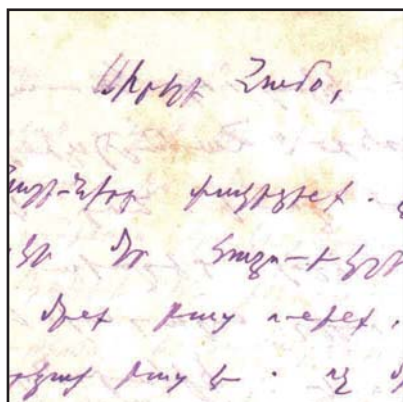
The Armenian Genocide has ravaged Western Armenia, the First Armenian Republic has fallen, Levon Shant (famous writer and former Vice-President of the Armenian Parliament) has taken refuge in France; he suffers from health problems and is emotionally distressed. On 27 August 1922, in a letter addressed to Simon Vratsian (former Prime Minister of the First Republic of Armenia), he writes:

“The void intensifies the feeling of being cut off from work even more, as well as that deep, deep nostalgia for our unfortunate motherland. I do not care for anything else. I wish I was living and working in our devastated country. Never before have I ever felt such a strong desire for the nation and the land.”



Nigol Aghbalian (literary critic and former Minister of Education in the First Republic of Armenia) joins Levon Shant on a trip from Cairo to Beirut, to lay the foundations of the Armenian Djemaran. In a letter addressed to Hamo Ohanjanian (former Prime Minister of the First Republic of Armenia) on 29 October 1929, he describes with utmost simplicity:

“We arrived in Beirut yesterday. They questioned Shant and me on the ship. They asked who we were and why we were staying in Beirut. We explained that Shant was opening a school and I was invited as a teacher.”



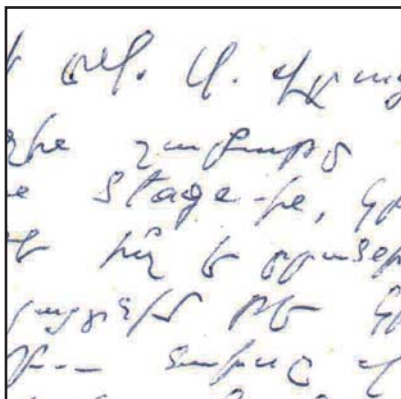
On 6 July 1931, in a letter addressed to Hamo Ohanjanian (Chairman of the Hamazkayin Central Executive Board), Nigol Aghbalian reports on the dire financial state of the newly opened Djemaran, and goes on to reassert his faith:

“Every day we are aware of the importance of the work that we have undertaken and of its influence on society... I am confident that our associates will deliver us from this dire state and will give us a chance to breathe.”



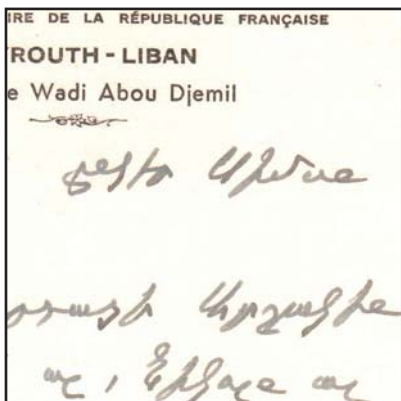
In the Hamazkayin archives the only photograph that depicts L. Shant and N. Aghbalian with graduates of Armenian Djemaran (from the archives of N. Aghbalian, dated 5 June 1938).

Sitting: Levon Shant (left), Nigol Aghbalian (right).



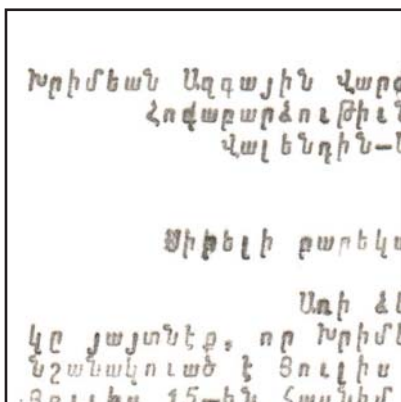
In June 1939 Levon Shant invites Simon Vratsian (who was residing in the United States) as assistant director and teacher “on behalf of the Armenian Djemaran Administration”:

“Nigol and I would be very happy with your presence and cooperation... Upon your arrival we will talk about how you can help me. You should know that you will also have enough time for your writings and other literary pursuits.”



Moushegh Ishkhan (a writer and teacher at Djemaran) travels to Sevre, France, to take a course in pedagogy. On 16 September 1960 he writes about his experiences to Simon Vratsian, now principal of the newly renamed Nishan Palandjian Djemaran:

“There are no significant novelties compared to what we do in Djemaran: motivate the students to work, develop the students' awareness, encourage them to take initiatives, ensure that they are not cut off from life, enhance their personality, etc.”



On 11 June 1963 Simon Vratsian sends a letter to the trustees of the Khrimian Armenian National School in Argentina, to arrange a trip for fundraising purposes. With subtle humor, he writes:

“This working trip of mine is limited to cultural matters only, related to the school and to the preservation of Armenian identity. I have no other commitment. Therefore, please do not organize external or showy events for me outside these boundaries. I am visiting as a teacher, and not as a former prime minister.”

“WHO IS ARMENIAN?”

**“And within the borders of the Armenian state, from one end to the other,
every nobleman and layman was mourning him;
every nobleman and layman living in the House of Torkom
and without exception, the Armenian language in general.”**

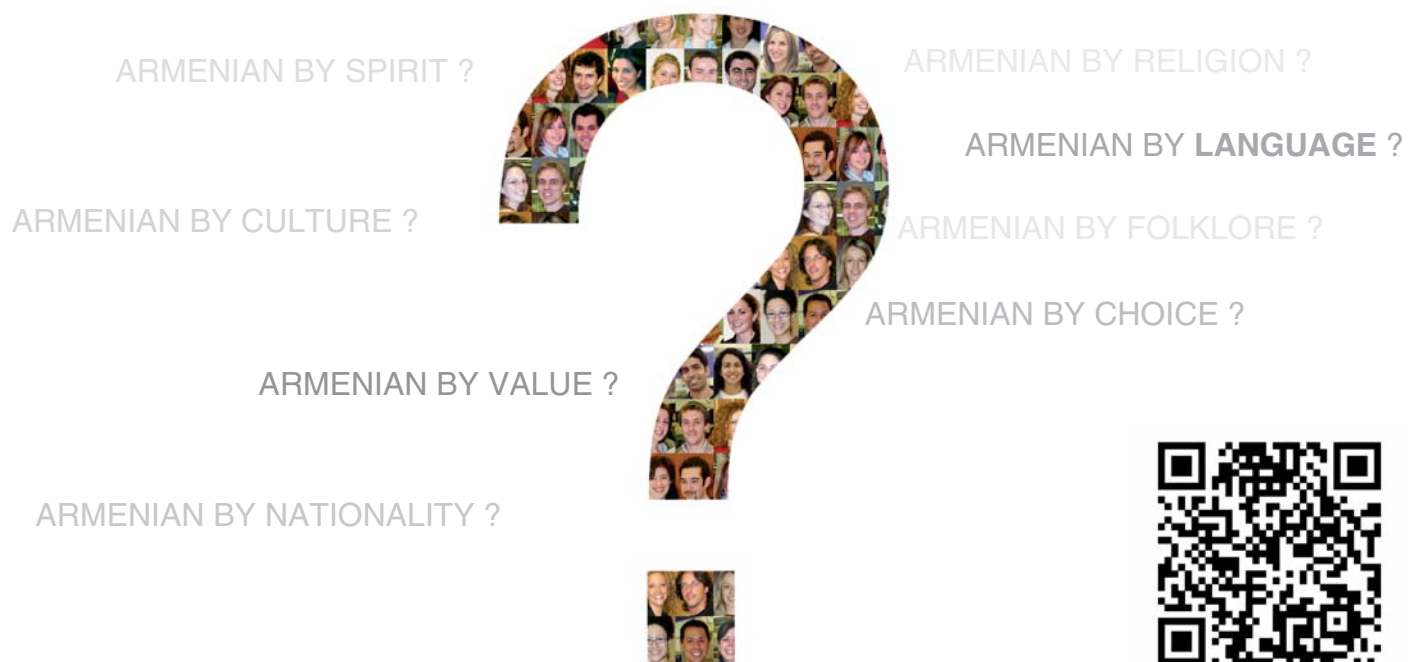
Pavstos Buzand

For the 5th century chronicler Pavstos Buzand, the defining trait of Armenians was their language; and he drew the borders of Armenia according to the areas where the language was spoken. He is quoted in *The Pillars of Armenian Identity* by A. Ayvazian, in turn by H. Balian in an article (2010). The quote makes one wonder whether anything has changed in terms of identifying Armenians by the Armenian language. The UNESCO classification of Western Armenian as an endangered language in 2010 intensified further the latent, indirect controversy among opinion makers:

To what extent does language precondition the Armenian identity today?

And still, lately, information is growing that there are large numbers of Islamized Turkish speaking Armenians with Turkish names living in Turkey, some keeping secretly to their Christian religious traditions, most living their lives as Moslems. It may well be that in the future these factors will also affect the debate on the Armenian identity.

*Abridged excerpts from articles, interviews and surveys outline the language debate in this issue.**



* Readers are invited to join the debate
and to post their comments at: www.hamazkayin.com

qrcode - link



“If you do not speak Armenian, if you do not think and write in Armenian, then your character will be distorted inevitably.”

PROF. KIM AGHABEKIAN; literary critic (Yerevan)

?

“Who is Armenian? Some give us a definite answer that a person is Armenian only if they speak Armenian. We find this definition very narrow. Those who include components of Armenian culture in their self-awareness and feel Armenian are also part of the Armenian nation. One can be Armenian either by emotional or by conscious choice. We should not dismiss those in the West who do not speak Armenian, but feel Armenian; who have consciously chosen the Armenian way and who include components of Armenian culture in their self-awareness; who want to get closer to the Armenian people, to be part of Armenian life. The concept of nation should be understood in cultural terms. We should not be labeling. It is wrong to reason: If one does not speak Armenian, then they are not Armenian.”

VATCHE PAPAŽIAN; president of Hamazkayin Central Executive Board (Beirut)

?

“Neither a cause for celebration nor for mourning, the actual reality forced upon us is tomorrow’s image of the transnational and planetary Armenian, corresponding to the widest view and definition of the nation. This image must include, beyond the present borders of Armenia, Artzakh and Javakhk, the traditional Diaspora – whether Armenian speaking or not, yet endowed with an enormous potential for commitment to a political cause; often lacking knowledge of the Armenian language and culture, yet enlisted to rebuild Armenia. It must include, in terms of origin, even the half-Armenian or quarter-Armenian who feels Armenian (for being an Armenian in the Diaspora today is more a matter of self-awareness than of instinct and heritage...). It must also include those Armenians of Armenia who have become the new diasporans over the vast expanses of the CIS or in the overseas Diaspora. And still, tomorrow it must be able to include also a new (albeit a very old) massive Armenian group, forced to convert and to speak a foreign tongue, foundering in the desolate lands of Western Armenia since 1915; probably having a sizable population on par with the large groups mentioned above.”

HARUTYUN KURKJIAN; literary critic (Athens)

?

“Can people of “Armenian origin”, who live, speak and write in all the languages of Babel constitute a nation and ensure its survival? And do not ask: To what purpose and to what end?”

H. BALIAN; editor of Pakin (Beirut)

?

“We should never forget that a language might have a staying power across time, but it cannot survive in the absence of land, spirit and habitat. Is language considered a vital component of Western Armenian identity today? The answer is negative. I have heard excuses saying: It is possible to be a “good Armenian” without knowing the language, why not? Practically we have a new sense and definition of Armenian identity today and as a result the legitimacy of foreign speaking Armenian entity is established. Along with religion and national values, the language has lost its existential role- a legacy of the 5th century. Western Armenian is not the language of Armenian culture and soul, and that is the existential question.”

PROF. SETA DADOYAN; Armenian Studies (New York)

?

“We are bound to accept that outside Armenia, in the vast area called the Diaspora, our national institutions and churches are preserved mainly by non-Armenian speakers. This may be a wonderful picture from the standpoint of preserving national identity and heritage, but it is a lame one from the standpoint of patriotism and self-awareness nurtured by the mother tongue. For the bitter truth overlooked by many is that national feelings alone are not enough for national survival.”

ROBERT HADDEJIAN; editor of Marmara (Istanbul)

THE STRUCTURE OF HAMAZKAYIN FUNDS

THE HAMAZKAYIN EXECUTIVE BOARD RESTORES ALL ITS WILLS AND FUNDS IN 2011

During the fifteen years of civil war in Lebanon, extraordinary conditions led to using the amounts in most of the wills and funds to guarantee the survival of educational and cultural institutions and programs. The Central Executive Board of Hamazkayin has now succeeded in restoring fully the original amounts in all the existing wills and funds.

The move aims to support the fulfillment of Hamazkayin projects; to promote Armenian education; and to propagate Armenian language and culture.

A BOARD OF TRUSTEES IS APPOINTED TO ADMINISTER THE FUNDS

The board's responsibility is:

1. To invest the deposited sums.
2. To provide new funds and to secure new donations.
3. To ensure that the funds are untouchable and consistent with objectives.

The board establishes the **Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Endowment Fund**.

The fund is registered in the United States as a Nonprofit Organization and is subject to US legislation.

WILLS AND FUNDS AND THEIR PURPOSES

Nigol Aghbalian's Will; Basdermajian Fund: Publication projects

Wills of Mike Kalajian, Khatchig Israelian, Avazanian, Bahadour ; Hratch Tarpinian Fund:

M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran's Student Fund

Dr. Levon Krikorian Fund; Meguerdich and Azniv Sarkisian Fund: Armenological studies

Dr. Bedros and Hovagim Tarpinian Fund: Literary and educational projects

Asdghig Alexandrian Fund: Publication of textbooks

Kevork Goparian Fund: Textbooks for Armenian language

Hamazkayin Eastern USA Regional Fund: Armenian textbooks

Mazmanian's Will: Printing House needs

FUNDS RESERVED BY INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Dr. Samuel Semerjian Fund: Medical studies

Nvart Asadourian Fund: General projects of Hamazkayin

Armenian Educational Foundation's Fund: M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran's Student Fund

NEW FUNDS ENTRUSTED TO HAMAZKAYIN

Meguerdich and Knar Karakashian Fund; Zohrab Bosnoyan Fund:

For the educational needs of the M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran

ALLOCATION OF PROCEEDS - 2011

Dr. Samuel Semerjian Fund (Medical Studies)

\$1500 for a M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran graduate enrolled in Medical Laboratory Science

Meguerdich and Knar Karakashian Fund (Djemaran)

\$2500 for the M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran's Student Fund

Zohrab Bosnoyan Fund (Scholarships for Djemaran students and graduates)

\$2000 for the M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran's Student Fund

\$2000 for two graduates from M. and H. Arslanian Djemaran, for their first year at the university

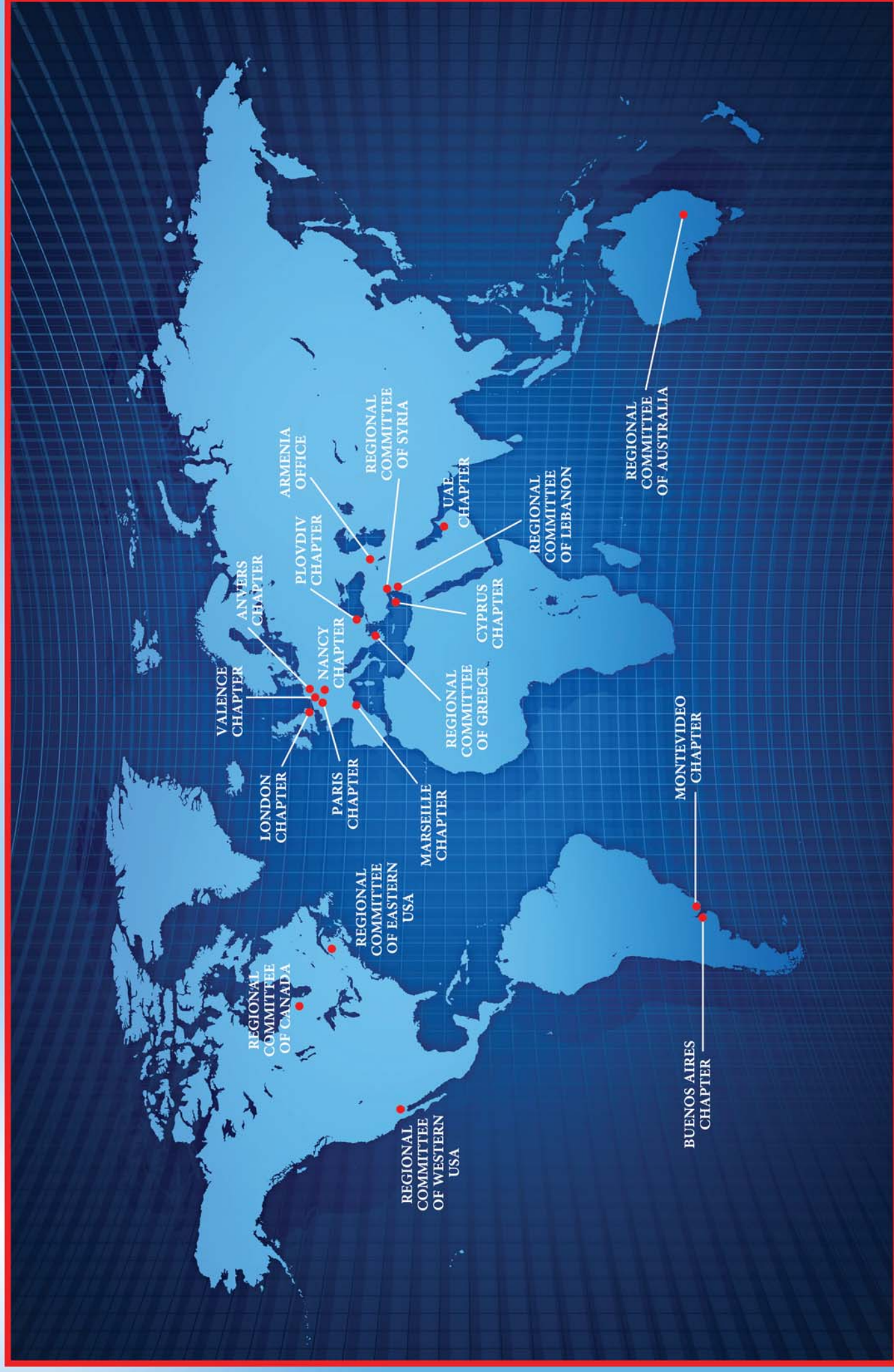
Basdermajian, Mazmanian and Hamazkayin Publishing Funds

\$6000 for Hamazkayin Publishing Projects: Orhan Pamouk's The Snow in classical orthography;

A collection of literary pieces by young writers in Armenia titled: 18-23 Anthology

Meguerdich and Azniv Sarkissian Fund (Armenological studies)

\$3000 for the Armenological Institute of Hamazkayin in Aleppo





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LEBANON OFFICE

USA OFFICE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

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ECOLE BILINGUE MARSEILLE

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BOOKSTORE

A & S GALSTAUN SCHOOL

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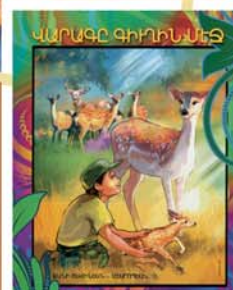
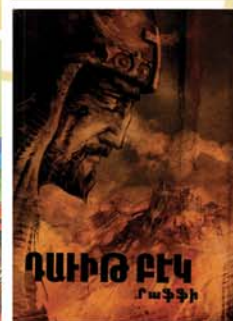
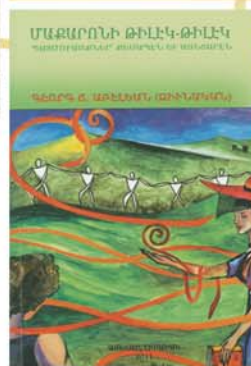
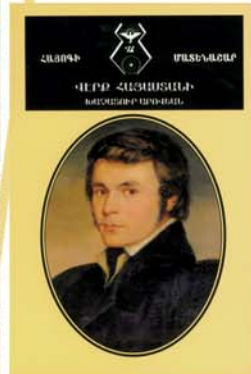
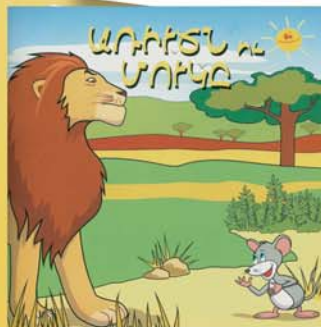
- ATHENS
- THESSALONIKA

- MELBOURNE
- SIDNEY

- DAMASCUS
- ALEPPO
- KAMISHLI
- KESSAB

- LOS ANGELES
- S.F. VALLEY
- LA CRESCENTA
- PASADENA
- GLENDALE
- ORANGE COUNTY
- SAN FRANCISCO
- FRESNO





HAMAZKAYIN
PUBLISHING HOUSE



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