

NEWSletter

Society for Armenian Studies

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Winter, 1977

TOWARD EXPANDING SAS ACTIVITIES

As the S.A.S. begins its fourth year, it is gratifying to note that the field of Armenian studies has gained significant recognition during the past three annual conferences of the Middle East Studies Association of North America. From the single panels held at Boston (1974) and Louisville (1975), the Society has gradually become bolder, sponsoring two panels and a business session at the Los Angeles (1976) conference. Attendance and interest in the panels have been encouraging.

Visibility in the larger academic community is certainly important, and I believe that soon we may be able to expand the programs to three panels. Elsewhere in this newsletter, a call for papers is given for the New York (1977) M.E.S.A. conference and S.A.S. panels. The deadline for proposals and the receipt of abstracts by the program committee has been set for March 1, 1977. Hence, Mr. Libaridian should have all proposals for complete panels for individual papers by the last week of February. While on the subject of S.A.S. panels co-sponsored with M.E.S.A., I shall take the opportunity to urge a larger number of our members to join M.E.S.A. as well. Applications may be obtained by writing: Middle East Studies Association, Hagop Kevorkian Center, New York University, Washington Square, New York, NY 10003.

During the business meeting of the Los Angeles conference, the membership expressed the desire to have more frequent and possibly expanded newsletters. Mr. Jirair Libaridian, secretary of the Administrative Council edited the first issue and will continue in 1977 to be responsible for the newsletter. It is to be hoped that the membership will send him periodically announcements; of past and coming events relating to Armenian studies; information about relevant personal and professional

CALL FOR PAPERS!!!

1977 MESA ANNUAL MEETING (NY)

The Program Committee for the 1977 MESA Annual Meeting has announced that the deadline for submitting abstracts of papers and proposals for panels is March 1, 1977.

During the past three years, organizing and co-sponsoring panels on Armenian Studies at the MESA Annual Meetings has been the SAS' main activity, and one of its primary goals. We consequently invite those who are interested in presenting papers or organizing panels at the forthcoming Meeting to submit abstracts to the SAS Administrative Council.

Papers submitted individually should be accompanied by a 75-100 word abstract. Proposals for panels should provide titles and abstracts for each paper and the names of the suggested participants. A Planning Committee of the SAS Administrative Council has been formed for the purpose of coordinating the various papers, finding suitable panel arrangements and submitting them to the MESA Program Committee.

In order to allow the Planning Committee reasonable time to accomplish its task, all abstracts and proposals should be sent to the Committee by Friday, February 25, 1977, at the address of the Secretary: G. Libaridian, 312 E. Stepney Street, Inglewood, California 90302.

The Program Committee for the 1977 MESA Meeting has also announced the introduction of a number of changes aimed at improving the 1977 Meeting in a number of ways. These will be announced in the MESA February Bulletin.

PAPERS DELIVERED AT THE 1976 MESA MEETING

As reported earlier, the SAS co-sponsored two panels during the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Middle East Studies Association, held at Los Angeles, November 10-13, 1976. In addition, papers by three SAS members were incorporated in other panels. All sessions were well attended and stimulating. For obvious reasons, however, a majority of SAS members did not attend. The following are summaries of papers presented based on the abstracts submitted by the speakers, to provide you with a specific knowledge of the topics discussed.

Panel I: Sources in Medieval Armenian History

AVEDIS K. SANJIAN, UCLA, "The Medieval Armenian Manuscripts in the U.S.: A Major Source for Armenian Studies."

The paper was based on the author's recently published *A Catalogue of Medieval Armenian Manuscripts in the United States*. It concentrated on the chronological and subject distribution of the 180 codexes systematically described in the Catalogue. It also presented in summary form the various schools of Armenian miniature painting represented in the U.S. collections. The discussion highlighted the textual and artistic significance of the Armenian codexes and emphasized the need for further monographic study of individual works.

LEVON AVDOYAN, Columbia University, "Zenob Glak: A Case for Authenticity?"

After a brief discussion of the theories of Khalatian, Abeghian and Abrahamian relating to the question of authenticity of Zenob Glak's *History of Taron*, additional material was presented on the basis of internal and external information, and on examination of John Mamikonian's colophon to his continuation of the work, to support a late date for composition, most probably late eighth to mid-ninth century. The work is a monastic history, written not only to glorify the Monastery of St. John the Precursor (Karapet), but also as an attempt to shift attention away from the north as the original center of Armenian Christianity.

ROBERT H. HEWSON, Glassboro State College, "The Anonymous Armenian Geography of the Seventh Century: The Text and Its Problems"

The well-known Armenian *Geography* was originally attributed to Moses of Khoren and later to Ananias of Chirak. Internal evidence shows that it was written by neither of these authors but was based on the now lost *Geography* of Pappus of Alexandria (fl. 300 A.D.), and dates from the seventh century. The picture which is given of the ancient Armenian state and its neighbors, although based on local documents of the author's time, is both erroneous and anachronistic. Uncritical use of this work has clouded our understanding of early Armenian history until the present time.

ROBERT W. THOMSON, Harvard University, "Literary Themes and 'Historical' Events in Some Early Armenian Historians"

In some passages in early Armenian historical works there are grounds for supposing that the account of a supposedly historical event is a fabrication based on a literary theme or genre. The Armenian versions of many foreign works provided Armenian historians with descriptive passages that were adapted to fit the much later Armenian situation. While it is not necessarily true that all events in Armenian history embellished in this fashion did not take place at all, there are episodes described in some Armenian writings that seem suspiciously like inventions based on common themes in classical and Christian literature. These include the following types: 1) Hagiographical themes: a) rulers' edicts; b) types of torture; c) the recording of proceedings. 2) Historiographical themes: a) the discovery of books in ancient archives; b) the quotation of letters and other documents; c) the invention of a chronological framework to explain a later situation.

The methods of Moses Khorenatsi in reference to his accounts of Armenian paganism and of Jewish colonies in Armenia are of interest in this last regard.

Panel II: Ideological Aspects of the Armenian Liberation Movement

SARKIS SHMAVONIAN, UC Berkeley, "Aspects of Modern Armenian Nationalism in the Russian Empire: 1858-62"

From 1858 roughly through the 1860's, two institutions of secular nationalism among the Armenian communities of the Russian Empire gained permanent form for the first time: a popular press, and benevolent societies. Because

of mutual jealousies and fractional struggles, neither was able to direct its energies toward a united opposition to the older clerical institutions it wished to replace. The ultimate cause of this inability to form "national" organs or to find common spokesmen may be traced to the Apostolic Church's own internal disarray during these years. The movement still followed the example of its own putative opponent and remained timid in its own resolve to direct community affairs.

LEON MEGRIAN, UC Berkeley, " 'Nation' and 'Nationality' – Reflections of 19th Century European and Russian Thought in the Works of Mikayel Nalbandian, 1830-1865"

During his short life, Mikayel Nalbandian was one of the most articulate, fecund, and politically active men of letters in Armenian life. Born and educated in pre-reform Russia, he was one of the *raznochintsy* generation. Having travelled to Western Europe more than once, he gained first-hand knowledge and became appreciative of intellectual currents there, but especially of national liberation movements. However, the focus of his life's interest was always the Armenian people in the Near East and their destiny as a viable nation.

This paper traced the evolution of Nalbandian's views and ideas on the dual notions of the "nation" and "nationality".

RONALD G. SUNY, Oberlin College, "From Populism to Marxism: The Origins of Social Democracy Among Caucasian Armenians"

The first Armenian political parties formed among Caucasian Armenians began in the late 1880's and early 1890's during a period of transition in which earlier peasant-oriented ideologies were being replaced by the worker-oriented Marxist philosophy of the newly-formed Second International. The distinctions which later appeared to separate Populism from Marxism were still unclear in these years, and the appeal of Marxism for Armenians may have had more to do with its internationalism rather than its specific reliance on the working class. Although Marxism would prove to be a more potent political movement both in Russia and Georgia than in Armenia, nevertheless, the first Marxist political movement among Caucasians was the Hnchak Party. But even the Hnchaks, with their ostensible adoption of Social Democracy, did not fully break with the Populist tradition, and the Dashnaktsutun had even clearer links to the *narodniki*.

GERARD LIBARIDIAN, UCLA, "The Armenian Socialist Review *Handes* and Its Role in the Development of Armenian Political Thought"

The difficult course of the Armenian Revolution between 1890 and 1897 was followed by a critical reexamination of the premises upon which the movement was based and simultaneously the rise of new political parties.

This paper focused on one such group, the Armenian Socialist Party and its organ *Handes* (1900, Geneva). An offshoot of the Hnchakian Party, the Armenian Socialist Party regarded the Ottoman society and its Armenian element as being ripe for socialist analysis and applied marxist principles to understand its problems and their peculiar manifestations. Thus, they moved beyond the concept of socialism as a framework for humanitarian and democratic ideals, and reached a socialism which could be used as a tool for the interpretation of history as well as the shaping of future society.

The *Handes* represented the views of a small minority of activists. It nevertheless provided an important link between various ideological positions which could not be adequately understood without it.

PAPERS OF INTEREST TO ARMENIAN STUDIES IN OTHER PANELS

FRANK A. STONE, University of Conn., "The Life and Death of Armenia or Euphrates College, Harpoot (Kharpert), Turkey"

The circumstances under which representatives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions became involved with educational activities in the interior of Asia Minor were sketched. The emergence of other institutions of higher learning in Ottoman Turkey that also had American Board sponsorship and with which Armenia or Euphrates College was related was discussed. Then the organization, program and development of Euphrates College, itself, was traced, using contemporary sources. The impact of the College on its surroundings and in the Armenian community was assessed, and the reasons for terminating this institution explained. Finally, some generalizations were made regarding Euphrates College as a specific "case study" within the extensive network of educational institutions that had been developed in Turkey during the second half of the 19th century by the various Evangelical Unions and the Missions of the American Board.

AGHOP DER-KARABETIAN, University of Kansas, Lawrence, "A Study of Assimilation in the Pluralistic Society of Lebanon: The Case of the Armenians"

Armenians are relatively recent arrivals into Lebanon, and the sectarian nature of the Lebanese society has provided ample opportunity for the maintenance of their ethnicity. Some data were considered which suggest a subtle trend toward assimilation. Namely, (a) a growing acceptance by the indigenous groups, particularly the Christians; (b) a 3.4 percent increase between 1961 and 1971 in the number of Apostolic men marrying non-Armenians; (c) a growing similarity of the Armenian personality to that of the Arab Christian between 1956 and 1973; (d) a smaller magnitude of ethnic orientation among younger age groups; and, (e) a lesser ethnic orientation among urban Armenians compared to rural Armenians. However, a strong residue of ethnic orientation was also reported, reflected mainly in a strong attachment to the Armenian language, in ethnic pride, and in an awareness of the threat of assimilation. It is believed that, due to this residual ethnicity and the segregated social and institutional structure of the Armenian community, it may still be a while before the Armenian community is completely assimilated into the Lebanese society, if at all. Furthermore, in the light of data that show higher ethnic orientation among Armenian political party members compared to non-members, the role of the parties is seen as central in maintaining the ethnic

GEORGE BOURNOUTIAN, UCLA, "Land Tenure in the Khanate of Erevan during the Qajar Administration, 1809-1827."

SAS ELECTIONS

Elections to fill the four vacant positions on the SAS Administrative Council took place between November 22 and December 22, 1976. An ad hoc Committee composed of Prof. Avedis K. Sanjian, Mr. George Bournoutian and Mr. G. Libaridian tabulated the ballots received. The following are the results:

Miss Gia Ayyazian	10
Prof. Nina G. Garsoian	25
Prof. Arpi Hamalian	14
Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian	31
Mrs. Arpena Mesrobian	15
Prof. Frank A. Stone	10
Prof. Robert W. Thomson	23

Therefore, including the three continuing members, the Administrative Council for 1977 is composed of the following members: Prof. R. H. Dekmejian, Prof. N. G. Garsoian, Prof. R. G. Hovannisian, Mr. G. Libaridian, Mrs. A. Mesrobian, Prof. R. Mirak and Prof. R. W. Thomson.

Subsequently, the new Council elected its officers: Prof. Hovannisian, Chairman; Prof. Thomson, Treasurer; and Mr. Libaridian, Secretary.

TOWARD EXPANDING SAS ACTIVITIES

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activities, field research, and changes in employment status; short book notices or reviews; bibliographic items, particularly of articles in scholarly journals and magazines; and open letters or commentaries.

I believe that the Society for Armenian Studies has fulfilled the expectations of those who initiated its organization. Let's keep a good thing going and developing.

Richard G. Hovannisian
Chairman, Administrative Council

OTHER NEWS

Pursuant to the resolution taken at the 1976 Annual Business Meeting of the SAS in Los Angeles, papers have been submitted to the appropriate authorities by Prof. R. W. Thomson and attorney Haig Der Manuelian in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to incorporate the SAS. Once that application is processed, steps will be taken to insure tax exempt status for the society.

Reminders for the payment of annual membership dues for 1977 have been sent by our Treasurer, Prof. Thomson, to all members. Checks should be made out to Society for Armenian Studies, and mailed directly to Prof. Thomson.

PUBLICATIONS BY SAS MEMBERS

Kouymjian, Dikran, editor, *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography and History: Studies in Honor of George C. Miles*. American University of Beirut Press, Beirut, 1974.

-----, with Angele Kapoian-Kouymjian, *The Splendor of Egypt, as Seen Through the Engravings Executed by Bonaparte's Expedition, 1798-1801*. Caravan Books, Delmar and Beirut, 1975.

Takooshian, Harold, *An Evaluation of the Pilot Phase of the AGBU's Social Service Program in New York City*. New York, AGBU, 1976.

Thomson, R. W., *Agathangelos*, SUNY Press, 1977.

FORTHCOMING

Thomson, R. W., *Moses Khorenatsi*, Harvard Armenian Series, (end of 1977).

ARMENIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE XVth INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF BYZANTINE STUDIES

By Prof. D. Kouymjian

The XVth International Congress of Byzantine Studies met in Athens from 5 to 11 of September, 1976. Originally scheduled to be held in Cyprus, the Turkish invasion and occupation of parts of the island forced the change in venue. Nevertheless, one of the five principal panels was devoted to "Cyprus in the Byzantine World."

"Byzantium from 1071 to 1261" was the overall theme of the meeting. Partly due to its being in Athens, attendance at the Congress was very high with nearly 1,000 registered participants. An over-capacity crowd filled the Great Hall of Athens University for the opening session, at which the President of Greece, C. Tastsos, and Prime Minister Constantine Caramanlis led a long list of dignitaries and internationally famous Byzantine scholars.

As with other recent international scholarly meetings, this Congress, with five simultaneously conducted panels — 1) History, 2) Language, Literature and Philology, 3) Art and archaeology, 4) Philosophy and History of Ideas, 5) Cyprus — and with some 150 to 200 communications, proved too big to be totally satisfying. However, true to its own established tradition, the major communications, which had been assigned in advance, were printed and ready for the examination of the congressists. Abstracts of the subsidiary papers were also available to each member.

Two important exhibitions were mounted: one of the icons of Cyprus in a tribute to the island where the Congress was to be held, and the other of Byzantine frescoes.

Among the seven Armenians who presented communications, a majority were from the Armenian SSR or the USSR. Two others, Garen Yuzbashyan of the Institute of Oriental Studies and Tatiana Izmailova (the Russian historian of Armenian art) of the Hermitage Museum, unfortunately were unable to attend. The Leningrad Institute was represented by Ms. Hripsime Janpoladyan who gave a paper entitled "New Specimens of Byzantine Glass from Soviet Excavations."

From Erevan, Academician S. Eremyan presented a general survey in Russian of the early medieval geographical studies that has been working on for some years: "The Administrative Division of Armenia and Asia Minor According to the *Ashxarac'oyc'* and Nilos Doxopatriis".

"The Administrative Division of Armenia and Asia Minor According to the *Ashxarac'oyc'* and Nilos Doxopatriis". Also from the Armenian Academy of Sciences, Hratch Bartikyan, originally from Athens, to the surprise of his audience, presented his long paper — "The Armenian Emigration in the Eleventh Century: Causes and Consequences" — in flawless and elegant Greek. In the long discussion after the paper, Ms. Viada Arountiunova of the Academy of Sciences in Erevan, presented

an interesting comment in English which suggested that the attitude of Armenian historians of the period changes perceptibly from Aristakes Lastiverc'i to Matt'eos Urhaec'i, and that this change is important to the interpretation of the emigrations. Ms. Arountiunova herself presented a paper in English, "The Expansion of Byzantium during the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries According to Armenian Sources."

Ms. Nina Garsoian, Professor of Armenian Studies and Chairman of the Department of Near Eastern Language and Culture at Columbia University, read her paper, "Gund-Thema in Armenian Sources", both in French and Russian. Though research is still in progress she suggests that a clearer understanding of the origins of the Byzantine themes may be forthcoming from a thorough study of the Armenian Gund.

Dickran Kouymjian, Professor of Near Eastern History and Art at the American College in Paris, and Visiting Professor of Armenian Studies at California State University in Fresno, presented in English, preliminary information on "The Frescoes of the Late Thirteenth/Early Fourteenth Century Armenian Church in Famagosta, Cyprus". Finally, Father Levon Zekiyan of the Mekhitarist Congregation in Venice, and the Center for the Study and Documentation of Armenian Culture in Milan, reexamined Armeno-Byzantine church ties in a paper presented in French, "The Negotiations between Nerses Shnorhali and Theodoros for Union of Armenian and Byzantine Churches".

All of the above mentioned communications were very well attended; Armenians from the Athens community were sometimes present. A luncheon for the Armenian participants was offered by Monsignor Hovhannes Koyounian of the Armenian Catholic Prelacy of Athens; other Armenian clerics as well as several Greek and Italian Byzantinists interested in Armenian studies were also invited.

NEW MEMBERS

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