

Karabagh is Subject of Lectures in Southern California

PASADENA, CA - Nagorno-Karabagh was the subject of a series of lectures presented in Southern California by Hratch Tchilingirian, scholar and analyst of contemporary Armenian affairs. Three lectures were sponsored by the 1700th Anniversary of Christianity in Armenia, Western Diocese Central Committee. Tchilingirian spoke in four cities, starting July 22 and ending on August 9.

"Guns and Crosses: the Church in Karabagh" was the title of the first lecture held in

By James Moushegian

Pasadena. Tchilingirian presented a brief historical overview up to 1930, when the church was completely closed, and focused on the reestablishment of the Armenian Church in Karabagh in 1989. He then discussed the role of the church and clergy in Karabagh since 1988 and the language of religious discourse in the context of the war with Azerbaijan.

In his second lecture, "Karabagh: The Unfolding

Story," Tchilingirian presented the developments of the last four years since the cease-fire in the region and gave an update on the current situation. He analyzed the negotiations process since 1992 and the reasons of the current impasse. This lecture was sponsored by Mashdots College in Glendale.

"Everything you ever wanted to know about the Republic of Mountainous Karabagh" was the topic of the third presentation held at St. Peter Armenian

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Church in Van Nuys. Tchilingirian discussed the historical, political and military processes that led to the declaration of independence and the establishment of state structures in Karabagh. Then he provided a general overview of the socioeconomic conditions, with particular focus on the various segments of the population. He explained the difficult socioeconomic conditions and their short- and long-term implications for Karabagh society.

The final lecture, held at St. Mary's Church in Costa Mesa, discussed the case of Nagorno-Karabagh in the context of regional and international political developments. Tchilingirian

presented the various political and economic conflicts in the Caucasus, particularly the Caspian oil contracts, and their implications for the resolution of the Karabagh conflict. He pointed out the interests of each of the regional powers — Russia, Turkey and Iran — as well as U.S. foreign policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia.

These most informative and analytical lectures by Hratch Tchilingirian, a PhD candidate at the London School of Economics and Political Science, provided an opportunity to more than 400 Southern California Armenians to get acquainted with the internal and external developments in Karabagh.