HISTORIC WEDDING IN GERMANY

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Category: Opinions

Converts Return to Armenian Roots

Hamo Moskofian, Wiesbaden, 22 January 2012

Despite stormy weather, nearly 1,000 friends of the bride and the groom attended, on Jan. 21 in Wiesbaden, Germany, the historic wedding ceremony of former Alevi Simon (Sedat) Goenden of Mush-Daron to an Armenian woman from Varto-Mush. Among the well-wishers were Alevis, Armenians, Assyrians, Kizilbash, Kurds, Syriacs, Zazas--many of them raised as Turks but now returning to their national roots. Afghans, Germans and democratic Turks also attended the wedding, which was officiated by Father Serovpe Isakhanian of Hessen and Istanbul.

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Mr. Goenden, raised as an Alevi, was christened in an Armenian church a few years ago. He is one of the leaders of Turkified nations whose members, in increasing numbers, are discovering their national roots and discarding their forced Turkish identify. Also at the party was democratic Turkish leader Ali Ertem, his wife and daughter Ani.

Simon's father--Huseyin--along with his sons and Dikran (Shahin) Chatinkaya, Sabo Akgul, Mikail Aslan, Zafer Kucuk, Cemil Qockiri, Kamer Veroz, Selin Devleti-Mirakian, Azad Shahin and others have been trailblazers in helping the "lost" members of various ethnic groups of Turkey to discover their national roots.

Through the assistance of Mkrditch Bouldoukian of Beirut and Dr. Dikran Abrahamian of Canada, I was able to keep my promise to Simon and attended the wedding. Following the ceremony, in the Western Armenian tradition with Christian and Alevi "colors", the cosmopolitan group enjoyed Armenian, Kurdish, and Zaza traditional music and dance. The 10-layer cake was decorated with the emblems of Armenia and Kurdistan.