'HOOSK' RIPE FOR REFORM

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By Loosineh Markarian, PhD Candidate, Tehran, 23 September 2010

There are major challenges in Iran for the spreading of genocide awareness. The biggest problem being the absence of a genocide studies center or program at universities. There could be many reasons for this shortcoming, such as the government's neglect of the social sciences, not funding the translation of new books, specifically human rights-related literature. Whatever the reason, the outcome is the absence of genocide studies experts and researchers. You might find a few articles here and there, but they are not robust studies or analyses. There are few genocide-related books translated into Persian. There are very few websites with information or news about genocide.

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In the absence of academic centers and scholarly work, the Armenian Research Center (Hoosk), the sole "Hye Dat" (Armenian Cause) organization in Iran, has taken the responsibility to educate Iranians about the Armenian Genocide. The Center does this job by translating books into Persian and by providing interested individuals with information, books, articles, etc.
The Center organizes seminars, workshops, and meetings for Armenians and Iranians. As a teenager I had the opportunity to meet many interesting individuals such as Hrant Dink, Mihran Dabagh, Hilda Tchoboian, researchers and political analysts by participating in seminars organized by the Center. Peyman, the Center's Persian-language quarterly, has become one of the most popular magazines among Iranians.

Despite the commendable job that has been done and is still being done (by very few people), the Center is facing a serious challenge to his reputation and importance. Thus, I am writing not to praise the job of Hoosk but to voice my concern! Hoosk is now being managed by some people who not only lack the ability to continue the good work of the previous members, but also do not have the necessary insight and knowledge to adopt new strategies for the dissemination of Hye Dat's views.

I am afraid. I am afraid there are very few active people who can save the Center. I am afraid the community would withdraw from participating in the Center's activities. I am afraid that capable people would give up and not fight the pretender-intellectuals whose lack of knowledge and expertise, as well as mismanagement, would harm the Center's reputation.

Previous articles by Loosineh Markarian on Keghart.com:

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