

Աստուած Պահպանեալ Տայաստան

Աստուած զաշտղանեալ Տայաստան
Պահեալ ազատ եւ անարատ,
Օրինեալ նորա լեռք ու դաշտը
Արքիբք, գետք եւ ծովակ,

Աստուած զաշտղանեալ Տայաստան

Պահիր մեզ միշտ քայ եւ խելօք
Տեզ մտքով եւ մաքուր սրտով,
Տղարտութիւն, ընն ու նախանն,
Ի մեջ մեզմէ, Տէր, դու բարձ,

Աստուած զաշտղանեալ Տայաստան

Չօրացո մեր սուրբ եկեղեցի,
Որովս մեր հայ ազգին գրկի,
Ազատ կրօնք, լոյս հաւատ
Շրջադառաց աղոյի ազգ:

Աստուած զաշտղանեալ Տայաստան

Պահեալ Աղարէգ Արզար

Եօկօհամա, Շաբոն
1920 Փետրուար 20

Prayer by Diana Apcar



Armenian refugees Satenik Mkrtichian and her brothers Arshak and Gevorg (Seattle, Washington, 1920)



Armenian refugees Satenik Mkrtichian and her brother Arshak (Tokyo, Japan, 1918)

Works by Diana A. Apcar

Susan. Yokohama, 1892.

Home Stories of the War. Kobe, 1905.

The Truth about the Armenian Massacres. Yokohama, 1910.

Betrayed Armenia. Yokohama, 1910.

In His Name... Yokohama, 1911.

The Peace Problem. Yokohama, 1912.

Peace and No Peace. Yokohama, 1912.

The Great Evil. Yokohama, Japan, 1914.

On the Cross of Europe's Imperialism: Armenia Crucified. Yokohama, 1918.

From the Book of One Thousand Tales: Stories of Armenia and its People 1892-1922. Bloomington, 2004.



Diana Apcar with her family, (c. 1920, Yokohama, Japan)

America! Armenia Calls to Thee

Between the mighty and one of strength bereft,
God stands for succor and for help;
From East to West God rules:
Oh! Land of the West, where the people rule,

Kaiser, and King, and Tsar: my children slain;
My rivers red with blood;
My plains and hillsides desolate.
Oh! Land of the West, where the people rule,

Diana Agabeg Apcar

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441 Mystic Street, Arlington, MA 02474-1108
Tel. (781)-646-3090
www.armenianculturalfoundation.org



Vertical Japanese text: アップカール, アガベック, デイアナ

Diana A. Apcar
Writer, Humanitarian, Diplomat

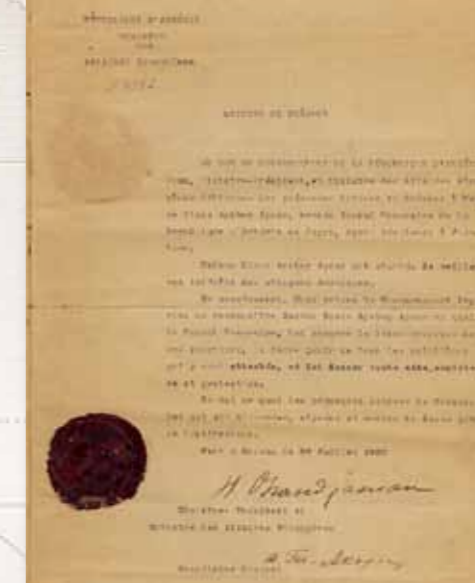
Throughout history, Armenian women have played an influential role in the affairs of their nation, with significant contributions to the cultural and civil life of Armenia and the Diaspora.

Born in Rangoon, Burma (present day Yangon, Myanmar) on October 12, 1859, Diana was the youngest of the seven children of the Agabeg family. Her father, Hovhannes Agabeg, was a first-generation Indian Armenian, having migrated there as young a boy with his parents from New Julfa, Iran.

Diana married Apcar Michael Apcar, also with roots in New Julfa on June 18, 1889 in Rangoon. Michael was one of the descendants of the prominent house of Apcar, founded by Arratoon (1779-1863) and Gregory (1795-1847) Apcar in 1819.

The Apcar couple moved and settled in Yokohama, Japan in 1891. They were blessed with five children, only three of whom survived. Their first child Rose was born in 1890 in India. Their son Michael and second daughter Ruth [Zumruth] were born in Japan in 1891 and 1896, respectively.

As the years went by, her son Michael took over the helm of the family business, leaving Diana more time to delve into her literary, humanitarian, and diplomatic work. She collaborated with various journals, among them Armenia (later New Armenia), The Japan Advertiser, The Japan Gazette, and The Far East.



Letter from Hamo Ohanjianian, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia appointing Diana A. Apcar as the Honorary Consul to Japan (July 22, 1920, Yerevan, Armenia)



Diana Apcar's Diplomatic Passport (March 3, 1920)

By 1920 she had already published over nine books dedicated to the Armenian Genocide, international relations and the impact of imperialism on the international affairs and world peace. These include her first novel, Susan, which was published in Kobe in 1892, followed by Home Stories of the War.

Diana Apcar especially focused on the refugees and survivors of the Armenian Genocide who had found their ways to Japan. The memoirs of the refugees of that period are testimony to her courage, devotion and unconditional benevolence. “This wonderful woman used to work miracles, helping poor strangers in difficult situations, especially when women and children were involved... She was a woman of faith and prayer and a woman of positive action. She wrote letters to contemporary kings, queens, and governments, about the plight and persecutions, the ruthless murders. The genocide of her race, and the prevailing poverty of the remnants in all parts of Turkey, pleading with a deaf, blind world...”

In 1920, Japan became one of the first nations to recognize the independence of the Armenian republic, mostly through her efforts. In a letter dated July 22, 1920, signed by the Foreign Minister of the Republic at the time, Hamo Ohanjanian, in recognition and appreciation of her devotion, and “for defending the interests of the newly-born Fatherland, and mitigating the conditions of our compatriots,” appointed her Honorary Consul to Japan. This appointment made Diana Agabeg Apcar the first Armenian woman diplomat, and one of the first women ever appointed to a diplomatic post. Her services in that position concluded with the Sovietization of Armenia by the Russian Bolsheviks in the 1920s.



Diana and her husband in Japan, 1902

The new status added to Diana Apcar's stature among governmental circles in Japan. In addition to diplomatic duties, it facilitated her work on behalf of the Armenian refugees who sought safe havens in distant shores, the United States, in particular. She corresponded with several international figures. In a letter dated December 20, 1920, she pleaded with President Woodrow Wilson about the “Armenian agony.” She was in contact with the American secretaries and under-secretaries of state, namely William Robert Lansing, William Phillips, and Alvey A. Adee. In addition she communicated with international humanitarians James L. Barton, foreign secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, David Starr Jordan, director of the World Peace Foundation and president of the World Peace Congress, and Arthur G. Symonds, Secretary of the Balkan Committee - to name a few. She was also instrumental in fundraising campaigns for the Near East Relief.

Her devotion to her faith and the Armenian Church was boundless. In a letter dated February 10, 1920, addressed to an Armenian clergyman in the United States, Diana Apcar writes:

“Holy father, ... It has been twenty-nine years that I have been living in this remote country. I am longing for the church, I am longing deeply. There is not a church like the Armenian church with her vibrant spirit and consoling prayer, not even one which can provide the gratifying feeling of the Armenian liturgy. I do not know whether there will be a day that I would have the privilege of crossing the threshold of my church and be a participant of the holy mass, my ears listen and satiated by those prayers.”

Diana Apcar knew the Bible verbatim. She followed the teachings of the church faithfully, and reading the Bible was part of her daily routine. She even wrote a prayer, which she asked to be read at the church service which read:

“I wish to spread this prayer among the Armenian nation (people), so that wherever there are Armenians they pray to God so that



The Krikorian family passport (refugees assisted by Diana Apcar)

*Armenia is liberated
That the Armenian Republic remains firm
Grant God and have mercy.*

*Ար Հայաստանն ազատոյի
Հայրց հանրապետութիւնը հաստատուն մնայ,
Շնորհիւ Տէր և ողորմէաւ:*

Diana's patriotism was coupled with religious zeal. A devout believer, and yet a true realist, she had an excellent grasp of the behind-the-scene machinations of the Great Powers, whom she found responsible for the calamities that befell her people. “Those who are called European Powers,” she once said to a visitor, “are the satan's scourge of the world... I would rather trust the satan than the European powers.”

At the age of sixty-seven Diana Apcar experienced various physical ailments, among them hearing loss, failing eyesight, and arthritis. She died on July 8, 1937. Two days later a capacity crowd gathered at the Yokohama Union Church to bid farewell to the pivotal figure of their community, who had lived among them for forty-six years with honor and dignity. In his eulogy Rev. Schenk spoke of Diana Apcar as the “good soldier of Jesus Christ, the sentinel on guard, strong, courageous, inured to hardship, loyal to her convictions, her racial heritage, to her mother church and to her beloved people.” She was buried in the Foreigners Cemetery of Yokohama next to her husband. Her tombstone is engraved with the simple words befitting her life and faith: “Out of Earth's shadows unto Heaven's Glorious Day. We Loved Her, but God Loved Her Best.”

A century ahead of her time, Diana Apcar was one of the leading figures of progressive thought among Armenian women intellectuals, a literary figure, orator and publicist in Imperial Japan at a time when women rarely thought of public activities. Her legacy is an inspiration to Armenians, women in particular, who grow up in foreign lands, away from their language and heritage.

The Most Excellent Woodrow Wilson
President of the United States of America
The White House Washington

Be graciously pleased to read this letter. I want to tell you that France has been behind the Turkish attack on the territory of the Armenian republic. How do I know? I know from all that France has done to the Armenians during two years. Since the signing of the Armistice the French have used the Turks as an instrument for accomplishing the destruction of the Armenians.

They abandoned Marash to Turkish massacre. They compelled the evacuation of Sis. They prevented aid from reaching Hadjin. They have pursued the Armenian volunteer bands in Cilicia with a virulent persecution, and foiled all the endeavors of those men to save their own defenseless people. The latest news is, that they have hanged Capt. Shishmanian.

Every Turkish massacre of Armenians has universally had some powerful European government or governments behind it. Every event that transpires in the Near East is directed by some European power or powers.

France desires that the Armenian agony should end in an Armenian grave. She is now working hard to dig that grave.

Respectfully,
Diana Agabeg Apcar
219B Bluff Yokohama
December 20, 1920



Encyclical issued for Diana A. Apcar by Catholicos Gevorg V [Surenian] Supreme Patriarch of All Armenians, (August 9, 1916, Vagharshapat, Armenia)

Ara Ghazarians, Curator
Armenian Cultural Foundation



Letter from Garegin Pastermajian, Armenia's Ambassador to the U.S.

American Consulate General
Yokohama, Japan
October 28, 1920

Subject: Appointment of a Woman as Consul for Armenia at Yokohama
The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to report that Mrs. Diana Agabeg Apcar has been appointed by the Republic of Armenia as Consul at Yokohama and is now waiting for her exequatur from the Japanese Government.

Mrs. Apcar is a native of Armenia, over 60 years of age, a widow, and has long resided in Yokohama, where she is engaged on export and commission business. She is a woman of unusual ability and is highly esteemed in this community, where her works of benevolence, especially in aid of unfortunate Armenians, have been of the most praiseworthy character.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
[Signed]
Consul

General
Hon. Robert Lansing
Secretary of State
Washington
Excellent Sir,

Pardon the liberty I take in addressing you this letter.

I am Mrs. Apcar, an old and well known resident of Yokohama, of Armenian nationality, and enquiries made regarding are at the U. S. Consulate General would satisfy you.

I am appealing to you on behalf of my nationals who arrive here via Siberia with the intention and purpose of proceeding to the United States. I know for a fact that every one of these is as loyal to the United States as the most loyal American: indeed are oppressed and hunted people cannot be anything else but loyal to the country that is kind to them.

What I pray, is, that the kindness which the United States government has shown to the Armenians in America may be extended to those who arrive here on their way to America.

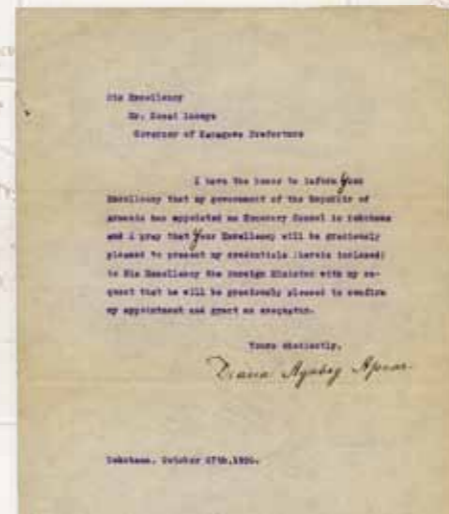
I know that the laws have to be obeyed, but I am asking a special favor for these poor Armenians which can only be granted by the Department of State.

Alas! Poor Armenians: not only pursued by one enemy, but sandwiched between enemies: it is on them that the aegis of America should be thrown.

Yours respectfully,
Diana Agabeg Apcar



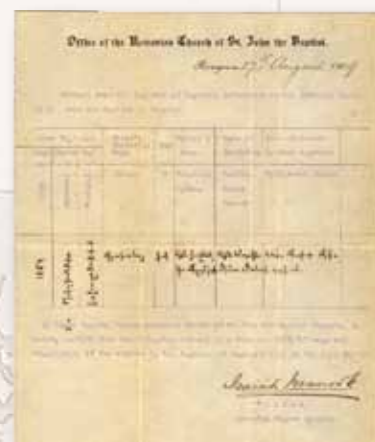
Encyclical issued for Diana A. Apcar by Archbishop Sahak Ayvastian, Prelate of the Diocese of Iran India (October 22, 1920, New Julfa, Iran)



Diana A. Apcar's letter to Kosai Inouye, Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture (October 27, 1920, Yokohama, Japan)



Letter of Hamo Ohanjanian, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Armenia to Diana A. Apcar (July 22, 1920, Yerevan)



Baptismal Record, (August 17, 1909, Rangoon, Burma)

ԱՐՏԱՔԻՆ ԳՈՐԾԵՐԻ ՄԻՆԻՍՏՐ
Երևան 22 Յուլիսի 1920 Թ.

Յարգելի Տիկին.

Ինձ յաւ յայտնի է որ Օսյարագոյն Արեւելքում ոչ ոք չի գործել այնքան, ինչքան Գոյք, մեր նորածին Տարեմիջի շաեերը յայտարարելու եւ մեր հայրենակիցների ծանր վիճակը թեթեւացնելու համար: Նոյնպէս ինձ յայտնի է որ այդ հեռու վայրերում ոչ մի հայ չունի այնքան մեծ հեղինակութիւն տեղացիների եւ մեր հայրենակիցների մօտ ինչպէս Գոյք ուստի ես Ձեզ նշանակում եմ Տայաստանի Հիւյստոսո Շառդոնում եւ յոսով եմ, որ չէք մերժել ստանձնել այդ ծանր յուշտօր յօգուտ մեր երիտասարդ հայրենիքին:

Սորա հետ միասին ուղարկւում է Ձեզ համադատասխան հաստարմագիր, վստահ եմ որ ձառորնական կառավարութեան կողմից ոչ մի արգելիչ չէք հանդիմոյիլ ստանալու անհրաժեշտ "exequatur":

Ուղարկում եմ Ձեզ Արտաքին գործերի Մինիստրութեան վերջին տեղեկագիրը, որից Գոյք կը ծանօթանաք Տայաստանի ներկայ վիճակի հետ: Կօզուտեք ամեն մի դեղքից Ձեզ միշտ տեղեկութիւններ տալու եւ խնդրում եմք մեզ նոյնպէս տեղեկ պահել Օսյարագոյն Արեւելքի կեանքին:

Ընդունեցէք իմ սրտագին ողջոյսներուս հաստատիքը:

ՄԻՆԻՍՏՐ ԵՄԵՆԱԿԱՏ
Եւ
ԱՐՏԱՔԻՆ ԳՈՐԾԵՐԻ ՄԻՆԻՍՏՐ
Տ. Օհանջանեան

ՏԻԿԻՆ ԳԻՆԱՍ ԱՐԱՔԷԳ ԱՔԱՐԻՆ,
ԵՕԿՕՏԱՄԱՆ



Certification of naturalization issued by the Armenian Legation to Washington to Zumruth Apcar; Diana Apcar's youngest daughter (March 29, 1922, Washington, D.C.)



Letter of Credentials from Hamazasp Ohanjanian, Prime Minister of Armenia