

**March 2015****[cagr.usc.edu](http://cagr.usc.edu)****From the Director***Los Angeles, March 31, 2015*

While during the last weeks, the Center hosted two impressive well attended lectures on topics from the Holocaust and the Cambodian Genocide (see below), one event stood out, since it opened an important avenue for the research at the Center.

Just a few days ago, the Center received a very generous donation from Glendale lawyer Vartkes Yeghiayan, consisting of files from his historic class action lawsuit on behalf of dozens of families of survivors of the Armenian Genocide against New York Life Insurance Company. The files amount to 50 boxes of documents that include claimant's files, with birth and death certificates, family trees, and photos. Additionally, they contain the correspondence of the lawyer on the behalf of the lawsuit and court documents. I am very excited to see what scholars will be able to learn from these invaluable resources in the future. This is hopefully the first of many primary source document collections the Center will receive in its aim to build the world's first archive of genocide materials.

To foster research is one important way to honor genocide victims, yet this April 2015 the Center for Advanced Genocide Research will also participate in various ways in the commemoration of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire during the First World War.

On April 8th, Dr. Ugor Üngür, Associate Professor at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, and one of the world historical experts on the Armenian Genocide, will be coming to Los Angeles and presenting a lecture at the Center. His research examines the Kurdish people in their roles both as perpetrators and resisters of the mass violence in the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. Dr. Üngür, who studies state formation and the historical sociology of mass violence, has published on both the Armenian Genocide and the Rwandan Genocide.

Invited by the Armenian government, I will have the opportunity of traveling to Yerevan, Armenia in late April as part of a USC Shoah Foundation Delegation to participate in the official 100th anniversary

commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. The delegation will also include Executive Director Dr. Stephen Smith, Director of Research and Documentation Karen Jungblut, and Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Professor Emeritus at UCLA. On April 24th, the Shoah Foundation will be launching its testimony collection from the Armenian Genocide on the Visual History Archive. I look forward to sharing more about these exciting developments.

*Wolf Gruner*  
*Director, USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research*  
*Shapell-Guerin Chair in Jewish Studies*  
*Professor of History*

## Recent Events

### **Center Received Primary Document Donation from *Marootian et al. v. New York Life Insurance Company Class Action Lawsuit***

On Thursday March 26th, the Center for Advanced Genocide Research celebrated its first primary-source document acquisition, consisting of up to 50 boxes of documents from the historic 2004 *Marootian et al. v. New York Life Insurance Company Class Action Lawsuit*. The lawsuit, which was arbitrated by Glendale lawyer Vartkes Yeghiayan, secured previously denied life insurance payments to Armenian families whose relatives (the policy holders) perished in the 1915 Genocide. The donated papers include trial transcripts, legal documents, genealogies, birth and death certificates, and photos. We were fortunate to have not only Vartkes Yeghiayan and some of his colleagues, but also members of the Marootian family present at the event. More information on the acquisition and the event can be found [here...](#)



*Please consider donating private papers, documents, photographs or films regarding the Holocaust and other genocides.*

*To find out more about donating materials, please visit our website at [cagr.usc.edu](http://cagr.usc.edu) or call 213-740-6001.*



**Peter Hayes (Northwestern University), lectured on the similarities and differences between anti-Semitism and homophobia in Nazi Germany**

On Tuesday March 10th, Dr. Peter Hayes, Theodore Zev Weiss Holocaust Educational Foundation at Northwestern University, explained to students, faculty and staff the similarities and differences between anti-Semitism and homophobia in Nazi Germany. Dr. Hayes highlighted four key differences in the understanding of the two hatreds: historical context, motives for

persecution, objectives of persecution, and scope of violence. Along with these distinctions, however, Dr. Hayes found similarities in the two groups' outsider status in a Nazi worldview of hegemonic Aryan masculinity and reproductive capability. More information about this event can be found [here...](#)

A full video of the lecture can be viewed [here...](#)

**Center Fellow Peg LeVine (Monash University, Australia), lectured about *Ritualcide* perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia**

On February 26th, our current Center fellow, Dr. Peg LeVine (Ph.D., Ed.D.) defined and discussed *Ritualcide*, the systematic destruction of rituals and ritual objects, by the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia. Dr. LeVine, whose diverse expertises includes trauma psychology, clinical anthropology, Asian studies, and sculpting, presented videos of her research in Cambodia, illustrating the ways in which Cambodian survivors experience spirituality and rituals and how they can be healed through their deep connections to the spirit world. More information about this event can be found [here...](#)



A full video of the lecture can be viewed [here...](#)

## Upcoming Events



### **The Kurds and the Armenian Genocide: Collaboration and Resistance**

April 8, 2015, 4:00 pm

*USC Tutor Campus Center, Room 450 - The  
Forum*

***A Lecture with Ugur Üngör, Ph.D.***  
Utrecht University (The Netherlands)

Associate Professor of History Dr. Ugur Üngör studies the historical sociology of mass violence. This lecture will look at how and why individual Kurdish people chose to get involved in the Armenian Genocide in 1915. Dr. Üngör will be discussing both acts of perpetration and resistance engaged in by the Kurds.

*This lecture is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Institute.*

[Learn More...](#)

## **Special Collections**

**Please consider donating private papers, documents, photographs or films regarding the Holocaust and other genocides.**

The Center works with USC Libraries Special Collections to preserve private collections and make them accessible for academic research and student investigation.

To find out more about donating materials, please visit our website at [cagr.usc.edu](http://cagr.usc.edu) or call 213-740-6001.

**For more information about the USC Shoah Foundation Center for Advanced Genocide Research and its work, please visit our website at: [cagr.usc.edu](http://cagr.usc.edu)**

**To subscribe to the Center's mailing list, please email [cagr@usc.edu](mailto:cagr@usc.edu)**



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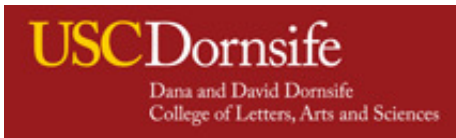
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