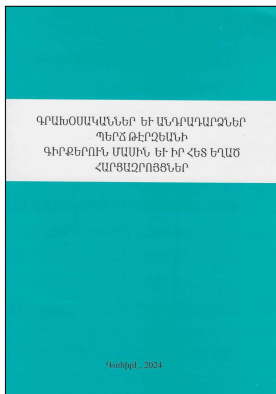


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### BOOK REVIEWS

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### A COLLECTION DEDICATED TO THE WORKS OF PERCH TERZIAN

Recently, we gratefully received the collection “Reviews and Reflections on Perch Terzian’s Books and Interviews with Him” by the renowned Egyptian-Armenian intellectual, steadfast guardian, and advocate of Armenian identity and the purity of the Armenian language, Perch Terzian. The author dedicated this work to his “life companion, Seda Samuelian-Terzian, without whose support this work would not have been possible.”<sup>1</sup> Taking this opportunity, I’d like to say a few words about my friend, the author, who has a deep love for Armenian culture, as reflected in his thoughtful and well-crafted works. The collection is made up of various sections, including “Reviews and Reflections,” “Perspectives of Egyptian Armenians,” “Looking Back,” “Publishing Activities of the AGBU’s Satenig Chaghar Foundation in Cairo,” “Establishment of the Embassy of Armenia in Egypt,” “Supplement to the Arabic Monthly ‘Arev’,” “Response as Needed,” “A Heartfelt Call for the Armenian Language,” “The Armenian Studies Center at Cairo University,” “The First Pan-Armenian Armenia-Diaspora Conference,” “Hrach Manukyan: Distinguished Member of AGBU and AYA (Antranik Youth Association),” “About Perch Terzian’s Works,” “Interviews,” “The Author’s Books and Booklets,” and “Awards and Medals Received by the Author.”<sup>2</sup> Unlike the first collection, which focused on a single book, this one is broader and more diverse. Along with

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<sup>1</sup> Terzian, P. (2024). Reviews and Reflections on Perch Terzian's Books and Interviews with Him. Cairo, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> The first such attempt was made in 2011. See “Retrospective Reflection: Reviews,” Cairo, 2011, p. 63.

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### A Collection Dedicated to the Works of Perch Terzian

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twenty-two reviews, it also includes several materials similar to reviews and seven interviews with the author conducted at different times. As Dr. Mohamed Refaat Al-Imam rightly points out in his authored "Introduction," if we take a glance at the topics covered in the book's articles, we find that they focus on four key points:<sup>3</sup> a) The Armenian Question in the Ottoman Empire, which led to the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, b) The Republic of Armenia after its re-independence in 1991, c) Issues of Armenian cultural heritage, and d) Personal observations, interviews, and related topics.

The charming "Preface," interwoven with the author's confessions<sup>4</sup> and one of the most successful parts of the collection, briefly presents Terzian's journey and concerns about the difficult task of preserving the Armenian identity of the current generation.

History is our memory and a strong tool for preserving our nation. When nations lose their sense of history, their belief in justice, and their faith in victory, they fade away. This is especially true for the Diaspora, like the Egyptian-Armenian community, which, thanks to its dedicated people, managed to create a good life and cultural centers in a foreign land. One of these dedicated individuals is P. Terzian, a humble writer and national figure. With years of experience and wisdom, he has become a quiet but deeply thoughtful person. He is an honest and practical individual, known for his productive thinking and active writing. He is the kind of person who works tirelessly to help Armenians keep their identity, preserve their spirit and values, and pass them on to future generations.

From a young age, P. Terzian loved reading, with books and literature at the heart of his soul, deeply connected to the Armenian nation and its boundless culture. As you explore the materials in the collection, it becomes clear that he is not an ordinary person but a strong and creative individual. Such people do not create for recognition, as their work, achievements, significant legacy, and life story already place them on a high pedestal. Terzian is a remarkable figure. Through his articles and books published in the Diaspora, he has contributed to creating a unique press environment. His impressive accomplishments command the respect of every Armenian.

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<sup>3</sup> **Terzian, P.** (2024). Reviews and Reflections on Perch Terzian's Books and Interviews with Him, Cairo, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

The collection is a way to show appreciation and respect for P. Terzian, celebrating his work with care, humor, and thoughtful storytelling. It highlights his contributions and achievements. Flipping through its pages, you can feel Terzian's essence, his dedication, faith, sacrifice, and selfless spirit of service. He has worked hard to preserve the Armenian identity, and we hope he continues this important work with renewed commitment.

He often emphasizes that he does not consider himself a writer or researcher. However, it is clear how deeply worried and restless he is, especially about the future of the Armenian Diaspora. He once said with regret, "If we do not provide our new generation with national education today, then in 20–30 years we will not have a generation dedicated to serving the nation and being useful to their homeland. We are preparing today's leaders for the future."<sup>5</sup>

There have been moments and problems that he could not pass by indifferently, and so he turned to writing. His works are not lengthy or filled with grand themes, but they have something to say. They present issues clearly, understandably, and in pure, flowing Western Armenian. Perhaps their most important qualities are their honesty, along with a deep knowledge and full understanding of the topics discussed. On one occasion, he admitted: "Although my education and studies were not aimed at making me a writer or a literary person, since the 1970s I have written articles in Armenian, and starting in 1998, due to the Arabic supplement of the 'Arev' newspaper, I have also written in Arabic."<sup>6</sup>

This collection is a unique summary and completion of P. Terzian's selfless work over the years, his role as a recorder and chronicler, and the creative output of a person with both messages and actions. Known for his calm behavior and peaceful, unquestionable style, Terzian even hides his inner worries or disagreements within impartial, comprehensive, and detailed descriptions, and this gives more trust to his words. Here is the individual, the citizen of the world, the Armenian and Diaspora type who, through years of life experience, worldview, and deeply honest attitude, tirelessly serves the world with pen and

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<sup>5</sup> In recent years, during P. Terzian's visits to Armenia, we have often met and discussed issues concerning Armenian identity and culture. These conversations touched upon a wide range of topics, some of which I have recorded and plan to publish.

<sup>6</sup> **Terzian, P.** (2024). *Reviews and Reflections on Perch Terzian's Books and Interviews with Him*, Cairo, p. 3.

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### **A Collection Dedicated to the Works of Perch Terzian**

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paper. The collection covers a wide range of topics and includes reflections on events of nationwide concern in the Diaspora, the homeland, and the Egyptian-Armenian community during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the first quarter of the 21st century.

The collection emphasizes that the main focus of Terzian's articles is life itself with its problems, worries, busy daily activities, and victories. At the center of the events are his reflections, worldview, and a bit of concern about the uncertain future, focusing on the individual, the Armenian, and the Egyptian-Armenian. Here, side by side, come together the press worker and the concerned guardian of the Armenian future, the Armenian radio station employee and a representative from the sports and cultural field, a notable and wealthy Armenian, and a dedicated figure in education. All of them share tension and worry and feel uncertain about tomorrow. They carry concerns and pain, and beneath the surface, a hidden longing for the homeland and the Armenian people, a clear and deep sorrow and lament inherited from the Armenian Genocide.

Despite all this, it is noted that in Terzian's writings, there is noticeable optimism in his reflections and conclusions on various issues. This optimism is undoubtedly a sign of a great spirit and the sincere beliefs of a strong individual. His hopeful and unwavering faith in the future is especially clear when he speaks about Armenian statehood.

The collection notes that Terzian, feeling deep sorrow for the biggest pain and tragedy of the Armenian people, makes firm conclusions worthy of a powerful individual. He believes it is necessary to learn lessons from the past, analyze events at a deep level, and clarify the responsibilities of the entire Armenian community. As a guarantee for fulfilling this sacred mission, he sees Armenian statehood. Although he does not consider himself a scholar, Terzian demonstrates deep knowledge of the subject and situation. He believes, it is necessary to respond properly to Turkish anti-Armenian propaganda and denial, emphasizing the dangerous trend where Turks are sometimes portrayed as enemies of Islam and as those who kill Turks.

P. Terzian is one of the Diaspora Armenian figures who never joined any political party. Without seeking any position, power, or influence in that system, he worked with deep conviction and dedication. He highly valued protecting the Armenian community from various risky adventures and, by supporting the

Careful and broad-minded approach of the “Arev” newspaper, served the nation and helped in the difficult task of healing its wounds. The collection notes that different critics recognize P. Terzian as an impartial recorder who realistically documents the history of events. At the same time, it is clear that he carries deep sorrow and mourning in his heart, along with anxiety and concern about actions against Armenians. These actions, by weakening cultural, spiritual, and educational fields, threaten the important mission of preserving Armenian identity and, ultimately, the very existence of the Diaspora.


In conclusion, I want to emphasize again that earning a living in the Diaspora today is easier than during the harsh post-genocide years. However, staying Armenian and raising and educating Armenian children has become very difficult. In this challenging and important work, dedicated people like Perch Terzian and his productive writing are greatly needed. It is also important to honor and celebrate them through publications like this collection. Many thanks to the highly respected author Perch Terzian for his complete dedication, loyalty to the Armenian people, and for being a true human under the sun. Thanks also to everyone who notices, appreciates, and honors him and his writings.

**SUREN SARGSYAN\***

*Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor*

*Institute of History, NAS RA*

sargsyansuren@yandex.ru

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