

Haigazian University

55th Anniversary

50th Commencement Exercises

July 2, 2010

President's Word

This event may not be recorded in the larger pages of world history, but it is a good day in our history as an institution and especially in the personal history of each graduate and their family. Any day is a great day when one succeeds in helping another grow. Any day is a great day when hard work pays off. Any day is a great day when one succeeds in challenging ignorance with a word of knowledge, prejudice with an act of mercy, chaos with discipline and order.

The 55-year Haigazian University experience has been unique. Here multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-national, and multi-disciplinary life have survived and flourished in a rather intimate family atmosphere with really limited resources. Our experience has shown that the close follow-up of the students' lives can only bear good fruit, that faithfulness to our religious tradition need not exclude others, that Armenian branches can be engrafted in the Cedar tree to beautify it further, that the liberal arts American system in its Lebanese form can positively guide even those who are neither American, not Liberal.

Haigazian University was an educational project in 1955. But the Haigazian passion lies in profound roots of sacrifice.

This University was not founded by Armenag Haigazian. It was rather founded to honor a victim of the Armenian Genocide, someone who was called by the *New York Times* in 1922 as the most prominent educator in the Near East. And today, on our 55th anniversary it is with deep gratitude that we are going to enjoy the words of the youngest grandchild of Dr. Haigazian. As we celebrate this anniversary, I pray for renewal of our will to not only live but to serve, serve all people without discrimination, to celebrate the fact that Lebanon is a country of service, a country that deserves our best.

Allow me, then to briefly introduce the Haigazian grandchild, Dr. Alan Strachan, a family psychotherapist in private practice in the State of California. He has earned his Ph.D. in Transpersonal Psychology from the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in Menlo Park, CA. He is an author with research on childhood dreams and trauma. He has joined our community this week with his wife Janet, a psychotherapist herself.

Forgive me to add, that Dr. Strachan's main credentials for being with us today is that he is the youngest grandchild of Armenag Haigazian, which for us speaks volumes of sacrifice and gives deep meaning to who we are and what we do.

Dr. Strachan, I am sure we all, especially our graduates are eager to hear you reflect and guide.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome our guest.

*Rev. Paul Haidostian, Ph.D.
President*