

Knarik Meneshian, in the *Armenian Weekly 2016 Magazine* (dedicated to the 101st anniversary of the Armenian Genocide). Titled “A Glimpse into the Life of the Armenian DPs in Europe,” the article describes life in the displaced persons (DP) camp in Europe where she was born and the family’s eventual arrival in the United States. But more importantly, she writes about the many conversations she had with her father about his Siberian ordeal, an opportunity such as I had lost.

In 1929, Suren Oganessian belonged to a secret rebel group in Yerevan. The following year, he was arrested in Leninakan (today’s Gyumri) the minute he arrived to distribute dissident literature. He was sent to Medekh Prison in Tbilisi, transferred to Tashkent a year later, and subsequently sent to the Jirlakhd labor camp in Siberia. He escaped, miraculously undetected, on April 17, 1935, taking advantage of a severe rainstorm. His memoir covers his perilous journey back to Armenian Gandzak (then Kirovabad, present-day Ganca in Azerbaijan), a distance of 2,200 kilometers, in four months.³⁹ There he lived and worked under an assumed name until 1942 when he was called up for military service in the Red Army. He fell captive to the Germans and spent some time in German camps working as a slave laborer. After the war, he was able to avoid forced repatriation to the Soviet Union. Instead, he went to a DP camp, and after years of wandering, he reached the United States with his newly formed family in 1952.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 77.