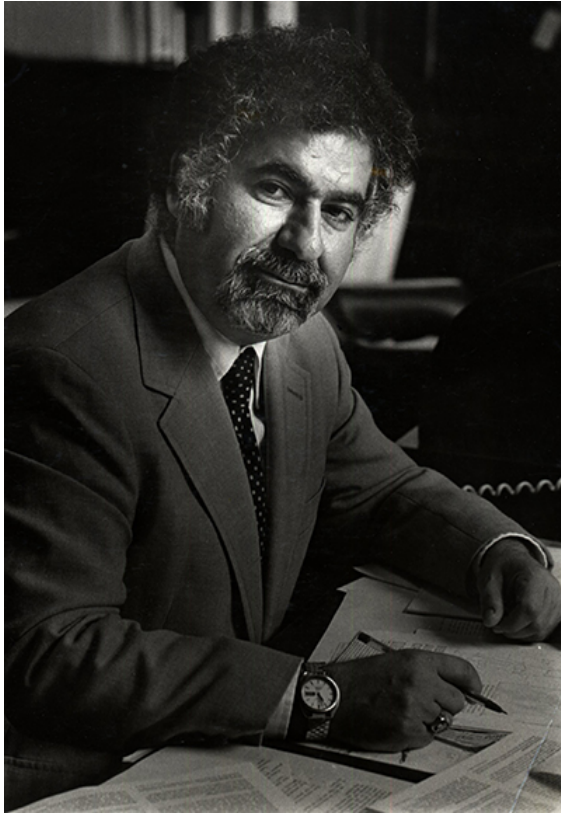


Vartan Gregorian, Former Provost and Dean, Dies

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Vartan Gregorian

Vartan Gregorian, former provost, dean, and faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania, died on April 15.

Dr. Gregorian joined Penn's faculty in 1972 as the Tarzian Professor of Armenian History and Culture. In 1974, he was appointed the founding dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, now known as the School of Arts and Sciences. As dean, he strengthened ties and promoted scholarly exchanges between Penn and the Sorbonne and helped preserve the high academic standing of Penn's department of romance languages. He served as provost from 1977 to 1981 before resigning when Sheldon Hackney was named President (*Almanac* October 28, 1980 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/v27pdf/n10/102880.pdf>)).

After leaving Penn, Dr. Gregorian was named president of the New York Public Library. When Dr. Gregorian took the helm, The New York Public Library was in the midst of a fiscal and morale crisis and he restored its stature as a vibrant cultural resource. In 1989, Dr. Gregorian left the New York Public Library to become President of Brown University. During his tenure at Brown, he oversaw the addition of eleven new departments and over 270 faculty members, and more than doubled its endowment. He left Brown in 1997 to serve as president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a position he held until his death.

Dr. Gregorian was a renowned historian and scholar. He was the author of several books, including *The Road to Home: My Life and Times*, *Islam: A Mosaic, Not a Monolith* and *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, Politics of Reform and Modernization, 1880-1946*, and several articles on history and global affairs. Dr. Gregorian was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society and other scholarly institutions.

Dr. Gregorian received awards from the French, Italian, Austrian, and Portuguese governments, as well as numerous honorary degrees, including from Brown, Dartmouth, the Juilliard School, the University of Aberdeen, and the University of St. Andrews. He was awarded the medal of Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor at a ceremony at the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in 2017. The award recognized his 30-year effort to strengthen relations between France and America, to improve links between French and American institutions of higher education, and to promote the study of French culture and language (*Almanac* February 21, 2017 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/articles/vartan-gregorian-chevalier-of-the-french-legion-of-honor>)).

In 1986, he was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor as part of the inaugural class, which also included Muhammad Ali and Walter Cronkite. In 1998, President Bill Clinton awarded him the National Humanities Medal and in 2004, President George W. Bush conferred upon him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award.

In 2004, in his honor, the Annenberg Foundation endowed a \$2 million Vartan Gregorian Chair in the Humanities at Penn (*Almanac* November 2, 2004 (<https://almanac.upenn.edu/archive/volumes/v51/n10/ppc.html>)). "Vartan Gregorian is a scholar, a humanitarian, and a truly remarkable individual, whose wisdom, leadership, and counsel have benefited several universities and important philanthropic endeavors," said the late Leonore Annenberg, then president of the Annenberg Foundation, when the chair was established.

"A lion for public learning and a renowned leader in higher education, Vartan was truly one-of-a-kind," said Penn President Amy Gutmann. "No matter what task he undertook, from his years of service to Penn to our service together on the Carnegie Corporation Board of Trustees, Vartan always did so with trademark genius and unsurpassed passion for growing the common good. The world will not see his like again."

Born to Armenian parents in Tabriz, Iran, Dr. Gregorian arrived in the U.S. in 1956 to study at Stanford University where he earned dual doctoral degrees in history and the humanities. He taught European and Middle Eastern history at San Francisco State College, UCLA, and the University of Texas at Austin before joining Penn's faculty in 1972.

Dr. Gregorian was predeceased by his wife of 58 years, Clare Russell Gregorian. He is survived by his sons, Vahé (Cindy), Raffi, and Dareh (Maggie); his sister, Ojik Arakelian; and five grandchildren, Juan, Maximus, Sophie, Miri, and Dashiell.