

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Regents Communication

ACTION REQUEST

Subject: Report of Faculty Retirement

Action Requested: Adoption of Retirement Memoir

Ronald Grigor Suny, Ph.D., William H. Sewell, Jr. Distinguished University Professor of History, professor of history, and professor of political science in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, retired from active faculty status on June 1, 2022.

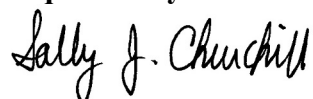
Ronald Suny received his B.A. degree from Swarthmore College in 1962 and his Ph.D. degree in history from Columbia University in 1968. He joined the University of Michigan as professor of Armenian history in 1981. After a stint at the University of Chicago (1995-2005), he returned to the University of Michigan as the Charles Tilly Collegiate Professor and, as of 2015, the William H. Sewell Jr. Distinguished University Professor of History and professor of political science.

Professor Suny is a preeminent scholar in the fields of Soviet nationalities, modern Russia, the Caucasus, and Turkey. His many field-defining books have shaped the thinking of generations of colleagues and students. His first book *The Baku Commune*, was the first to explore the reverberations of the Russian Revolution outside of the capital cities. His subsequent work built on this early interest in nationalism and Marxism. His studies illuminated the idea of “constructed” nationality or imagined communities. With each successive book, he mastered new theoretical approaches and a new, difficult language. His research languages include Russian, Armenian, Georgian, and Turkish. Turkish proved essential to his award-winning book, *They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else*, where he explored not only the geopolitical but also the affective context in which the Armenian genocide became possible. A public figure as well as a scholar, he is constantly sought out by news services around the world. His recent book on the young Stalin has already altered understandings of this major historical figure.

Professor Suny is a famously popular teacher. He has taught courses in Soviet, Russian, and Armenian history, the history of nations and nationalism, and of empire. In addition to directing the Eisenberg Institute of Historical Studies, his service record at all levels of the university was exceptional. He is a dedicated mentor of generations of undergraduate and graduate students, maintaining these mentoring relationships often long after the students leave the university.

The Regents now salute this distinguished scholar and teacher by naming **Ronald Grigor Suny, William H. Sewell, Jr. Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of History, professor emeritus of history, and professor emeritus of political science.**

Requested by:



Sally J. Churchill, J.D.
Vice President and Secretary of the University

May 2022