

ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՒՄ ARMENIAN ACTION

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Armenian Studies Program
CSUF, Fresno, CA 93740

Saroyan archives moved to CSUF

By Randy Baloian

For more than three years after the death of the famed novelist and playwright William Saroyan, the bulk of the author's personal library, drawings, and other miscellaneous belongings has remained warehoused in Saroyan's two Fresno homes.

It was not until late December that this material was turned over to the Special Collections Department of the Henry Madden Library at California State University, Fresno (CSUF) and the Armenian Studies Program.

The contents of Saroyan's homes, packed up in nearly 650 boxes, were moved to Special Collections by members of the Armenian Students Organization. Special Collections Director Ron Mahoney has since devoted most of his time to organizing the cartons and indexing the material. Those items pertaining to Saroyan's Armenian background (such as Armenian newspapers, books, and periodicals) will be transferred to the

Armenian Studies Program. The remainder will be examined in greater detail by Mahoney.

Although the Bancroft Library at UC-Berkeley holds Saroyan's unpublished letters, most of Saroyan's collection is now at CSUF.

If it is possible to learn a little about someone by the books they read, then Mahoney has done just that in his survey of Saroyan's books.

"He had a wide interest," said the Special Collections director. "There are many different kinds of books."

Indeed, Saroyan's collection ranges from Armenian cookbooks to translations of his own novels. Although curiosity did not center on any one topic, Mahoney noted that he seemed to have to a peculiar fancy for how-to-learn English books printed in various languages.

Also included are Saroyan's abstract paintings. In the past some of these works have been displayed at the Conley Art Building. Among the more interesting aspects of Saroyan's artistry are his

drawings on the covers of some of his books. The drawings are untitled and include dates, times, and short comments.

Lastly, there is an assortment of everyday personal effects accumulated over time: plastic spoons, golf balls, opened

envelopes, etc. Saroyan, who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1940 for his play *The Time of Your Life*, kept residences in both Fresno and Paris. He was an obsessive collector during his later years, stashing

See Saroyan Archives, Back Page

Cyprus: Ten years after the Turkish invasion

By Marietta Famellou
Contributing Writer

Dr. Anastassios Simonidis, Consulate General of the Republic of Cyprus, spoke at California State University, Fresno about the human rights issue in Cyprus during the ten years since the Turkish invasion of the island.

In a lecture attended largely by the Greek and Armenian communities of Fresno, Simonidis talked about the role that the United States played in the invasion.

"The invasion of Cyprus by the Turks was made possible with the use of American-made arms," Simonidis stated. "The arms were given to Turkey to be used for defensive purposes only, according to the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act. Since then, the aid to Turkey has been steadily on the rise—it reached one billion dollars during 1984. Thus, the American taxpayer is fully subsidizing the Turkish occupation of Cyprus, whose yearly loss is estimated

tor power, with the sole purpose of restoring constitutional order after the short-lived coup which had attempted to bring down the government of President Makarios," Simonidis said. "The invasion, described by Ankara as a 'peace-keeping operation,' was accompanied by massive violation of human rights, including mass killings, rape, and abuse of prisoners. Two-hundred thousand Greek-Cypriots (40% of the population) were evicted from their homes and land, while the Turkish army drew what it called 'the Attila line' across the island."

"The true motives of the invasion are Turkey's partitionist and expansionist plans," said Simonidis, adding that Fazil Kuchuk's 1957 book, *Cyprus—A Permanent Solution*, shows on its cover the Republic divided along the "Attila line."

"What they did to the Armenians, they did to the Greeks—it is exactly the same thing," the Consulate General claimed, comparing the invasion of Cyprus to the Armenian Genocide of 1915.

Following the lecture, Simonidis held a question and answer period. To a question posed by a member of the audience as to what Americans can do to help the Cyprus situation, Simonidis suggested that the United States has the capacity to pressure Turkey into withdrawing its troops from Cyprus. He said, "Americans must pressure their congressmen to get the government moving against Turkey."

"U.S. should help Cyprus for the sake of peace, freedom, and democracy, because America is a benevolent country," he said. Extensive debate arose on this matter because members of the audience felt that America did not take an active part in condemning Turkey for the Armenian Genocide. It was thought by some that by due process of law and working with the system, the United States would not take any action regarding the situation in Cyprus.

Although there was considerable argument on this issue, the question remains: What about Cyprus?

The weapons that hold the Turkish troops on the island are still labeled "Made in America."



RETURN TRIP TO FRESNO

His Holiness Karekin II visited the Armenian community in Fresno for the second time since his last visit in 1980. Included in his brief stay was a meeting with CSUF students. Story on Page 5.

Setian fills in as ASP Coordinator

By Sharon Torolan
Staff Writer

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Coordinator and Professor of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno, will be on leave during the spring, 1985 semester.

Replacing Kouymjian this semester will be Professor Ralph Setian. Setian previously held the position of coordinator of English Language Programs and Director of Student Life at Haigazian College from 1981 to 1984.

Kouymjian is in Paris to finish writing a memorial volume for the late Haig Berberian, editor of the *Revue des Etudes Armeniennes*. He is also preparing a work on the Armenian historian Ghazar Pharpetzi and a Saroyan trilogy.

Professor Setian has taught English and Armenian courses, both language and literature, at numerous universities, including University of Pennsylvania, UC Riverside, Aleppo University, Lebanese University, Boston University, Columbia University, and UCLA.

Setian has earned an M. Phil. in Armenian Studies and Linguistics from Columbia, an M.A. in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from the American University in Cairo, certificates in the French language from the University

of Paris (Sorbonne), and an M.A. from UCLA in English Literature.

He is the published author of a variety of works, including articles, books, short stories and poems (in both English and Armenian). His work has been published frequently in the Armenian literary magazine *Ararat*.

Although Professor Setian has been in Fresno before, he has not visited the city in over a decade. He remarked that the

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"The invasion of Cyprus

by the Turks was made

possible with the use

of American-made arms."

at 500 million."

Simonidis, whose appearance at CSUF was sponsored by the Hellenic Student Association, said that Turkey invaded Cyprus in July, 1974. Turkish troops occupied 37% of Cyprus, drove out the resident Greek-Cypriot population, and concentrated all the Turkish-Cypriots, who constitute 18% of the population, in the occupied northern part of the country.

Six-thousand lives were lost in the invasion, and 2,200 Cypriots are still missing.

"Turkey declared at the time that her troops were invading Cyprus as a guaran-

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

Thank you for your acknowledgement of the receipt of the Saroyan neighborhood map drawn by my father, John Karabian, from memory in 1981. Unfortunately, my father passed away in May, 1983. All his life he was a proud son of Bitlis even though he was born in Fresno in 1911. Memories, names, places, and people of old Armenia town in Fresno or more particularly the Emerson School neighborhood were vivid in his memory right to the end. He use to be called upon to resolve disputes between old friends as to who lived where, who was married to whom and what events happened in the days gone by.

After graduating from Fresno High School in 1928, he went to work for Berberian Brothers. He worked for them all his life until his retirement in 1970. Berberian Brothers was first at 800 Broadway, the Broadway and Butler. Later they moved to 333 Van Ness (next to Bekins) and finally to its present location on Van Ness (near the old California Field). So you see, my father stayed in the old neighborhood all through his adult life even though we lived in the Longfellow School area.

You will find that any of the additions made to the map are made by people who did not understand the restraints my father placed upon himself. He dated this map circa 1920's and 1930's well aware that people and families moved away and others came in. Nevertheless, you will find that it gives a 99% true picture of the neighborhood for the following reasons:

1. It accurately tells who was in place when William Saroyan was experiencing his boyhood memories about which he wrote in the years to come.

2. It dates the beginning of almost every Armenian family in Fresno. To this end, it is an important chronicle since every one of us trace our beginnings not only to Bitlis, Dickranagert, Van, Kharpert, etc., but we can also trace our roots to a specific place in the old neighborhood. His generation as I said in the film, "Strangers," "was the Saroyan generation." They were born in Fresno of immigrant parents and had common bonds between them that were unshakeable and unbreakable with the passage of time.

Sincerely,

Walter Karabian
Los Angeles, California
(See page 10 for Karabian map.)

Editor:

With great pleasure I received the recent issue of *Hye Sharzhoom* that you were so kind to send me. I appreciate very much being put on your mailing list and I hope you will continue to send me this most interesting journal.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. J. J. S. Weitenberg
Netherlands

Editor:

I had missed the *Hye Sharzhoom* and am pleased it has been revived. Not only do my mate and I enjoy reading it, but our children and grandchildren are interested to see it and are at least prodded by it to wonder and learn about their beginnings. The November issue is the best of all issues, if my memory serves well...and thanks for the note in the *Hye Sharzhoom* about the modest contribution of material. Certainly it is dwarfed by the others of much more substance.

Here is a donation to be used equally for the Armenian Studies Program and the ASO. Our best wishes to all of you.

Sincerely,

Michael Sohigian
Fresno, California

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!



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Hye Sharzhoom welcomes prose, poetry, articles, manuscripts and other material from its readers. For further information concerning the newspaper or the Armenian Studies Program, contact the Armenian Studies Office (209) 294-2669 or the Ethnic Studies Office (209) 294-2832.

Armenian Studies Program
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Dear Dr. Kouymjian:

J' espere que vous avez passe un bon sejour en France et suis bien content de voir le recommencement de *Hye Sharzhoom*. Vos etudiants devraient etre complimentes pour leur publication. C'est vraiment bien fait. C'est beau de sentir que l'Armenie continue dans le sang et l'esprit de ces etudiants d'Armenologie qui sont, pour la plupart, des Armeniens. "Shonoragalem" aux etudiants de l'ASO! If I may, I would like to ask two questions which may or may not have answers or be possible:

1. Is there a Correspondence course available on Armenian History, Art, Culture, or related subects? If not, could the CSU/UC system include such a course in their offerings of Correspondence courses? There are many Armenian-descent young people (and probably adults also) who would benefit and yet are scattered through-

out the U.S. and the world. The word could be spread via the *Hye Sharzhoom*.

2. Why are other universities such as Harvard, UCLA, etc., receiving so much assistance and CSUF so little? Perhaps you need to advertise your need in *Ararat* and *Hye Endanik* (San Lorenzo, Italy) magazines. Also, the Armenian General Benevolent Union Association (N.J.) could assist in funds and spreading the word. I will write to them if you believe that will help.

Enclosed is a donation to help with your excellent work. Thank you for your work to keep a great and noble heritage alive.

Most sincerely,

Daniel Alexanian-Remy
Kingston, New York

Staff Editorial

A Cinderella Story

Remember Cinderella. She was the one who was not allowed to go to the ball because she was supposedly not as attractive as her two stepsisters. Instead, Cinderella was banished to spend the night at home, while — through their mother's pocket book — the sisters attended the ball in new gowns. Of course we all know what happened next: Cinderella is saved by her fairy godmother who provides her with acceptable attire and transportation to the ball. She later goes on to marry the prince (and lives happily ever after) while her two sisters never amount to much of anything.

So much for fairy tales.

Of its many distinctions, Fresno contains the largest percentage of Armenians of any city in the United States. Through their skill, ingenuity, and devotion, Armenians have contributed much to the development of the Fresno area. Armenians have also been ardent supporters of CSUF activities. Among the many beneficiaries, football and basketball teams receive a generous portion of this support. To be slightly presumptuous, it is likely that these two programs are highly valued by most of the Armenian community.

This brings us to an unusual and unexplainable statistic: of the twenty-three donations received for the Armenian Studies Program and the Armenian Students Organization (in response to the November issue of the *Hye Sharzhoom*), only FIVE have been from Fresno residents. This is even more perplexing when one considers that 80-90 percent of the circulation or over 5,000 copies of the *Hye Sharzhoom* are mailed within the Fresno area. It is rather distressing to know that only 5 out of 5,000 (.1 percent) saw fit to send a contribution to the paper. On the other hand, although the *Hye Sharzhoom* has a limited distribution outside Fresno (approximately 10-20 percent or 600-1000 copies), these distant readers accounted for 78 percent of the responses.

How is this phenomenon to be interpreted? Do Fresno Armenians take for granted a publication like the *Hye Sharzhoom* (organ of the Armenian Studies

Program and Armenian Students Organization) being only one of two such Armenian student newspapers in the nation (the other being the *The Armenian Horizon* from U.C.L.A.). Has the Fresno Armenian community grown so apathetic as to slight the presence of an Armenian studies program and student organization on campus? Perhaps these endeavors do not seem as attractive as other programs at CSUF.

The Armenian Studies Program and Armenian Students Organization are not struggling for existence, nor are they penniless paupers. However, additional monies enable these groups to reach their full potential, making possible activities with greater variety and depth. These activities are not only meant for the students, but for the entire community. The goals of the ASP and ASO are simple: to educate all interested persons about Armenia, and to provide an atmosphere of Armenian awareness within the community. Just as an athletic team works toward a championship, the ASP and ASO also strive to meet their goals.

By no means is support measured in monetary value alone. A simple letter complimenting a particular event conducted by the ASO or an insightful article in the *Hye Sharzhoom* does wonders for morale. Even uncomplimentary responses are not discouraged; they show that people are not indifferent to the world around them.

The whole point is that nobody likes to be ignored, especially within one's own surroundings. The members of the ASP, ASO, and the *Hye Sharzhoom* feel there is something important about being Armenian — not just as some ephemeral feeling of collegiate unity, but as a life long sense of ethnic solidarity. One has to question the Fresno Armenian community in failing to at least recognize the efforts of their own college youth. Conversely, it's a pleasant surprise to receive support from outside sources; in fact, it says a lot for these donors who do not live in an Armenian environment of nearly the same population density as Fresno.

Thank heaven for fairy godmothers.

"A New Kind of War"

By David Durfee Minier

"I will be the first one as an example to many more to follow." —Gourgen Yanikian

David Minier, District Attorney of Santa Barbara and prosecutor in the 1973 Gourgen Yanikian trial, submitted the following article to Hye Sharzhoom. We are indeed fortunate to receive an item of such significance. Although Minier finds no connection between the present Turkish government and the Ottoman Empire, it should be noted that, according to the Genocide Convention of the United Nations, the guilty party in a genocide is a perpetuating state, and has thus no statute of limitations. In view of this, though the government of the Turkish state has changed, both during and after the Ottoman Empire, the present government is still judged guilty according to the Genocide Convention. The article was written in August, 1984 and includes a summary of Yanikian's life, the events of the trial, and Minier's own conclusions about the "Armenian Question".

Last Sunday the Bee published a detailed article about how the Armenian massacres of 1915 are viewed today.

As noted in the article, a delayed consequence of the massacres has been, starting in 1973, a series of assassinations of Turkish diplomats and family members by Armenian terrorists.

Local readers may be interested to know that this terrorist movement was begun by Gourgen Mkrtich Yanikian, a Fresno resident from 1951 to 1956. When the 89 year old Armenian died last March, shortly after his release from prison, Yanikian was eulogized as a hero—the creator of what he called "a new kind of war": the terrorist assassination of Turkish diplomats.

For eleven years Yanikian's "war" has raged on, taking the lives of diplomats in over a dozen countries. There is, unfortunately, little hope that it has ended with Yanikian's death.

This "new kind of war" began on January 27, 1973, when the distinguished, 78 year old Armenian emigrant received the Consul General and Vice Consul of the Republic of Turkey in his cottage at the exclusive Biltmore Hotel in Santa Barbara, California. As they settled into comfortable yellow armchairs, Yanikian withdrew a nine millimeter luger pistol from a hollowed out book, filled the two diplomats in a hail of bullets, and then administered the "coup de grace" to the head with a second gun.

A few hours before his act, Yanikian, an American citizen since 1956, mailed a "call to action" to hundreds of newspapers, magazines, and prominent Armenians throughout the world. In it, he proclaimed that he had begun a "new kind of war," which he urged his fellow Armenians to continue "until the final surrender." "All representatives of the so-called Turkish government," Yanikian wrote, "should be eliminated from the earth wherever they appear." Of his own act, the elderly assassin said "I will be the first one as an example to many more to follow."

In response to Yanikian's blueprint for assassination, there has followed a global series of terrorist attacks upon Turkish nationals. These have in the last 11 years, claimed the lives of 26 Turkish diplomats, their relatives and aides, and have left over 150 others dead or wounded. (An intensive F.B.I. investigation concluded that Yanikian acted alone in his assassinations. Credit for subsequent killings has been claimed by several different Armenian terrorist groups.)

In January, 1982, on the ninth anniversary of Yanikian's act, a second Turkish Consul General was shot and killed in California, at Los Angeles. (Ironically, this same Consul General had recommended Yanikian's removal from prison and placement in a rest home on humanitarian grounds. In January, Hampig Sassounian, a 20 year old Armenian representing the "Justice Commandos of the Armenian Genocide," was convicted of the murder.)

Last July, a Turkish embassy attache was gunned down in Brussels, six people were killed in the bombing of the Turkish Airlines counter at a Paris airport, and a diplomat's wife was killed in a bloody attack upon the Turkish ambassador's house in Lisbon. Other Turkish officials have been killed in over a dozen cities of Europe, Australia, and the Middle East.

As District Attorney of Santa Barbara County, I prosecuted Gourgen Yanikian for the killing of the two diplomats. After a lengthy trial, a jury found the white haired engineer-turned-author guilty of two counts of first degree murder, and he was sentenced to life in prison.

Last January, Yanikian finally regained his freedom. Eighty-nine and in failing health, he was paroled from California's bleak, gray walled Vacaville Medical Facility, after 11 years behind bars.

When I interviewed Yanikian there shortly before this release, I found him bent with age, nearly deaf, and suffering from a host of physical ailments. The commanding voice, the piercing gray eyes, and the proud bearing, however, were all as I remembered them to be a decade earlier. Two months later, Yanikian was dead of a heart attack. He was unrepentant to the end, and, in death, he has become a symbol.

What motive caused this elderly man to take the lives of two Turkish diplomats 11 years ago, and to exhort Armenians everywhere to follow him in waging a "new kind of war"? It was, he wrote, "to demand justice" for the 1915 massacre of two million Armenians, and the appropriation of their historic land, by the Turkish government.

This motive has been echoed since 1973 by the followers of Yanikian's "example," who have demanded 1) an admission by the Turkish government that the massacres occurred, and 2) restoration of an Armenian homeland in Eastern Turkey.

The massacres which motivated Yanikian's "call to action" are known to Armenians everywhere; almost every Armenian can recall the names of relatives who were victims. Armenia, one of the world's oldest nations, and the first to embrace Christianity, came under Moslem rule in 1453 with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks. Armenian nationalism was never extinguished, and in 1895 it led to the first large scale massacres. In that year—in which Gourgen Yanikian was born—the Turkish government brutally suppressed fledgling Armenian independence movement, killing an estimated 80,000 Armenians in Turkey's eastern provinces.

In 1909, perhaps 30,000 more Armenians were killed, in reaction to their nationalistic activities. It was the outbreak of World War I, however, which provided the excuse for terminating Turkey's "Armenian problem."

In 1915, the second year of the war, the once mighty Ottoman Empire was in its death throes. After 700 years of despotic rule by the sultans, Turkey was often called "the sick man of Europe." Backwards and oppressively poor, its population was largely illiterate. Church and state were united under the Sultan-Caliph. Women had no rights, polygamy flourished, and red fezes adorned the heads of the country's men.

Entering World War I on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary, Turkey faced invading armies on two fronts: the English to the west, at Gallipoli, and the Russians to the east in Anatolia. Fighting with the Russian forces was the 10,000 man Armenian Volunteer Regiment commanded by General Antranik.

Fearful that eastern Turkey's Armenian population of almost two million would aid the invading Russians,

See "A New Kind of War", See Page 9

Students compare Armenian churches

By Jenny Kasparian
Contributing Writer

Students in Dr. Kouymjian's Armenian Studies 10 classes were assigned, as one student stated, to "a very educational and cultural day with the Armenians." Dr. Kouymjian asked each student to attend one Armenian Apostolic church service and one Armenian evangelical church service, and then write a critical analysis describing the two experiences.

The Armenian students attended Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic, St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church, and St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church (in Fowler). The evangelical churches visited were Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church and First Armenian Presbyterian Church.

The comments received from the Armenian students first dealt with architectural differences: "Entering Holy Trinity, I walked through a very ornate church,"

and "St. Paul's is a spacious, tetraconch style church, while the Presbyterian church is smaller and simpler."

The second distinct area of comparison was the congregation. "Recognizing that I was new in First Presbyterian, about four people came up and spoke with me before the service. This warmth was clearly lacking in Holy Trinity." The same student commented, "I also noted at Holy Trinity the way the people have had strength and faith in this religion for all these years." Another student wrote, "As I left the Pilgrim Church, the minister stood at the door and greeted people, while Holy Trinity's priest did not come out."

The third area compared was the service itself. One Armenian student observed, "At Holy Trinity, the choir plays a major role in the service. The priest sings a chant and the choir replies in unison; at First Presbyterian, the service was taken from the bible, reminding me of a class in bible

study."

The non-Armenian student also attended the above mentioned churches, with the exception of St. Gregory. Their comments, however, focused on the indi-

treatment by the congregation to the visiting non-Armenian students. "Overall, Pilgrim had a very warm feeling. We were greeted by the preacher and felt very welcome."

"a very educational and cultural day with the Armenians."

vidual services and how they, as "outsiders," were treated.

One student stated, "Unfortunately, the completely Armenian spoken service, except for a portion of the sermon, was quite vague even with the handout outlining the liturgy. The length of the service, three hours, became quite tiring. In accordance with this, another student added, "The reflection on the readings and sermon (at Pilgrim church) gave me a good spiritual feeling."

The greatest contrasting area was the

"My visit to St. Paul's church was a stark contrast. We were not made welcome and felt quite uncomfortable."

Finally, a quote from a student summing up his experience: "I definitely had a better experience at the Pilgrim Church. As for a friendly and welcome atmosphere, there was no real comparison. To me, a church should be a place of friendship and togetherness, somewhere that you look forward to going to, and the Pilgrim Church offered this, whereas the St. Paul's Church did not."

The Washington Connection

Bishop keys interrelations in the nation's capitol

By Vahe K. Messerlian
Editor

He is the goodwill ambassador of the Armenian people. In the subtlest of ways, he has integrated the Armenian name into the United States political arena.

"The whole Armenian community must start a new course, a new way of life to participate in the politics of the country where they live," he insists.

He is the Rt. Rev. Bishop Papken Varjabedian, Diocesan Legate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, and his presence in Washington, D.C. has made the Armenian entity one to contend with in political circles in the American government.

For the past 16 years, Bishop Papken has engaged in meetings with the highest officials in the U.S. government, has met and discussed issues of religious relevance with church leaders of different denominations, and has participated in events in the nation's capital universal in nature, offering invocation, closing prayer, speaking, or making remarks.

The Legate represents the Armenian Church on these different levels, but his most critical role is as a contact with the government.

What makes his position so indispensable is the laudable diplomacy with which he conducts relations with government dignitaries. The Bishop has a list of 100 senators and representatives who have acted favorably for the Armenian cause, and frequently writes letters to these "friends of the Armenians."

"I emphasize the importance of the

Armenians to express their appreciation (to congressmen)," stated the Bishop. "Otherwise, they will say 'If the Armenians do not care, why should I?'"

He mentioned that young Armenian workers in the Capitol complain as to why the Armenians are so indifferent.

"We have to acquaint ourselves to the American government—they must feel our existence, our presence."

The Bishop began his propitious theological career 45 years ago, graduating from the Jerusalem Armenian Seminary. He then taught at the Antelias Armenian Seminary for six years before traveling to New Haven to receive his master and doctorate degrees in religious education from Yale Theological College.

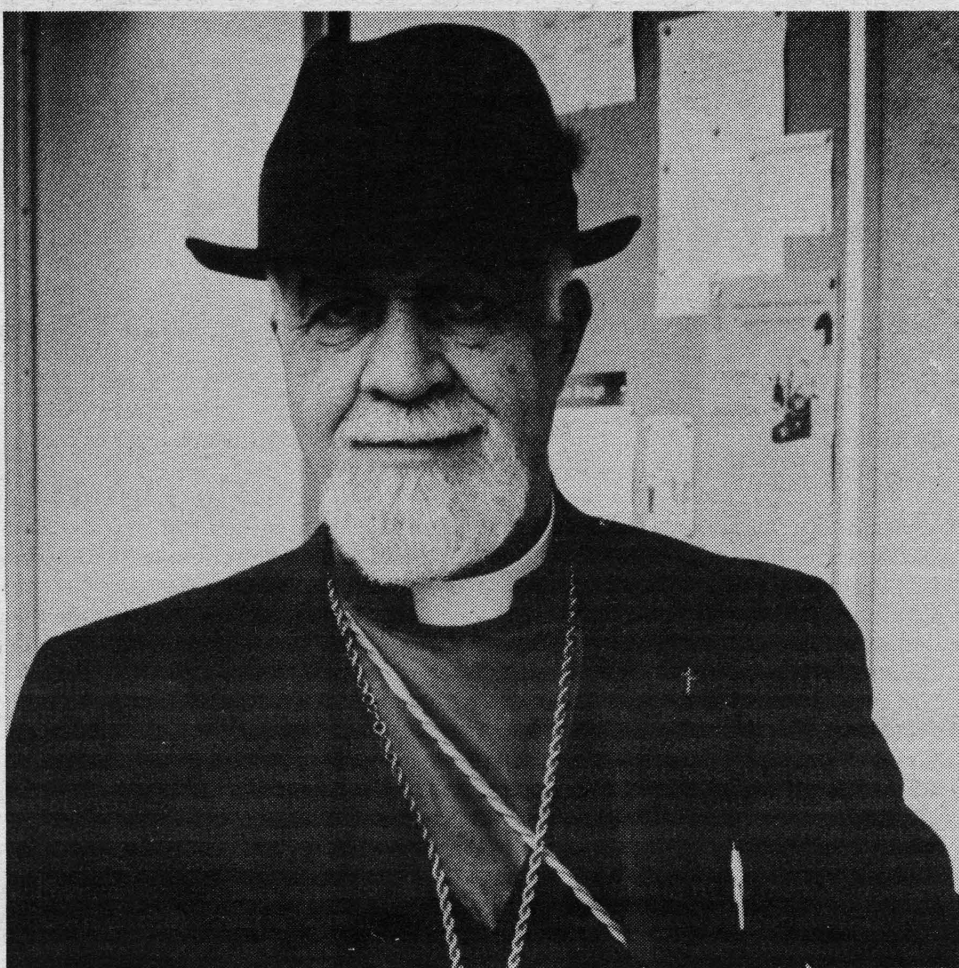
From 1957 to 1963, Bishop Papken served as Primate of the Western Diocese based in Fresno. Following his tenure, he went back to Antelias to give instruction again. The Bishop finally returned to the United States and, since 1969, has performed his duties as Diocesan Legate, serving under the jurisdiction of Archbishop Torkom Manoogian.

Bishop Papken periodically travels to the West Coast and, in this instance, came exclusively to procure financial assistance for the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary located in New Rochelle, New York near New York City.

The seminary, one of four Armenian seminaries throughout the world, is valued because of the shortage of clergymen in the Armenian Church in the United States, said the Bishop.

"We must support this seminary, make it strong, make it useful, make it fruitful," said the Legate. "In ten years, we will need 40 or more priests."

"There is no hope at the present from the old country. Jerusalem is in very bad shape; it is in shambles. Antelias—unfortunately, we still don't have the unity. Etchmiadzin is the best seminary in the world for the Armenian Church, but they



Bishop Papken Varjabedian has been a key contact in the Capitol. He has travelled the west coast to seek financial assistance for the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary in New York

need the clergymen," stated the Bishop referring to the fact that there are three million people in Soviet Armenia.

The seminary was established in 1962 in Evanston, Illinois under the auspices of the Eastern and Western Dioceses of the Armenian Church. After some initial difficulty, said the Bishop, the institute was moved to New York and operated successfully, graduating seven clergymen and three women who continue to serve the Armenian Church.

The seminary currently functions in affiliation with St. Vladimir's Seminary, the leading Eastern Orthodox seminary in this country. Theological students may study a variety of disciplines in Armenian studies at St. Nersess and then obtain a theological degree from St. Vladimir's. St. Nersess students must also travel to one of the seminaries abroad for added

proficiency in the Armenian language and liturgical practice.

"There are eight students in the seminary, but we can have and should have 25 more," said the Bishop. He commented further, emphasizing the need for American-born students. The reason for this, the Bishop explained, is for the clergymen to have a better cultural contact with the Armenian-American community.

"This seminary is for all Armenians," proclaimed the Legate, stressing that support for the seminary is "the obligation of the Western Diocese as well as the Eastern Diocese." Thus far, the East Coast has endowed nearly one-half million dollars toward the seminary.

"The church is one of the most powerful assets of the Armenian people. We must support this seminary to ensure a prosperous future for the the Armenian Church."

Book Review

Saroyan: A Biography

SAROYAN: A BIOGRAPHY by Lawrence Lee and Barry Gifford; Harper & Row; 338 pages with chronology, bibliography, and index; \$17.95.

By Dickran Kouymjian
Advisor

Here is a very public book about a very private man. Larry Lee and Barry Gifford have once again successfully dramatized the life of a major American writer through the words of his family, friends, and associates. Their first collaborative venture in this genre, *Jack's Book: An oral Biography of Jack Kerouac* (St. Martin's Press, 1978), was a fast-paced, earnest work which consciously tried to explain Kerouac's writing and its importance to those who lived the so-called "Beat Generation." That book also attempted to assess the value of Kerouac's art to a new generation. After Saroyan's death in 1981, the San Francisco team set out to do something similar around the equally legendary California Armenian writer.

For those who have grown up as admirers of Saroyan's ability to vividly chronicle America's everyman, this relentless and at times gossipy book may anger as it intrigues. To a younger generation, one not used to reading Saroyan, the book will be an adventure into the world of Broadway and New York publishing during the fabulous decades of the 1930s,

40s, and 50s. It will also appeal instantly to that same audience which was enthralled by the confess-and-fight-back books about Saroyan from the pen of his sometimes estranged son, Aram. Like Aram's *Last Rites: The Death of William Saroyan* (William Marrow, 1982) and even his *William Saroyan* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), this book is concerned more with the pseudo-, at times genuine, psychoanalysis of a major figure of American letters, than with a serious endeavor to understand Saroyan as a writer or to evaluate his literary achievement. Herein lies the great difference between the Kerouac book and the one at hand.

Once picked up, only the most disciplined reader will be able to stop to take a sensible breath before racing on. One reason is the story does not begin at the beginning in Fresno in 1908, but in New York and San Francisco in 1940 when William Saroyan is arguably the most renowned writer in the United States. Undaunted Saroyan fans should begin the book with the section entitled "The Time of Your Life" (p. 226), savoring the warm and flattering testimony of Lillian Gish and Eddie Dowling, before starting at the beginning.

Why have the biographers started in a "middle" of their own choosing? And why in the first section of the book, more than half the story, is there so little of Saroyan's

recognized genius? On the eve of World War II, it was Bill Saroyan of Fresno, California who could so quickly capture the everyday speech of everyday people and elevate it to some of the most noble humanistic accounts of man's search for the meaning of life.

The question is hard to answer. Especially for this reviewer whose modest aid is so generously acknowledged by the authors. To me, whether consciously or not, Lee and Gifford display no empathy toward the subject of their research. Rarely does one find lyrical phrases about Saroyan like those which are common in the Kerouac book. Kerouac too, had in his own way a lonely, often solitary life like that attributed to Saroyan and like him was often misunderstood and rejected by the literary establishment.

In fact the first part of the book seems to be less about Saroyan than his former wife, Carol Marcus Saroyan Matthau, for whom the authors certainly show sympathy. If Aram Saroyan had his chance to work out his personal problems through the writing of a psychodrama about his father, it seems that our writers have provided Saroyan's twice divorced wife the means to work out publicly her own psychic cleansing. William Saroyan was the culprit. While busily writing some of the most unusual plays of the 20th century and surely some of the most widely read novels and stories, it seems he was

damaging the lives of his wife and at least one of his children. Additionally, we get the impression from the book he was so insufferable, the authors had a hard time finding people who would say kind words about him. There are some affectionate glimpses in the book, especially near the end from his daughter Lucy, but they are so few they almost underline the opposite emotion.

It is unfortunate that in this finely crafted book, containing an abundance of information unavailable elsewhere, some serious, often unsubstantiated, charges are made against Saroyan. The book jacket even revels in making this point: "...Artie Shaw, Budd Schulberg, Celeste Holm, Irwin Shaw, Julie Haydon, and Lillian Gish. All of them speak here in their own voices, and their revelations of compulsive gambling, anti-Semitism, and paralyzing jealousy bring new darkness and depth to the saga of the brash young man in the cocked fedora who won everything, only to lose it all."

This is hardly an attitude designed to endear us to one of the most loved of American writers. If Saroyan were alive he would sue for libel, I suppose. For example, the charge of anti-Semitism is gratuitous. Nowhere in the book is it proved or even convincingly described. Carol Matthau has said that Bill Saroyan

Catholicos revisits Fresno community

His Holiness Karekin II answers students' questions

By Alan Atamian
Contributing Writer

Meeting the Armenian counterpart to the Vatican's Pope doesn't happen every day. And one would expect a good degree of "pomp and circumstance" to be associated with it. Well, there is *some*—but as the hundreds of Fresno Armenian-Americans who partook of His Holiness Karekin II's visit last November will attest, it is also like seeing an old friend.

The Hye Pontiff can hardly be called "old" either. At 52, having served in the office as ministerial head of Armenians worldwide, only his black beard marbled with white swaths could even begin to suggest age. This is put nicely by His Holiness:

"The grey that you see in my beard is not a sign of getting old; but it is a sign of becoming more fit to the office of Catholicos," he said. It is this clever and satirical sense of wisdom that perhaps dispels the air of austerity stereotyped commonly with "men of the cloth."

To further shatter misconceptions about himself, His Holiness proceeds to solicit input from his audience as opposed to talking *at* them. This was evidenced in his discourse to the students of CSUF at the Fresno Hilton on November 19, the last day of his two-day whirlwind tour of Fresno, the world's "Little Armenia" away from home. In this visit, Karekin II visited with the Armenian Community School's students, CSUF students, the members of the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church and their youth group.

"Thank you very much indeed for coming here," began the pontiff to the group of some 75 CSUF students. "I would have assured you that (if I had missed Fresno on my schedule) something vital would have been missed by me." Avoiding the use of the microphone, he said that "communication begins with sight." He chose this "more direct and personal kind of talk" in front of students over a lecture-type speech, he said.

"I would like to hear *you* and to know what *you* think is important to discuss in 1984, when we realize that a new generation is coming into responsibility in our community life around the world," he told the audience.

The pontiff fielded several questions from the audience according to this format of informal discussion, but along with this, he did show his sense of commitment to issues Armenian, worldwide, and spiritual.

The pontiff stressed keeping abreast of new studies in theology. Indicating his 32 years of teaching at the seminary, which he is continuing now, he also said that if one doesn't continue learning about new developments within one's discipline, one will soon lose relevance to the world.

"I stay young by being with the young," he said.

The first question posed to the Catholicos concerned the issue of terrorism. "As a churchman, I cannot agree with terrorism," he began his response.

"I don't know from where, how these actions are being taken. What I can do is to serve my church and my nation by speaking in the name of the church that is concerned with justice, that is concerned with human rights, that is concerned with the rights of individuals and communities and nations," he said. "And to speak about it and to make every effort possible through our ways as a church to see that such justice (terrorism) is not recognized by our people. And we have tried to do that kind of work. To what extent it could be successful, I don't know," he said.

On the subject of justice, Karekin II said that a church leader cannot simply speak on the "con" side of issues.

"To speak against is not sufficient. He (the church leader) must also speak for," he said. "The spirit of martyrdom is not in the blood but in the dedication," he said, quoting Napoleon as saying "What makes the martyr is not death, but the cause for which death is assumed."

The pontiff said that he has spoken to fellow Armenians and told them to be awakened to their rights which are legitimate for them to have as well as for the rights of people in predicaments similar to the Armenians. He also indicated that he is not just a church leader, but also a world leader.

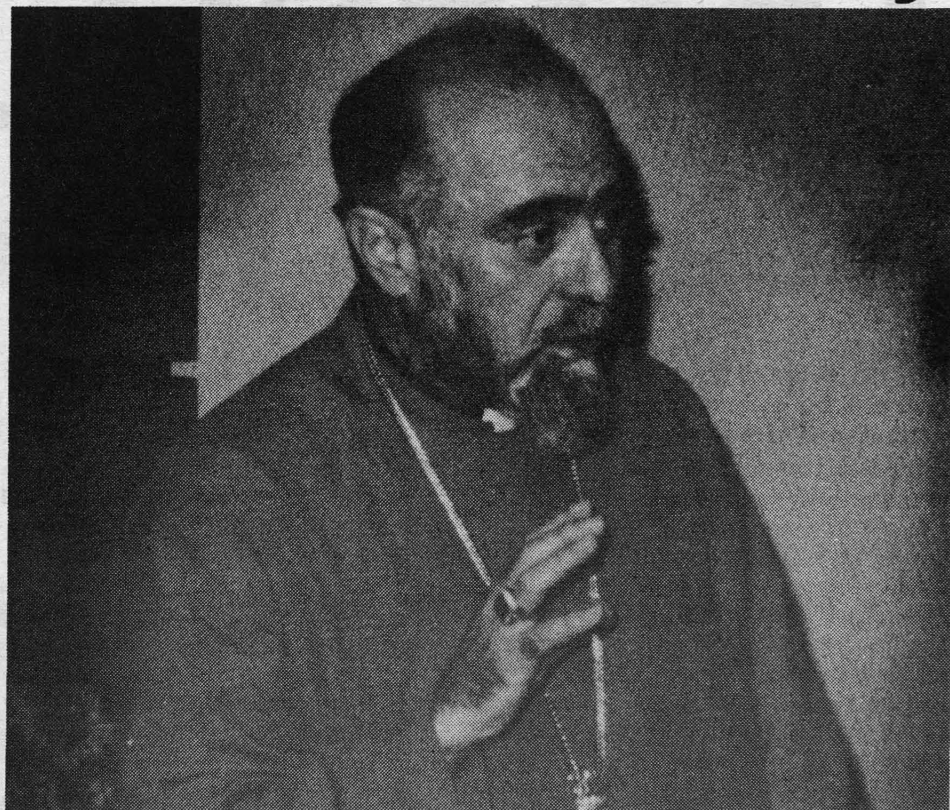
"I don't speak only for the rights of the Armenian people, but also for the rights of other people," he said.

On the Armenian issues, though, the Catholicos said, "I know how difficult our position is, our case is...but who can tell me that 20 years from now what the world situation will be?"

"What we (Armenians) have to do is be alert and conscious so that when there are favorable changes for us, we should seize the opportunity and not miss the chance (to use them)," the Catholicos said.

Spirituality is an element missed in American life, said the Catholicos. "This technological, extremely secularized world—this affluent, new culture does not give attention to the soul," he said. Here he referred to "deviating" movements which attempted this, such as the "Hippie movement of the sixties and such over-industrialized countries such as Sweden and the United States in comparison to more "family-based" countries in the Middle East.

The pontiff suggested that humans look to a higher power because of "man's insufficiency to man" which necessitates spiritual curiosity. In response to a question from the audience, he proceeded by admitting that the Armenian church has



CSUF students posed questions, and the Catholicos responded favorably, answering without restraint.

Unfortunately not developed an "organic plan" to meet the needs of each person, but that each parish may choose to handle spiritual education differently.

New biblical translations have been issued, Karekin II said, to help further education of Armenians in Lebanon.

These new measures, he said, include bible studies, seminars, studies adapted especially for children and Armenian day schools.

"All these are efforts to meet this spiritual need which has been intensified because of the crisis that we are having in the Middle East," he said. He noted that a hunger for spirituality is existing due to the hunger and deprivation in the world that causes people to search for things other than affluence and the secular isolation mentioned earlier. He noted that this year 46 applications to the seminary were received and only 18 positions were available.

The Catholicos was asked that in light of the awareness of the increasing presence of women in positions of authority and power, such as those within such entities as England's Anglican Church, would he foresee the ordination of women in the Armenian Church. He responded that the role of women in the Armenian Church has been very important and that the "doors have been open from the beginning for women." However, he was adamantly against applying a new way of thinking to this age-old tradition.

"I personally may be considered a traditionalist, and I don't mind saying so. The sociological patterns (of society) should be taken seriously," he began. "But the church should not put everything in the church that occurs in society. If for 2000 years it has not happened, why should it occur in the church because of a sociological occurrence outside the church?" he asked.

The women's role in the church is exemplified by their responsibility in the education of children in the church, he said. He referred to the fact that in the

Armenian language, the word "mart" means both men and women and that this wording, as it first appeared in the Armenian National Constitution of 1863 in Constantinople, is a testimony to the "doors being open from the start."

The Catholicos said that the great attention being paid to balance male and female references as well as racial references in modern day literature should not be applied to spiritual affairs, because the essence of religion is the spirit and not our worldly frustration with differences in people.

"Instead of talking about the spirit, we are talking about the battling agenda of the world," he said.

A member of the audience asked the Catholicos if he had a word to the young people of today. The leader was most positive in his response.

"You are a fortunate generation. You have all the possibilities for higher education—to make an impact on this strong, powerful nation," he said. He urged young people to become participants, not spectators in American life and to give up the lack of self-esteem that marked the feeling that their Armenian forefathers might have had.

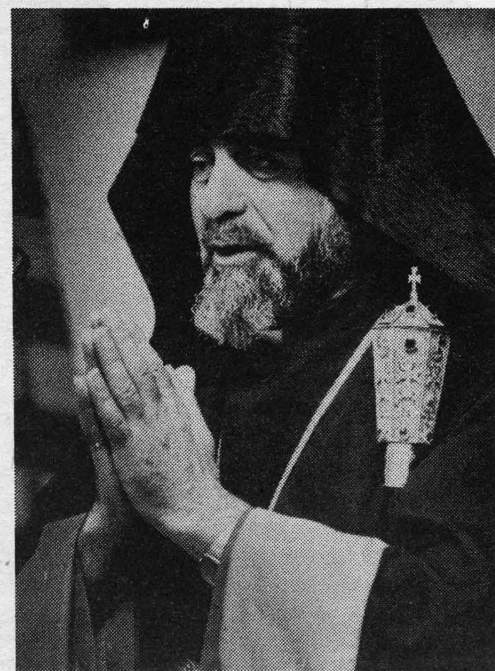
He had three specific suggestions for the youth: to enter the American "texture" of leadership, to go for the highest thing that they can, and to bring that Armenian "color" to American life. He said that the "diversity in unity," an ecumenical term, is the desired cultural situation.

"I would hate to see that image of America that made America what it became to be to be changed into a technological, financial, military, and other senses of superiority. Let us not kill the spirit for the sake of interests of immediate nature..." he said.

"We are being victimized by the avalanche of pleasure," he said. "The young American generation has to revolt against this background."

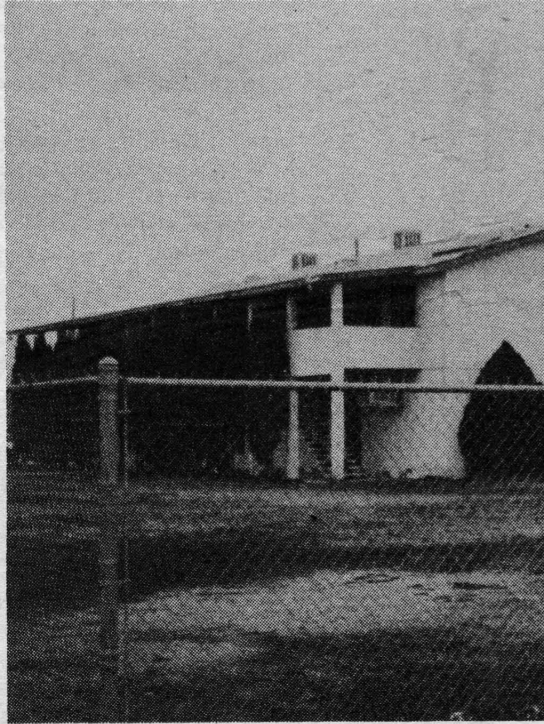


Left: The Catholicos is greeted at the airport by the community.
Right: His Holiness prays with members of the Armenian Home for the Aged.

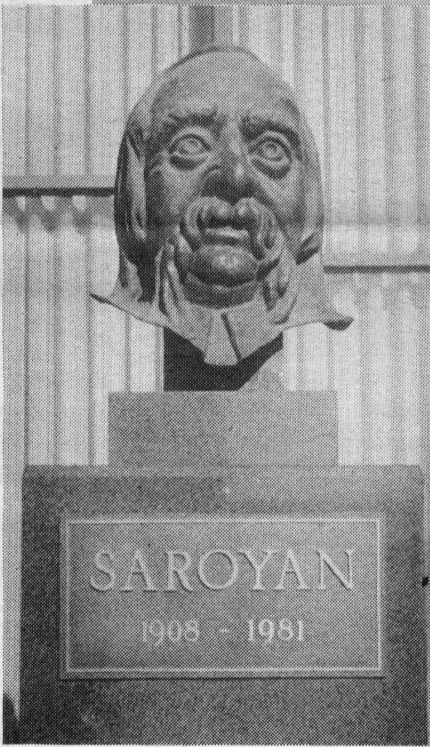


ARMENIA... EXTENDED

Whether it be a haven from the ravages of distant lands, or an opportunity for a better livelihood, Fresno has been providing immigrant Armenians with a new beginning for over 100 years. The undying character of the Armenian people is evident in their many dispersed communities throughout the world. *Hye Sharzhoom* salutes the spirit of the Armenian people in these photographs of various Armenian sites and institutions in Fresno.



Clockwise from bottom left: Armenian Pilgrim Congregational Church; Sassountzi Taviti Statue (David Saroyan Theatre (the statue of Saroyan is situated in front of the theatre); Armenian Community School of Fresno is the hope for the future.



Congregational Church; First Armenian Presbyterian Church; Holy Trinity Armenian Church; David of Sassoun (David of Sassoun) in Courthouse Park; St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church; William Saroyan in front of the theatre(insert); Soghomon Tehlerian Monument in the Ararat Cemetery; the hope for the future.

ARMENIAN CULTURE

to Uncle Willy in Heaven

Strange Uncle Willy to think
of you in heaven with your cigarette
relaxed between two fingers, gesturing
with accents over the thumb glass
of brandy,
annointing a new idea with laughter
and tears rocking a chair,
exposing the underside
of your moustache:
an Artic island, a moon

when your face comes up for Air;
it's a quiet world
since you left, Uncle Willy

Strange, Uncle Willy, the absent streets
sitting in phrases
intending to be ended,
or appearing like a shadow
among the best dinners
in town,
a line served in depression
with apples for dessert

It's a closed universe
since you left Uncle Willy:

children find themselves
in corners
smelling of garlic

By James C. Baloian

ՅԱՐՈՅ ԳՆՈՒՄ Է, ՅՈՐԵՆ Է ՄՆՈՒՄ

Նստած էի ես մի օր մեր շենին,
Քեռիս ցորեն էր երևում մեր կալում.
Սարից փշում էր աշնան գով բամին,
Քամին քշում էր ու յարդը տանում

— Քեռի՛,— ասացի,— էդ ի՞նչ ես անում,
Մեր ամբողջ յարդը տուեցիր բամուն:
— Բան չկալ բալիկ, ինչ ես վշտանում,
Յարդը գնում է, ցորենն է մնում:

Ամեն բանի մէջ ես ամեն ժամին
Քամին երևում է ու յարդը տանում,
Մեզ էլ երևում է աշխարհի բամին,
Յարդը գնում է, ցորենն է մնում:

Մենք ողջ աշխարհն ենք երևում լոյսից լոյս,
Յարդն ու ցորենը տալիս ենք քամուն.
Ու ես յիշում եմ խօսքերը քեռուս,
«Յարդը գնում է, ցորենն է մնում»:

Երևում եմ ես էլ երգերս հիմի,
Իմ ամբողջ կալը բռնել եմ քամուն.
Ինչ որ չի՛ մնալ, կը տանի քամին.
Յարդը գնում է, ցորենն է մնում:

ԽԱԶԻԿ ԴԱՇՏԵՆՅ

Armenian Typesetting
Courtesy LIBERTY PRINTING

Saroyan Review

Continued from Page 4

left her when after six years of marriage he finally found out she was Jewish. Their son Aram had said it already. Yet the credulity of those who knew Saroyan well, even his Armenian cronies, is stretched to the breaking point. However much Saroyan's Uncle Aram of Santa Barbara may have made anti-Semitic remarks in the 1920s, Saroyan's lifelong Jewish friends and acquaintances from Broadway never talked about it and even in these pages do not. To imagine that Saroyan, who all of his life had an almost irritating obsession to know the origin of every name he came across—and he wrote about these things time and time again in stories published long before he met Mrs. Saroyan—not to know that a girl from New York named Marcus with a mother named Rosheen was not Jewish is just absurd. Saroyan left Carol Marcus because, as he himself told us in his post-divorce fiction and memoirs, he suspected her of lying and infidelity. On the latter point, Lee and

Gifford probably uncovered more than they were willing to reveal.

Let's take another example. How is the intelligent reader to explain this book's attitude toward Saroyan's military career and his wartime novel *The Adventures of Wesley Jackson*? During his entire life William Saroyan was vehemently against violence and war. He made that known openly even to his superiors in the army. He was certainly what we would call today a conscientious objector and yet that word or its suggestion is never once found in the book. *Wesley Jackson* is an anti-war novel, pure and simple, and the first one published on World War II. Of course it was unpopular with the establishment, that is precisely why thinking persons should appreciate its gutsy boldness as well as its humor.

Indeed, this is the main problem in an often challenging reassessment of the Pulitzer prize winning writer. The authors fail to see, or refuse to acknowledge, that Saroyan was always against the system, any organized institution, whether the army, school, Hollywood, the publishing world, Broadway, especially when they

ՏԻԿԻՆ ԱՂԱԽՆԻ Հ. ԳԱԶԱՆՃԵԱՆ նախակրթիւնը ստացած է Հայկազեան Վարժարանին մէջ: Երիտասարդ հասակին յատուկ սեր ունեցած է հայ գրականութեան՝ եւ մասնաւորապէս հայ բանաստեղծութեան հանդէպ: Իր բանաստեղծութիւններուն մէկ մասը լոյս տեսած է Անդրանիկ Մատուկեանի «Նայիրի» շաբաթաթերթին մէջ:

Տիկին Գազանճեան եղած է Հալէպի Հայ Մերանոցի հիմնադիրներէն մին:

Ներկայիս իր գաւակները կը ջանան հրատարակել իր բանաստեղծութիւններու հաւաքածոն:

ԱՍՏՈՒԱԾԱՅԻՆ ՊԱՏՈՒԷՐԸ

Դո՛ւն Հայ որդիակ,
Չըլլայ, չըլլայ որ վերցնես,
Այն վաղեմի սահմանները հախճաքներուդ,
Սահմանները մեր հայրենի մաքուր վարքին,
Մեր ժառանգած ընտանեկան վսեմ բարքին:

Մեր հախճաքը մեծ հաւատքով, սուղ գիներով,
Անպատմելի հոռիքու ջանքով,
Վստահութեամբ հաստատեցին,
Սահմանները իրենց կեանքին,
Որ համաձայն Աստուծոյ վսեմ Խօսքին:
Դուն չի խառնես, չի վարակես,
Ընտանեկան սուրբ մաքուր մթնոլորտը մաքուր պահես:

Յիշէ, անոնք շատ լեզուներ չի խօսեցան,
Օտար ազգի չի միացան, չի ձուլուեցան,
Ու մերժեցին հարստութիւն, փառք սնոտի,
Որ սայմանը պարկեշտութեան ու հաւատքի,
Տեղէն չեղլէ, որոշ մնայ ու հաստատուի:

Աքտորուեցան ու ապրեցան հողին վրայ օտարներուն,
Բայց հաւատքին, ընտանեկան սուրբ բարքերուն,
Բոլոր սրտով, մեծ վնասով բայց կամովին,
Ամենուրեք հաւատարիմ միշտ մնացին:

Ուստի դուն ալ ուշիմ տղա՛ս,
Նախնիքներուդ նման ըլլաւ:
Անոնց դրած սահման ու հիմ աղամանդէ,
Իրենց տեղէն չի վերցնես: Պարտքդ ալդ է:

Մայրաքաղ
Աղանի Հ. Գազանճեան

ՅԱԿՈՐ ԳԱՐԱՄԱՆԼԵԱՆ սկսած է գրել 15 տարեկան հասակին: Իր առաջին բանաստեղծութիւնները լոյս տեսած են Լիբանանի Ֆրանսական Սէն Ժոզեֆ Համալսարանի ամսաթերթին մէջ: Հակառակ հայերէն լեզուի ուսուցիչ ըլլալուն՝ Յակոր գրած է միայն ֆրանսերէն: Ստորեւ կուտանք Յակորի գործերէն մին, իր քարգմանութեամբ:

ԴՈՒ ՉԵԿԱԾ

Դու չեկած,
Կուրացած այս կեանքում
Միակ լոյսս սրտում
Աղօտ էր ու թողում:

Դու չեկած,
Մանկութեանս օրերում
Տանջանքի էջերում
Բակում էի մնում:

Դու չեկած,
Վերես մի տանիք
Եւ իբրեւ ընտանիք
Ունէի արհաւիրք:

Դու չեկած,
Իմ օրերը բալիկ
Ալիք առ ալիք՝
Մեռնում էին մանկիկ:

Դու չեկած
սիրտս խոցած
Ձեռներս երկարած
Ի մի պատար չոր հաց:

Դու չեկած,
Եկեղեցում չորած
Աղօթում առ Աստուած
Բայց մնում էի լաց:

Իս քո հետ,
Սիրոյ օրօրոցում
Լի քո անձով սիրուն
Իմ կեանքն է ծաղկում:

Իս քո հետ,
Երջանկութեամբ հարբած
Արդէն մե մոռացած
Օրերը դու չեկած:

ՅԱԿՈՐ ԳԱՐԱՄԱՆԼԵԱՆ

deprived people of their individuality. He gambled all his life and lost most of the time, but he won a lifelong bet between himself and the world: William Saroyan would succeed in the system, while criticizing it, attacking it, telling it where to get off, mocking it, and finally walking away from it and still surviving it.

The end of this fascinating literary construction tries very hard to be more understanding to Saroyan and even partially succeeds. The price that we as readers must pay is to envisage him as a solitary, lonely, pathetic and mean figure in need of our sympathy. That ending is the same one that Aram Saroyan chose to

use, and, indeed, Lee and Gifford quote in extenso from *Last Rites*.

Those who were close to William Saroyan in the last years know that he died at his pace in his time, a man who lived privately by choice, but was always full of public bravado, a man who had thought more about the human condition than most figures of our time and had furthermore written it all down, a human being who in regularly revealing to us in clear and at times brutal terms his won deficiencies, died an integral and whole person with no need for hysterical psychodrama to explain his personality to the rest of us.

Why Study Armenian History?

By Randy Balolan
Assistant Editor

Just recently, during a session of Dr. Kouymjian's course in **Armenian History to the Mongolian Invasion**, I asked myself what possible benefit is derived from the study of Armenian history. As usual, the doctor's lecture on the various events and figures of the period was nothing less than intriguing. Yet, it is hard to find where archaic dynasties and medieval power struggles fit into modern Armenian affairs.

A question of this sort assumes history to be an endeavor which can yield usable information to the individual and/or society as a whole. Like most disciplines, history's primary objective is to attain knowledge for its own sake—that is, without any predeliberation of applying such knowledge to a practical matter. Although this may seem to be an idealistic approach, many scientific breakthroughs which have had value to society are products of basic research (science for learning or general science), rather than applied research (science with a practical goal). Of course, history may never make possible man's future technological advances or solve the problems they create. However, history does engender an equally important effect—it provokes thought about the state of man.

Of all the fields of learning, the humanities (history included) are best able to capture the quintessence of the human experience. I like to think of history as a special kind of literature. Just as a student of literature may ponder over the contents of a Steinbeck novel, a historian will reflect upon the chronicles of Herodotus. The novel and history differ in that one is the product of imagination, while the other is "based on a true story" so to speak. But both depict the realities and meaningful events of a particular setting and period in time. Thus, history is useful to the individual and society; as we race through an era of unprecedented technological change, I think it is essential to understand mankind's past in order to better define our own place in time.

Although this offers a rationale to the study of history in general, my intention is to explore the present-day relevance of Armenian history.

For the scholar, Armenian's past contains an abundance of invaluable data, providing some of the pieces to the overall historical puzzle (i.e. Armenian, as a branch of the Indo-European language, can aid in the reconstruction or interpretation of extinct languages.) But this really doesn't specifically pertain to current Armenian conditions.

When discussing the worth of history, that old cliché, "those who do not know history are doomed to repeat it," is invariably mentioned. Well, considering that Armenians have had their share of unfortunate incidents, it would probably make sense to recognize potentially malicious situations. Yet, I don't think it would reward the watcher to sit and wait around for history to reoccur; out of the countless instances of the past some are bound to resemble each other.

Histories are usually the major source of pride among ethnic groups. What Armenian has not heard of Tigran the Great, the builder of a vast empire, an epitome of Armenian aspirations. Tigran was like any other despot of his day, though—deceitful, autocratic, and conceited. If Tigran were alive today, he would probably be regarded as somewhat of an pompous intransigent (hardly a source of pride). Admittedly, there are many heroic figures in Armenian history, but they should be looked at in the proper perspective; it is all too often that a people are guilty of ethnocentrism.

So what reason is there to study Armenian history?

History holds special significance to an ethnic group in that it serves to distinguish a people from other groups. Many of the distinctive features of Armenian culture are found amongst its age old institutions; the church, spoken and written language, organizations, etc. possess links with the past. In a sense, they are defined by their histories. For example, today the Armenian Church exists separately from other Christian denominations not because of present circumstances, but due to a long history of remaining as a divergent branch of Christianity.

"A New Kind of War"

Continued from page 3

Interior Minister Talaat Pasha ordered his armed forces "to destroy completely all Armenians living in Turkey." Under the guise of resettlement, as many as 1.5 million Armenians were murdered or left to die during forced marches into the desert. Most of those who survived fled eastward behind the Russian lines, and began a worldwide diaspora.

Eyewitness accounts and photographic evidence of the mass murder of Armenians are abundant. The Turkish government, however, while admitting that hundreds of thousands of Armenians perished, denies that there was a deliberate extermination. The loss of life was, it claims, the unfortunate result of wartime resettlement of a rebellious ethnic population.

Gourgen Yanikian experienced the horrors of the Armenian massacres firsthand. He was born in Erzerum, in eastern Turkey, 1895. Escaping that year's massacre of perhaps 80,000 Armenians, his family fled east to the Caucasus Mountains. During their flight, Yanikian fell from a sled, unnoticed, into the snow. He was only half alive when his older brother, Hagop, returned hours later to rescue him.

At the age of eight, Yanikian witnessed the murder of Hagop by a band of marauding Turks. Watching from a basement hiding place, he was almost smothered as his mother stifled his screams to prevent their own discovery and execution. In horrified silence, mother and son watched as Hagop's throat was slit.

Five more of his own family, Yanikian would later recall, were killed by Turks.

Educated alternately in Turkey, Switzerland, and Russia, Yanikian left his studies at Moscow University during World War I to join General Antranik's Armenian Volunteer Regiment. Later he returned to the university, took a degree in engineering, and married a doctor who had been his classmate.

As an engineer, Yanikian built railroads in the Soviet Union and Iran, and traveled widely in the Middle East. For several years he carried a Turkish 2 1/2 lira bill, which he asked prominent friends to autograph. Among those signing were Shah Riza Khan Pahlavi of Iran, King

George II of Greece, and several prime ministers.

During World War II, Yanikian directed 10,000 men in building a vital portion of the Trans-Iranian railroad, over which would pour tons of Lend-Lease supplies to keep Russia in the war.

Immigrating to the United States in 1946, Yanikian became a citizen 10 years later. Turning to writing, he published five books and wrote a number of plays. Among his most prized possessions were letters from Presidents Nixon and Johnson, thanking him for complimentary copies of his books. (President Nixon would later call Yanikian's assassination of the Turkish diplomats "a deplorable act of violence," and express his "deepest regret for this tragic incident" to Turkey's president.)

After living in Beverly Hills and Fresno, California, Yanikian settled in the seaside resort of Santa Barbara, a few miles from President Ronald Reagan's hilltop ranch. (Reagan, governor of California at the time of the assassination, called them a "a terrible tragedy," and praised the slain diplomats as being "among the most dedicated and efficient diplomats in this country.")

While living in Santa Barbara, Yanikian made plans to declare his "new kind of war." He appeared at the Turkish Consulate in Los Angeles, claiming to be an Iranian immigrant. There he offered as a gift to the Turkish government a seventeenth century painting by the Italian master Farelli, which had been stolen from the sultan's palace in Istanbul a century earlier. Yanikian then produced a copy of his autographed 2 1/2 lira bill, and offered the original as a second gift. The diplomats would, however, have to come to Santa Barbara to collect the gifts, Yanikian said.

A date for a Santa Barbara meeting was agreed upon, and Yanikian's trap was set. The day before the meeting, he mailed out hundreds of copies of his "call to action."

On January 27, 1973, Consul General Mehmet Baydar, 47, and Vice Consul Bahadır Demir, 30, arrived at Yanikian's Biltmore Hotel cottage to receive the painting and the bill. Yanikian shot and killed them, asked the switchboard operator to call the Sheriff, and then sat calmly on the cottage terrace to await his arrest and prosecution.

Yanikian hoped to focus world attention on his trial. "I will ensure that they will arrest me and I will continue

The importance of the past is also evident in Armenian values: where one plans to go is not so important as where one has been.

Of all the aspects of Armenian culture, I think group behavior best illustrates the relationship with the past. Take for instance the inability of Armenians to unify. Recent problem? Product of modern times? Result of a dispersed population? Perhaps, but a simple glance through Armenian history indicates dissension to be the rule rather than the exception. Another persistent characteristic found throughout history has been the willingness of Armenians to accept the precepts of a dominant culture but never becoming fully enveloped by it. This is probably why Armenians are as successful as they are—they have had the capacity to adapt to many difficult situations. It is possibly why Armenians also live in fear of being persecuted. (Although not as obvious in the United States, this paranoia manifests itself from time to time.)

The whole idea is that these concepts cannot be understood without some knowledge of their related history. As stated before, history serves to define the present by explaining the past. With Armenian culture this is even more true, since so much of the past is bound to the present.

Not all aspects of Armenian history can be easily reconciled with the present (e.g. Armenians have long since abandoned their feudal form of organization.). Yet, these seemingly insignificant details should be understood as well as those items which have present-day relevance. A society operates as a web of interrelated components; one part is almost certainly connected in some way to other parts. If one were to study the Armenian Church in the first millennium A.D., it would be a prerequisite to gain some knowledge of the *nakharrar* system, since both church and state were closely associated. (Depending on how far this logic is taken, the histories of nations surrounding Armenia can also be very elucidating. Many events in Armenian history must be seen in an international context.) It is not enough to understand those aspects which have stood the test of time, but also those that have not.

If the individual can learn something about his culture by studying history, then he may also learn something about himself in the process. The individual, like culture, is composed of many elements from the past. It has already been discussed how history influences Armenian behavior. I think history can also hold a more subjective meaning to the individual. If Armenians are to be proud of their history, the pride should come from sheer longevity of the nation, rather than from accomplishments considered to be superior by other cultures. Being Armenian is not expanding one's territory at the expense of weaker countries or subjugating other peoples to tyrannical rule. Simply being Armenian is *surviving*.

This may not seem to be a spectacular achievement, but Armenians can take solace in that they do it very well and are very successful at it. What group can say it has witnessed the fall of Assyria and the advent of capitalism and communism? Very few. Think of all the groups that have become extinct, or worse yet, those that have been forgotten or are considered irrelevant. What a wonder it would be to travel 2500 years into the future to find that Armenians still exist; albeit different than us, nevertheless still Armenian and still surviving! The present-day Armenian does not just live as a part of the modern world, but also as an extension of the past. There is continuity between the Armenian and his predecessors. Even though the surroundings may change, as well as Armenian culture itself, one thing remains a constant—Armenian identity.

In emphasizing the importance of history, I do not mean to imply that history alone should be studied—the past is relevant, but it does not entail the exact conditions as the present. (There are other disciplines which are compliments to history: anthropology, sociology, etc.) As mentioned previously, history's benefit to man is a conceptual look at himself, rather than some tangible good; it is the abstract nature of history which makes finding reasons to justify its utility not always apparent. When all else fails, though, consider that Armenian history (and all other studies of the past) is an interesting subject—that's reason enough.

to defend my rights before a world court," he had written before the killings. Armenian newspapers predicted that Yanikian's Santa Barbara trial would become the "Armenian Nuremberg," where the 1915 genocide would be proven.

There was a precedent for such a showcase trial. Sixty-one years earlier, a 24 year old Armenian political activist, Soghomon Telerian, had tracked down Talaat Pasha, the hated Turkish Interior Minister who ordered the 1915 massacres. Talaat had fled Turkey and was living under an assumed identity in Germany.

On March 21, 1921, Telerian found his prey on a Berlin avenue, where he shot and killed him. He used his subsequent trial, which was reported in the world press, to expose the 1915 massacres and Talaat's role in ordering them. After a sensational jury trial, Telerian was acquitted, becoming an immortal Armenian hero.

Upon his death in 1960, Soghomon Telerian was buried in the Ararat Armenian cemetery at Fresno, California, where Gourgen Yanikian resided in the early 1950's. There, beneath a stately victory column crested by a golden eagle, lie the graves of Telerian and General Antranik.

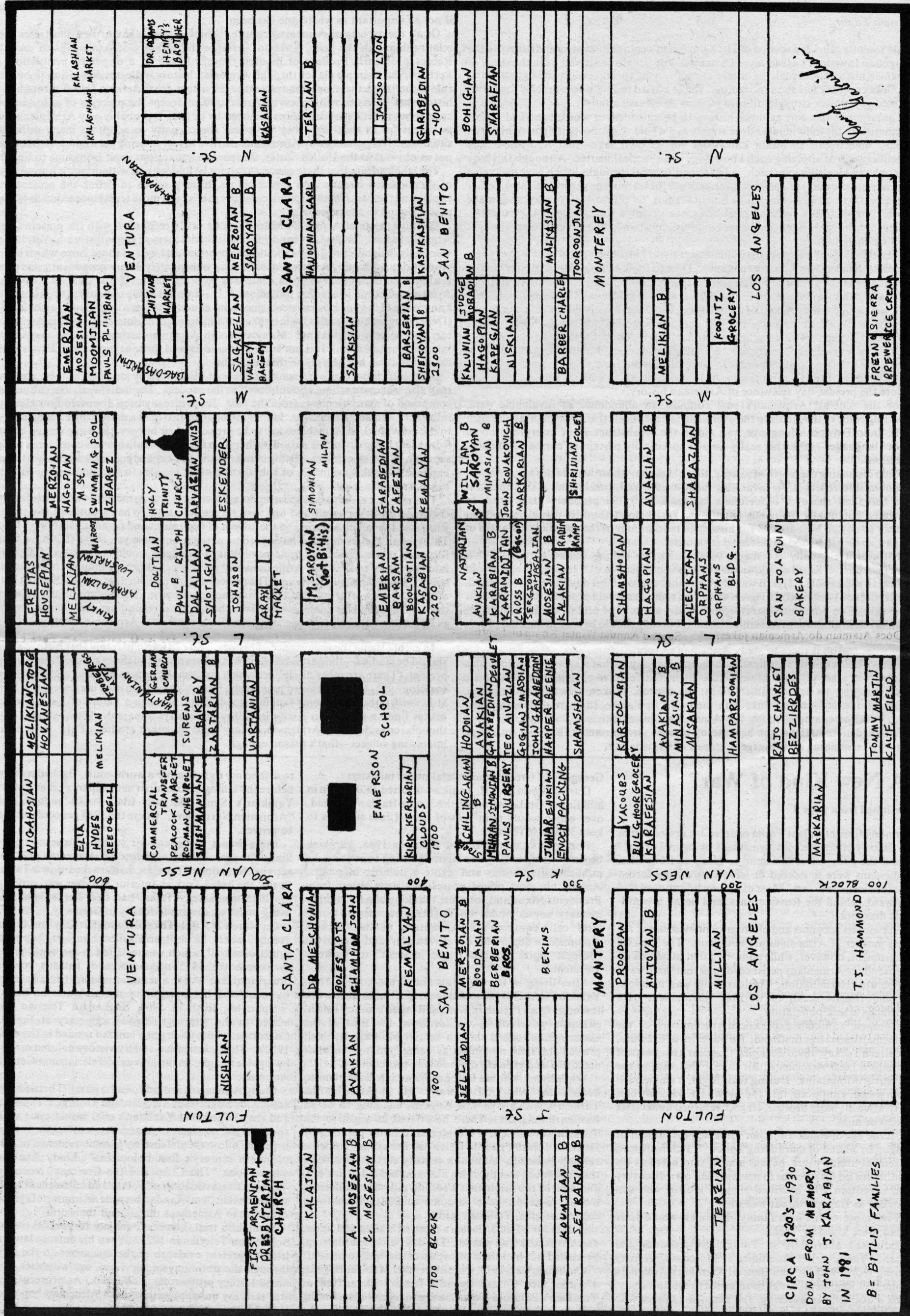
Many Armenians indeed found a parallel between the actions of Soghomon Telerian and Gourgen Yanikian, and they hoped that Yanikian's trial would once again spotlight the massacres. As the state's prosecutor, I was urged to allow the defense to present evidence of "the twentieth century's first holocaust." Lindy Avakian, whose book "The Cross and the Crescent" recounted Telerian's assassination of Talaat and subsequent trials, wrote me that "you stand to become an immortal symbol of justice to Armenians throughout the world."

Yanikian's trial, however, was not to parallel that of Soghomon Telerian in 1921. When his defense lawyers tried to present evidence of the massacres to the jury, through the testimony of survivors, eye-witnesses, and noted history professors, I objected. As prosecutor, it was thus my unhappy task to dash Armenian hopes for their "Armenian Nuremberg."

Unlike Soghomon Telerian, Yanikian had not avenged the massacre of his people by killing the man who had ordered it. He had, instead, killed two blameless men

See Yanikian, Page 11

Fresno's "Little Armenia"



An exact redrawing of the map of the famous "Little Armenia" in Fresno, California prepared by John J. Karabian. The areas around L and M Streets, with its Holy Trinity Church, its Armenian bakeries, and Emerson School, was almost solidly Armenian and the home of such well known personalities as William Saroyan and Kirk Kerkorian. The letter "B" indicates homes of natives of Bitlis. The map was prepared from memory by Mr. Karabian, but it reflects the neighborhood as it was after World War I. *Hye Sharzhoom* readers are encouraged to examine the map carefully and send comments to the Armenian Studies Program, CSUF, Fresno, CA 93740.

Fresno Armenian launches comedy career

By Vahe K. Messerlian
Editor

Alan Atamian says that he's naturally funny, something that has developed through the years. And after having just a few words with him, one can't help but chuckle just a little, if not burst into laughter.

"Actually, I'm really myself on stage—just a little more histrionic," says Atamian about his standup comedy.

Atamian is becoming one of the most popular comedy acts in Fresno, playing in such places as the Lucky Lady Saloon, Hacienda Inn, Knock Three Times Lounge, Centre Plaza Holiday Inn, and numerous private parties. In fact, he took second place in the "Funniest Person in Fresno" contest last May.

But that doesn't overinflate the ego of Atamian, a native Fresno.

"Yes, I'm a native of Fresno, and I've got my spears in my car," he says matter-of-factly. The 23-year-old CSUF graduate plans to move to Los Angeles to launch a career in comedy, but will stay in Fresno until he develops a style. He has already prepared a video tape to send to "Star Search," a Los Angeles television program for fresh talents.

Atamian, former President of the Armenian Students Organization and Editor of *Hye Sharzhoom*, obtains his material from reading and current events, but mostly enjoys doing parody derived from celebrities and prominent figures. He does 130 impersonations in his repertoire and adds that "74 of those are not taken up by Orson Welles."

Does Atamian do Armenian jokes?

"I try to avoid doing ethnic jokes, because they tend to proliferate stereotypes. If I do, it's usually about something that isn't derogatory or demeaning...like dolma."

"I feel strongly Armenian-American," he claims, stressing both his Armenian and American upbringings. He has no problem, however, finding a compromise between his Armenian heritage and his American environment.

Atamian noted that Armenians have a long history of being persecuted and are underneath a frustrated people. As a result, Atamian asserts, Armenian-Americans are "becoming Americanized, losing their Armenian identity."

"I am proud to be Armenian—I have no reason to hide it."

Atamian has other core beliefs: respect for human life and dignity, truth, and personal integrity. He is not heavily opinionated, however, and likes to keep an open mind to all viewpoints.

His comedy says a lot about his view of life. "Comedy is a reality. It's just another way of looking at the world—it gives you a different insight."

His background in radio and television broadcasting has helped Atamian in his performance in front of audiences. He has a double major in journalism and speech communication and may eventually return to a more stable career if his comedy career doesn't take off. He is presently being considered for the editorship of the *Dinuba Sentinel*.

But this multi-talented Armenian is not about to give up comedy yet. He can next be seen performing at ASO's Second Annual Winter Romp on Febru-

ary 23 at the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church.

Anyone wishing to book Alan for an event should call (209) 224-STAR or write:

Alan Atamian
P.O. Box 5955
Fresno, CA 93755



ASO well represented in intramurals

It seems that the ASO has added a viable alternative to its list of activities.

Because support for athletic teams has been favorable, the ASO will continue to participate in the CSUF Intramural Program.

In addition to fielding a softball team later this spring, the ASO Intramural Committee has decided to sponsor two basketball squads—one in the men's independent league and the other in the just-for-fun league. The teams will be called *ASO I* and *ASO II* respectively.

ASO I actually consists of a group of players which has played under such names as the *Hye Steppers* and the *Sanger Stars*. These teams, led by forward and team-captain Gary Kazanjian, have qualified for post-season play for the past three years.

"We feel we now have the experience to go far in the play-offs," said Kazanjian.

Kazanjian teams up with former All-Metro star Mark Tufenkjian to make-up what could be called, "the bookend forwards of Armenian basketball". The tandem guided the *Hye Steppers* to a perfect 4-0 record by leading the team in scoring last year.

After watching them play, one cannot avoid noticing the similarities between Kazanjian and Tufenkjian: both are 6-3, have comparable playing styles, and even resemble one another to some degree.

"Mark and I have been playing together for some time now and know each other's moves—that's what makes us so suc-

See ASO Intramurals, Back Page

Yanikian

Continued from Page 9

who were born many years after the massacres occurred, solely because they were Turkish diplomats.

Barred from presenting the witnesses they wished, Yanikian's defense lawyers still had one means left of proving the massacres: Yanikian himself. Proud and erect, the 78 year old defendant strode to the witness stand, and began a remarkable testimony which continued for six days.

The judge had supplied Yanikian with an interpreter—81 year old Aram Saroyan, the "Uncle Aram" made famous by his nephew, author William Saroyan. Saroyan was to translate the testimony of the English speaking witnesses into Armenian, for Yanikian's benefit. Now, insisting on using the language of his adopted country, Yanikian testified in broken but unhalting English.

He was a commanding figure, confident and authoritative, dressed in a dark blue suit which concealed a bullet proof vest for his protection. The courtroom was overflowing with elderly Armenian-Americans, including many survivors of the massacres, who rose and applauded whenever Yanikian entered or left.

In deep, assured tones, Yanikian traced the ill fated history of the Armenian people. As he testified, his audience reacted emotionally, crying at some points and murmuring their approval at others.

Yanikian detailed his own life, telling how he left his studies at the University of Moscow in 1915 to fight the Turks in General Antranik's Armenian Volunteer Regiment. Then, weeping openly, Yanikian described how he had watched the murder of his brother Hagop. To a hushed courtroom, he told of finding the butchered bodies of his wife's relatives after Antranik's forces retook the town of Kars from the Turks.

Of killing the two Turkish diplomats at the Biltmore Hotel, Yanikian said he was "destroying two evils," as representatives of the government that had massacred his people.

In their final arguments to the jury, Yanikian's attorneys described him as "a man of destiny" who would always remain a hero to the Armenian people. The candle the elderly Armenian had lit in the darkness would continue to burn only if he were acquitted, they pled.

The jury, its inquiry limited to the issue of Yanikian's premeditated killing of the diplomats, found him guilty of two first degree murders. By his acts, however, it appeared that Yanikian had in fact achieved his goal: a place in Armenian history as the author of "a new kind of war" against the Turkish government. His trial was reported by the world press, and, within 10 years, the war would be carried to twelve other countries. Twenty-six

Turkish diplomats, their aids or family members—including two wives and two children—have now been assassinated in such cities as Los Angeles, Boston, Paris, Vienna and Rome.

Last January, when Gourgen Yanikian walked away from Vacaville's ugly gray walls, in the twilight of his life, his place in Armenian history was assured. Whether he was a martyr or merely a murderer, however, depends on one's viewpoint.

Although some view Yanikian as a self-sacrificing hero, responsible Armenians the world over, including California's Governor George Deukmejian, have condemned his acts and the terrorism which has followed. The victims have all been blameless diplomats, their families and political aides, whose only offense was to be Turkish. Whereas the hated Talaat Pasha had on his hands the blood of over a million Armenians, the victims of Yanikian and his successors were not yet born when the massacres of Talaat occurred.

Moreover, the Turkish state which the murdered diplomats represented was born after the massacres occurred, in revolt against the Ottoman Empire. The modern Republic of Turkey was created in 1923 by Kemal Ataturk and his followers, in a political and cultural revolution. Those responsible for the massacres—Talaat Pasha and his Young Turk Party associates—fled the country for their lives, as did the sultan.

With the formation of the new Turkish republic, the sultanate was abolished, and Islam was discarded as a state religion. Voting rights were given to women, polygamy was outlawed, and wearing of the fez was prohibited. A new civil code was adopted, and even the alphabet was changed, with roman letters substituted for the arabic. In short, the Ottoman Empire was transformed, within a few years, into a new and vastly different Republic of Turkey.

Today's Turkish diplomats no more represent, or bear responsibility for the Ottoman Empire, than a Western German diplomat today represents and is accountable for Hitler's Nazi Germany.

The likelihood that more assassinations will result in the restoration of an independent Armenian nation is almost nil. Much of historic Armenia now lies within the Soviet Union, and the terrorists have wisely steered clear of any acts against its representatives, at home or abroad. The Turkish government has never acknowledged the massacres, and is unlikely ever to consider the creation of an Armenian state within its own borders.

Recognition of the massacres by the present Turkish government would, however, have the beneficial effect of weakening the motive for continuing Yanikian's "war". Western Germany, by example, has found little difficulty in admitting and condemning the guilt of Nazi Germany

for its mass murder of the Jews. Why cannot modern Turkey, in like manner, reassess the conduct of the Ottoman Empire—the "sick man of Europe" which it overthrew 60 years ago—and come to historical grips with the hard evidence of the massacres?

History's darkest chapters—its genocides—should be fully and fairly exposed. Only in this way, by revealing the ultimate depravity of man, can we try to assure that such atrocities never occur again.

Unfortunately, the Ottoman Empire's 1915 solution to the "Armenian Problem" was never fully exposed in the spotlight of world attention. As Adolf Hitler said 24 years later, in ordering the liquidation of "men, women and children belonging to the Polish speaking race, "after all, who remembers today the extermination of the Armenians?"

ASO PRESENTS RAINBOW ROMP

DATE: February 23, 1985

TIME: 8:00 till ???

PLACE: Holy Trinity Church Hall

ADMISSION: \$5 in advance, \$6 at the door

ASO's Second Annual Dance
featuring comedian
ALAN ATAMIAN

Music by
STREET SOUND

Tickets available at the Armenian Studies Office.

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ASO Intramurals continued from page 11

cessful," added Kazanjian.

Rounding out the ASO I squad are Lance Armo(guard), Charles Mugrdchian(guard), Joe Padilla(center), Mark Kazanjian(guard) and Jim Kirkorian(guard).

Although ASO II will be competing in the lower just-for-fun league, you wouldn't know it from the attitude of the players.

"Don't let that name fool you," said guard Don Arax, "when we go out on the floor, we're there to do one thing—win."

Unfortunately, winning has not been a common event among ASO teams. After posting an 0-5 record in football last fall, the basketball team is looking to improve on that mark.

"We can only get better," noted Vince Gambero, who was a mainstay on the Hye Enk football team.

ASO II is currently filling out its roster. Anyone interested should contact Randy Baloian at the next ASO meeting.

Both teams encourage fan support.

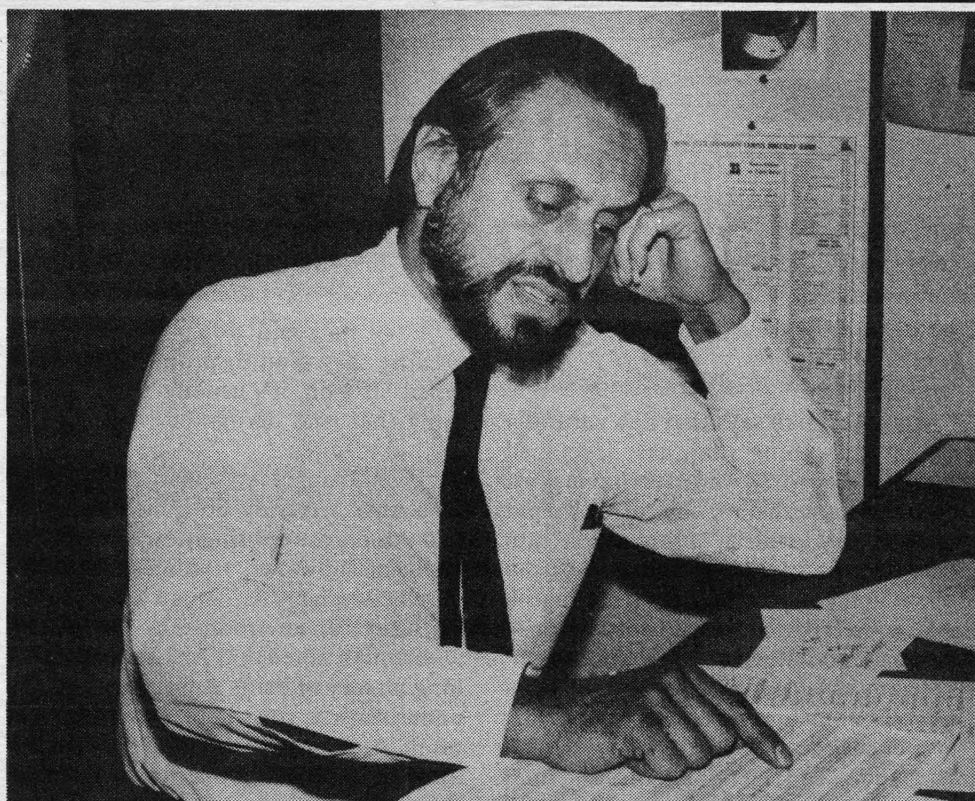
Saroyan Archives

continued from Page 1

away everything from hotel stationary to stray rocks. This vast archive is slowly being sifted through and may someday reveal the true inner Saroyan.

Aside from these personal mementos, Saroyan's estate also contains a large stockpile of unpublished manuscripts. Experts have appraised the value of these works as potentially reaching into the millions. A number of plays have been discovered dealing with Armenian themes. Currently, plans are underway to publish a sampling of these writings through the CSUF press. Saroyan fans can look forward to coming volumes in the future.

Mahoney said that what is not taken by Special Collections or the Armenian Studies Program will be given to the Fresno Metropolitan Museum.



Professor Setian examines Armenian Studies enrollment. Setian will be temporarily replacing Dr. Kouymjian this year.

Setian

continued from Page 1

university and the city have grown considerably.

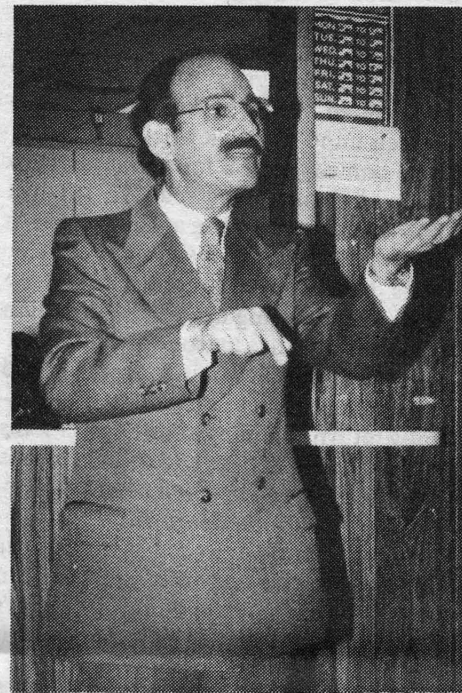
"I feel that I must get to know everything again. I am eager to meet students on campus and to become familiar with various Armenian institutions and organizations in the greater Fresno community," he said.

Setian added, "I hope that more CSUF students will sign up for courses in Armenian studies."

This semester, Professor Setian will be teaching **Modern Armenian History 108B**, **Armenian Language 1B**, and two sections of **Armenian Studies 10**.

When asked if his temporary position this semester could turn into a permanent one, Setian replied, "I would like very much to remain at Fresno State, but this would depend on the budget and enrollment in the Armenian Studies Program."

Dr. Kouymjian will return to CSUF for the fall, 1985 semester.



Dr. Kouymjian stresses a point during an Armenian National Committee farewell dinner given in his honor.

TOM BOZIGIAN

presents an

Armenian Folk Dance Seminar

Saturday, March 23

For further information, call the
Armenian Studies Office (209) 294-2669.

Thank You!

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