

# HYE SHARZHOOM

## Armenian Action

### ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՍ



36<sup>th</sup> Year

March 2015

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

## Der Mugrdechian President of Society for Armenian Studies



Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian  
STAFF REPORT

The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) celebrated its 40th anniversary at its Annual Membership meeting held in

## Evelyn Sahroian Tregoning Bequest of \$100,000 to Armenian Studies

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced a gift of \$100,000 from the estate of the late Evelyn Sahroian Tregoning that will establish the Tregoning Endowment in Armenian Studies.

Evelyn Sahroian Tregoning was born on September 30, 1923 and passed away on June 1, 2014. She was born to an Armenian immigrant family in the farming area of Sanger, near Fresno, and she was always eager for more education, apparent by her studies

Washington, D.C., on Saturday, November 22.

A new Executive Council was elected with Barlow Der Mugrdechian (California State University-Fresno) chosen as the new SAS President. Also elected were Vice President Bedross Der Matossian (University of Nebraska-Lincoln); Secretary Lilit Keshishyan (UCLA); Treasurer Sergio La Porta (California State University, Fresno); and advisors Tamar Boyajian (Michigan State University), Marc Mamigonian (NAASR), and Jean Murachanian (University of New England).

On behalf of the SAS newly elected President Der Mugrdechian thanked outgoing

SEE SAS PAGE 7



Evelyn Sahroian Tregoning

in school. After graduating Mrs.

SEE TREGONING PAGE 6

## Dr. Douzjian Gives First in Series of Kazan Visiting Professor Lectures



Left to right: Bako Oganyan, Dr. Myrna Douzjian, ASO President Marine Vardanyan, and Tatevik Hovhannisyan.

LAUREN CHARDUKIAN  
STAFF WRITER

This semester, the Armenian Studies Program welcomed Dr.

Myrna Douzjian as the 11th Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies at Fresno State. As part of her responsibilities as

SEE DOUZJIAN PAGE 7

## Armenian Monument Will Open in April to Mark 100th Anniversary of the Genocide



Construction of the Armenian Genocide Monument at Fresno State is well under way with completion of the Monument slated for mid-April.

ARAMAYIS ORKUSYAN  
STAFF WRITER

Each year on April 24, Armenians around the world commemorate the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. This year, however,

marks a symbolic cornerstone for the Armenian people as they prepare to commemorate the 100th anniversary of what has been called “The first modern genocide of the 20th century.”

Many events are taking place worldwide to commemorate

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

this important year, and those who attended the Khachaturian Trio concert at Fresno State last November have already become acquainted with one of the many worldwide initiatives

SEE MONUMENT PAGE 8

## Leon Peters Foundation Grant of \$30,000 to ASP for 2015

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced that the Leon S. Peters Foundation has made a generous donation of \$30,000 to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State for 2015.

This continues the tradition of the Peters Foundation in supporting the Armenian Studies Program Annual Lecture Series, as well as a variety of other activities, including scholarships, outreach activities, an Armenia summer study trip, and general support for the Program.

Leon S. Peters was respected as a businessman, civic leader, and philanthropist who lived and worked according to the highest ethical standards. He cherished his community and considered its well being his personal responsibility.

SEE PETERS PAGE 3

## La Porta Selected for “Fresno State Talks” Series

MARINE VARDANYAN  
EDITOR

2015 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Why should you care? According to Dr. Sergio La Porta, Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State, the Armenian Genocide “is very much tied up with who we are today and the whole notion of modernity.” On Thursday, February 26, Dr. La Porta explored the role of the Armenian Genocide in shaping modern-day civilization at the Fresno State lecture series known as “Fresno State Talks.”

SEE LA PORTA PAGE 8



Left to right: Fresno State Provost Dr. Lynette Zelezny, Dr. Robert Maldonado, and Dr. Sergio La Porta.



## Armenian Studies Program Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Prof. Sergio La Porta, and the Armenian Studies Program would like to thank the donors, authors, and publishers for the following books, periodicals, videos, and archival gifts, either offered personally, or to the Program.

**Jacqueline Agazarian**, Fresno, for copies of the journal *Raft* and Armenian books.

**Edward Ashjian**, Fresno, for a DVD and photos of the groundbreaking of the Armenian Genocide Monument at Fresno State, November 2, 2014.

**Marguerite and Andre Biklian**, Bakersfield, for a selection of Armenian records.

**Bishop Moushegh Babayan**, Holy See of Etchmiadzin, for two books: *Hayots Tseghaspanutyun yev Haykakan Harts* (The Armenian Genocide and the Armenian Question) by Avag Harutyunyan (Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, 2014), 558pp., in Armenian, Russian, and English, a valuable bibliography of more than 3,000 books written between 1860-2010 and a copy of *Haykakan Azgayin Khorhrdانشanner* (Armenian National Medals) by Hayk Demoyan (Yerevan, 2012), 465pp., in Armenian, an illustrated book that covers the history of military medals, flags, and symbols used by the Armenians over a wide period of time.

**Center for Armenian Remembrance**, [www.centerar.org](http://www.centerar.org), for five books: *The Case of Soghomon Tehlerian* (Glendale, CA, 2006) by Vartkes Yeghiayan, 2nd edition, 223 pp.; *British Reports on Ethnic Cleansing in Anatolia, 1919-1922: The Armenian-Greek Section*, compiled by Vartkes Yeghiayan, 296pp. (Glendale, CA, 2007); *Pro-Armenia: Jewish Responses to the Armenian Genocide* by Vartkes Yeghiayan (Glendale, CA, 2011), 2669pp. in English, a collection of the writings on the Genocide by Jewish diplomats, intelligence operatives, and members of the human rights movement; *Vahan Cardashian: Advocate Extraordinaire for the Armenian Cause* compiled by Vartkes Yeghiayan (Glendale, CA, 2008), 353pp., in English; *Raphael Lemkin's Dossier on the Armenian Genocide* by Vartkes Yeghiayan (Glendale, CA, 2008), 158pp., in English.

**Patricia De Fury**, Fresno, for a copy of her great-uncle Mugerdich Gulian's biography, "The Long Road from Samsun: An Armenian Saga," written by her uncle Richard Vartian.

**Hrant Dink Foundation**, Istanbul, Turkey, for a copy of their 2015 agenda/calendar, beautifully illustrated with photos and historical notes. In Armenian, Turkish, and English.

**Don Eskender**, Fresno, for several Armenian themed books in English.

**Haig Ghazarian**, Yerevan, Armenia, for a copy of his new book *The Caverns of Gesaria: Pages from My Diary* (Yerevan: History Institute of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences, 2014), 166pp., in Armenian and English. The book is about the experiences of the author's family during the Armenian Genocide.

**Dr. Jeannette Hovsepian**, Colorado Springs, Colorado for ten boxes of books on a variety of topics ranging from history and literature, to art and architecture.

**Abraham D. Krikorian** and **Eugene L. Taylor**, Port Jefferson, New York, for a set of DVDs on "The History of the Armenian Orphan Rug (Coolidge Rug)" that was made for the White House in 1925. The Rug was recently displayed in the White House Visitor's Center in Washington, D.C. The movie is available on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/MkQQEFsXDRg>. They also donated a DVD "Raphael Lemkin: The Genesis of the Concept behind the Word Genocide," a UN Casebook XXI television program, also available on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/CXliPhs1530>.

**Dr. Herand M. Markarian**, Congers, NY, for a copy of his new book, *The Martyred Armenian Writers 1915-1922* (Congers, NY: Libra-6 Productions, 2015), 246pp., in English. This anthology focuses on thirteen prominent Armenian writers who were martyred during the Armenian Genocide. A biography and the selected works of each author are presented, translated from Armenian into English by Dr. Markarian.

**Marianne Markarian**, Carpinteria, CA, for a copy of her new book *Mariam's Easter Parade* (Pomegranate Publishing, 2015), with illustrations by Margaret Markarian Wasielewski. This book is a celebration of the Armenian culture and the traditions associated with Easter.

**Mirta Djeredjian Sarafian**, Buenos Aires, Argentina, for a copy of her book *Armenia: Its People and Its Millennial Culture: The History and Cultural Legacy from its Origins until the Fall of the Kingdom of Cilicia* (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2013), 252pp. in Spanish. This lavishly illustrated volume presents a fascinating history of the Armenian people. The photographs in the book include a selection from the "Churches of Historic Armenia: A Legacy to World" photographic exhibit mounted on the website of the Armenian Studies Program.

**Larry & Marilyn Shuklian**, Los Osos, California, for Armenian books.

**Papken Topjian**, Saint-Laurent, Quebec, Canada, for a copy of his book *Matenaskhosakan*, Volume 2 (Montreal: Armash Publishing, 2014), 146pp., in Armenian. A collection of spiritual and religious writings by various religious figures.

## California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program

### Fall 2015 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
<b>General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2</b>				
• Arm 1A-Elementary Armenian (Class #72240)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B Der Mugrdechian
• Arm 2A-Intermed. Armenian (Class #75855)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
<b>General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1</b>				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #74036)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
<b>General Education-Breadth, Area D3</b>				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #72241)	3	12:00P-12:50P	MWF	Staff
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #75843)	3	8:00A-9:15A	TuTh	Staff
<b>General Education-Integration, Area IC</b>				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #75793)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	S. La Porta
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #75854)	3	3:30P-4:45P	MW	S. La Porta
<b>Upper Division Armenian Studies Courses</b>				
• ArmS 108A-Arm History I (Class #72242)	3	3:30P-4:45P	TuTh	S. La Porta
<b>New Course-Upper Division</b>				
• ArmS 120T-Armenian Question (Class #75842)	3	4:00P-6:50P	W	Kazan Visiting Prof.

## HYE SHARZHOOM

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**Dickran Kouymjian**, Berberian Professor Emeritus of Armenian Studies

## Give Your Way

### to the Armenian Studies Program

There are many ways to support  
the Armenian Studies Program.

- 1) A gift today could come through the donation of cash, stock, or goods.
- 2) The Armenian Studies Program can also be supported in the future in estate plans.

Regardless of how a donation is made, each gift impacts the lives of students and faculty at Fresno State.

Armenian Studies Program • 5245 N. Backer Ave. PB4  
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## Dr. Tachjian-Director of Houshamadyan Project - Focuses on Armenians of the Region of Kharpert



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Left to right: Michael Rettig, Marina Chardukian, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Lauren Chardukian, and Bako Oganyan with Dr. Vahé Tachjian, center, after the January 29 lecture.

**MICHAEL RETTIG**  
*STAFF WRITER*

It has been difficult for historians to reconstruct the daily lives of Armenians prior to the Genocide. Those who lived before 1915 could not conceive that their entire way of life was on the brink of extinction. Many of them felt no need to document their day-to-day lives, most likely imagining that they would go on in the same fashion for generations to come. Those who did write were often among the first to be targeted by the Turkish government, which subsequently arrested and killed many of the Armenian intellectuals. Much was lost during these years, making it hard for historians to reconstruct the lives of Armenians living in Turkey.

Dr. Vahe Tachjian, director of the “Houshamadyan Project,” has made it his life’s work to piece together what life was like for the Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire using primary sources. “I seek to show the inescapable value of Armenian sources to study Ottoman Armenians and the Ottoman Empire in general. The use and study of Armenian primary sources has for a long time been the missing link in Ottoman studies.”

In his lecture “Building the Model Ottoman Citizen,” presented at Fresno State on Thursday, January 29, Dr. Tachjian presented his research on daily life in Kharpert, based on the writings of two notable figures from the region: Donabed

Lulejian and Hovhannes Bujicanian. Their articles, letters, and other publications were preserved and later published by their families, making them available for study. As Dr. Tachjian noted, “These sources open up a wide vista on the cultural, economic, political, social, and even personal events in the region.”

Focusing on Kharpert was fitting for this lecture, considering the sizeable population of Armenians from Kharpert living in Fresno. The community demonstrated their interest in this topic by attending in large numbers. Among the audience was the former Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of California, Marvin Baxter, who contributed an article about his ancestors to the Houshamadyan website.

Kharpert was known for being the center of education and enlightenment for the Armenian people. The Protestant missionaries greatly contributed to this reputation by establishing the Euphrates College in 1878, from which both Hovhannes Bujicanian and Donabed Lulejian graduated. The Euphrates College became a stepping stone for many Armenians to further their education in Europe. Bujicanian was able to study philosophy in Edinburgh and return to Armenia to teach while Lulejian was able to pursue his education in America.

Dr. Tachjian recounted the calm before the storm, as the Young Turks came to power with

the support of the Armenians. Bujicanian was a strong supporter of the Young Turks and hoped that they would bring a better life for the Armenians. The new sense of freedom and change among the Armenians resulted in more homes with windows and double-stories. Their enthusiasm was soon crushed when news of the Adana massacres spread.

Bujicanian quickly became disillusioned with the new government and wrote to his friend in America that Ottoman Armenians were ready “at any minute for meaningless death.” Both Bujicanian and Lulejian were killed during the Genocide, but their thoughts live on through their writings.

Dr. Tachjian collects such writings for his website, titled “Houshamadyan: A Project to Reconstruct Ottoman Armenian Town and Village Life” (<http://www.houshamadyan.org>). He believes that “despite the wealth of materials written in Armenian, the perspective of Armenian authors on their own issues and daily life is not represented.” This website is meant to give voice to Armenian primary sources and better describe what their lives were like. He concluded his lecture with a guided tour of the site, which includes pictures, articles, videos, maps, and more, for the purpose of reconstructing the lives of Armenians before the Genocide. Visitors to the website are able to find different cities in Armenia and easily learn more about the regions various characteristics; such as religion, sports, and economy. Dr. Tachjian led the audience to the “sports” section of the website, which had descriptions and pictures of various games and activities that Armenian kids played.

Houshamadyan.org relies on researchers, such as Dr. Tachjian and his colleagues, to consolidate primary sources with the purpose of giving the visitor a glimpse at what life was like in Historic Armenia before the Genocide. This is an important resource for Armenians to discover what life might have been like for their ancestors. Old Armenian games and histories are resurrected and made available after having been tragically forgotten after the Genocide.

Photo: ASP Archive

## Dr. Sanjian Discusses Armenian Communities of Middle East



Dr. Ara Sanjian, standing, fifth from right, with members of the Armenian Students Organization before his Dec. 4 lecture.

**STAFF REPORT**

The rapidly diminishing Armenian Christian community of Syria, and the still strong Armenian community of Lebanon was the focus of a lecture, “Armenians in the Midst of Civil Wars: Lebanon and Syria Compared,” by Dr. Ara Sanjian, Director of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, on Tuesday, December 2, 2014.

The lecture was part of the Fall Armenian Studies Program Lecture Series, funded in part by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Dr. Sanjian began his presentation with an overview of the Armenians in Lebanon and Syria. Tens of thousands of Armenian Genocide survivors found refuge in Lebanon after World War I and by 1928 about 33,000 Armenians had settled there. By 1940 the Armenians constituted about 4.5% of the total population and later in 1944 the percentage of the Armenian had risen to over 6%.

By comparison, there were some 100,000 Armenians living within the boundaries of Syria in 1938. After Syria’s independence from France, Armenians constituted about 4% of the total

Syrian population of 3,000,000. In both countries, Armenians, as other minorities, were recognized based on their ethno-religious background.

Dr. Sanjian’s lecture gave insight as to the status of the Armenian communities in each country and how the decisions that each community made shaped their status within the respective countries.

During the past several decades both Lebanon and Syria have undergone upheavals. During the Lebanese Civil War of 1975-1990, Armenians adopted the policy of positive neutrality. Most Armenians in Lebanon and Syria today think that this was a wise choice and that it helped to minimize somewhat the heavy toll of civil war for the Armenian community in Lebanon.

The situation for the Armenians in Syria in 2011 was more difficult than for their brethren in Lebanon in 1975. One factor was that the Armenian population of Syria had declined over the same period, while in Lebanon the Armenian population had steadily grown. The Encyclopedia of the Armenian Diaspora put the numbers of Armenians in Syria

SEE **SANJIAN** PAGE 7

## Bertha & John Garabedian Foundation Award of \$11,000 to Armenian Studies Program for 2015

**STAFF REPORT**

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian announced that the Bertha and John Garabedian Foundation has made a generous donation of \$11,000 to the Armenian Studies Program for 2015. This brings the total donations from the Foundation to the Armenian Studies Program to over \$100,000.

The gift will be used for a variety of activities, including outreach activities and scholarships.

The Garabedian Foundation has been a long-standing supporter of the Armenian Studies Program. Their grants

have supported the development of the Armenian Studies Program website and the online Arts of Armenia.

### **PETERS, FROM PAGE 1**

Leon Peters and his brother, Pete Peters, established Valley Foundry and Machine Works, a world-recognized supplier of agricultural equipment, and it became one of the region’s most successful businesses, allowing them to start the foundation in 1959.

Since then, the Peters Foundation has become one of the community’s biggest benefactors,

giving to higher education, hospitals, and arts organizations.

Since the early 1980s, the Peters family has provided numerous gifts to Fresno State including the Pete P. Peters Endowment in Armenian Studies, the President’s Fund, Ag One Foundation, the Henry Madden Library, the Bulldog Foundation, the Leon S. Peters Honors Scholars, and the Business Associates Program.

## Armenians on the Internet

**Tatevik Hovhannisyan**  
*STAFF WRITER*

<http://armenia.am/>



Armenia.am has the answer to all your questions about the modern Republic of Armenia. Learning basic information about Armenia is essential for Armenians and non-Armenians who would like to plan a trip there for the first time. Clear, user-friendly, and rich with information, this website is guaranteed to become your favorite friend during your virtual and actual visit to the Republic of Armenia.

This unique website is loaded with information. Categories that are open to exploration include the official web sites for the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, the Armenian Development Agency, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, the official web site of Yerevan and many others that give details about the important aspects of the country.

The Governance category takes the visitors to the sub-categories that provide all the information one needs to learn about the government of Armenia. This category is useful for those who are interested in researching the political and judicial aspects of the Republic, along with learning about the relationship between its allies and its treaties.

A Travel category exists to provide browsers helpful insight for planning their vacation in Armenia. Information about visas, airports, tourist sites, hotels and entertainment are all offered by the website. Other important categories include the economy, education, and culture. The most useful link that is connected with Armenia.am is an informational system called Spyur.am. This is the yellow pages of Armenia, providing statistics, directory, and information for different companies and businesses in Armenia.

Offered in English, Russian, and Armenian, armenia.am has a lot to explore. The portal connects visitors to different official and interesting web sites, making it easier to research a visit to Armenia.



## Basketball Legend Jerry Tarkanian Passes Away

STAFF REPORT

Famed basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian passed away at age 84 on Wednesday, February 11, at a Las Vegas-area hospital with his family by his side.

He is survived by his wife, Lois, four children and seven grandchildren.

Tarkanian was born on Aug. 8, 1930, in Euclid, Ohio. His mother, Rosie, was a refugee from the genocide of Armenians growing out of World War I. In his taped Hall of Fame induction speech, Tarkanian said his mother had “fled her homeland on horseback with only the clothes on her back after her father and eldest brother were beheaded by Turkish soldiers.”



Photo: ASP Archive

### Jerry Tarkanian

He was 13 when his father died, and his stepfather criticized his love of sports. “I would never amount to anything — so much was sports all the time,” Tarkanian recalled his stepfather saying.

“I should look into becoming a barber.”

But his mother encouraged him and he went on to play basketball for Fresno State, graduating in 1955. He coached high school and junior college basketball in California before becoming Long Beach State’s coach in 1968.

Tarkanian, who was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in September 2013, coached for the Fresno State Bulldogs from 1995-2002.

“Jerry Tarkanian was a great coach, mentor and citizen in the Central Valley. Mary and I enjoyed visiting with him at Bulldog games, including when

SEE **TARKANIAN** PAGE 5

## Author Matthew Karanian Presents New Book on Historic Armenia after 100 Years to Community



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Left to right: Michelle Tutelian, Joel Mazmanian, Matthew Karanian, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Ovsanna Simonyan, and Marine Vardanyan at the book signing following the February 17 event at the University Business Center.

MARINE VARDANYAN  
EDITOR

Sometimes it takes an accident to produce the most beautiful of works. Attorney Matthew Karanian, author of the new illustrated book, *Historic Armenia After 100 Years*, admitted that the product itself was an “accidental publication.” Karanian spoke on the process of creating his book as part of the Spring Lecture series of the Armenian Studies Program, held on Tuesday, February 17, at Fresno State.

What started out as a visit to historic Western Armenia for a wedding in Cilicia, soon led to the production of a book that holds images of historic Armenia from 100 years ago to the present. Illustrated with 125 color photos and maps, *Historic Armenia* allows readers to travel through history and experience the Armenia that was once populated by Armenians. Karanian has travelled to and from historic Armenia since 1997, capturing images of Armenian landscapes, structures, and people. *Historic Armenia* focuses on the six Western Armenian provinces along with the Eastern Armenian region of Ani and Kars.

Like many with ties to Western Armenia, Karanian was ambivalent about travelling to the land of his ancestors. The region seemed to be haunted by the presence of the Armenian people and the Genocide of 1915.

During the presentation, vibrant photos of Western Armenia lit up the auditorium, however, not all photos elicited positive feelings. One image showed a church with uneven terrain surrounding it, a remnant of efforts to dig up “Armenian gold” after the Genocide and a common scene in many of Karanian’s visits to historic Armenian sites.

Despite his initial hesitancy, Karanian’s first day in Western Armenia was a transformative experience when he participated in a *Badarak* (Divine Liturgy) at the Church of the Holy Cross with Archbishop Mesrob Ashjian and scholars Dr. James Russell and Armen Aroyan.

It was this experience on Akhtamar island that inspired Karanian to continue his travels, scratch the surface, and find more of the lost homeland. “Akhtamar is the bone sticking above the sand,” said Karanian.

Karanian compared 100-year-old photos of several churches, before and after, but he was not prepared for the shock of seeing the ruined structures, many of which were a direct result of Turkish government vandalism and military damage.

Ani, once known as the “City of 1001 Churches,” is one of the areas with a dense number of cultural sites.

Powerful photos of what remained of the city showed the frail condition of many churches and the remnants of the capital,

depicted by a multitude of scattered rocks.

Karanian’s photos not only captured the surviving Armenian structures, but also the surviving Armenians. These hidden Armenians were encountered in Diyarbakir, Chunkush, and Zara.

A 95 year-old Armenian woman named Aida shared the story of her mother, who was taken by a Turkish soldier as a bride. Though Aida and her mother continued to live in Chunkush after the Turkish man died, their Armenian identities were never forgotten. She expressed her joy in encountering fellow Armenians, “I get as happy as a mountain.”

A particularly interesting point of the presentation revolved around Karanian’s visit to Kharpert, a city that was home to many Armenians who immigrated to Fresno. Due to the American missionary presence in Kharpert, more than 80 percent of Armenians in the United States prior to the Genocide were *Kharpertsis*.

Though Karanian photographed numerous breathtaking sites, even the most innocent looking views could not escape the memory of the Genocide, as many of them were the killing grounds for thousands of Armenians.

It is because of this painful fact that many Armenians face difficulty in visiting their ancestral homeland. For many, the presentation was the closest they will ever get to Western Armenia.

But were we wrong to stay away from our homeland for the past 100 years?

This question, asked by Karanian, may not have a simple answer. Yet for Karanian, one thing is certain, “If we keep staying away, there will be nothing left for us to see.”

Karanian dedicated his new book to his two grandmothers, both survivors of the Armenian Genocide, and to everyone who has helped rise and rebuild from the Genocide.

Information about the book *Historic Armenia* may be found at the following website: <http://www.historicarmeniabook.com/>.

## Armenian Studies Conference on Armenian Genocide at Northridge



Scholars from the California State University, Northridge conference on the Armenian Genocide.

Photo: ASP Archive

STAFF REPORT

On Saturday, January 31, the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) hosted a one-day conference on “The Armenian Genocide: Accounting and Accountability.” Held at CSUN’s Grand Salon, the conference was part of the United Armenian Council of Los Angeles’s series of Armenian Genocide Centennial events, and was dedicated to the generations of 1915 and 2015.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State participated in the first panel on Saturday morning with a paper on “Western Armenian Language and Literature in Exile: Genocide and Its Consequences.” The panel, “Language as a Victim,” was moderated by Dr. Hagop Gulludjian and featured Dr. Vartan Matiossian on “Pleading No Context: On Uses and Abuses of the Word ‘Yeghern’”; and Dr. Shushan Karapetian, “The Burden of Language as a Moral Obligation.”

The second morning panel dealt with “Teaching Genocide,” with Dr. Rubina Peroomian moderating. Dr. Hasmig Baran spoke about “Content and Pedagogy of Genocide Education in the 21st Century: The Armenian Case”; Roxanne Makasjian spoke about “Armenian Genocide Education in Secondary Schools Today”; and Dr. Kori Street reflected about “Educating for Change: Using Testimonies in Teaching about Genocide.”

The third and fourth panels were held in the afternoon session. Dr. Levon Marashlian moderated the third panel, entitled “Those Who Were Forced to Assimilate.” It featured the following speakers and subjects: Prof. Khatchig Mouradian, “Un-Hiding the Past: Myth-Making and the ‘Hidden

Armenians’ of Turkey”; Dr. Elyse Semerdjian, “‘The Girl with the Cross Tattoo’: Field Notes on Crypto-Armenians”; and Dr. Vahram Shemmashian, “The Fate of Captive Armenian Genocide Survivors in Syria.”

The fourth panel, entitled “Legal Responses to Genocide-Related Liabilities,” was conducted by the Armenian Bar Association (ABA). Garo Ghazarian, Esq., introduced the ABA and its panelists, and Armen K. Hovannisian, Esq., moderated the panel. The speakers and their topics were: Saro Kerkonian, Esq., “Justice for Genocide and Challenges in United States Courts”; Edvin Minassian, Esq., “Justice for Genocide and Challenges in Turkey’s Courts”; and Karnig Kerkonian, Esq., “Justice for Genocide: Opportunities and Challenges in International Courts.”

The conference concluded with a commentary by Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian, professor emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and the first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA.

The conference was co-sponsored by the United Armenian Council of Los Angeles, the National Association of Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Knights of Vartan-Los Angeles County Chapters, the Armenian Bar Association, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and Literatures at CSUN, and the Mousa Ler Association of California.

Near East Relief posters were exhibited during the conference by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum of Mission Hills, CA.

## “Valley of Hope: The Armenian Journey from Terror to Triumph”

Thursday, April 16 • 7:00-9:00PM  
on ValleyPBS

Sarah Sghomonian • Project Coordinator  
559-266-1800 ext 230  
1544 Van Ness Ave. Fresno, CA. 93721  
[www.valleypbs.org](http://www.valleypbs.org)



Kazan Visiting Prof. Dr. Douzjian Offers Class on Genocide in Film



Dr. Myrna Douzjian, fourth from right, with students of the Wednesday afternoon “Armenian Genocide in Film” class.

MARINA CHARDUKIAN  
STAFF WRITER

The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State is fortunate to have visiting scholars to teach in their area of expertise. This year’s Kazan Visiting Professor, Dr. Myrna Douzjian, is teaching a new course, Armenian Studies 120T- “The Armenian Genocide in Film.”

Dr. Douzjian has been teaching for twenty years and greatly enjoys being a visiting professor. She has taught previously at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and has traveled back and forth from Los Angeles to Philadelphia. Dr. Douzjian travels between Los Angeles and Fresno for her weekly Wednesday class.

Dr. Douzjian’s course focuses on the various modes through which the Armenian Genocide is represented in film. The class consists of assigned readings, discussions, and screenings of films and documentaries. The environment created by Dr. Douzjian allows students to learn to look at films through different perspectives and to be more analytical. This is the first time that Douzjian has had the opportunity to design and teach her own Armenian Studies course.

Dr. Douzjian’s interest in film began in 2009 when she became a contributor the Critics’ Forum, a column that focuses on art and culture in the Diaspora.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian  
“I attended the AARPA Film Festival in Los Angeles for the first time. To my surprise, despite the quality and variety of the films being screened, I found virtually no reviews of them in the press. Critics’ Forum had a section on film and music, so I decided that one of my annual articles should cover some of the films at AARPA. Since then, I have pursued research and writing on film, although my formal training is in literature and the dramatic arts.” Her experience in reviewing films has allowed for students to appreciate the contribution she makes to the course and the stimulating activities and discussions she initiates.

All of the students are very involved in the class and are interested in the documentaries shown. Dr. Douzjian has put careful thought in choosing which films to screen each week.

“I made the specific selections by aiming to strike a balance between some of the most well-known films that deal with the Armenian Genocide, like Egoyan’s *Ararat*, and others that have had a comparatively narrow reach, like *Memories Without Borders*. In this way, students will have an opportunity to rethink films that they have already seen and, at the same time, gain exposure to new films,” stated Dr. Douzjian.

In this novel course students are exposed to films that encourage them to think, question, and explore different interpretations.

La Porta Devotes Sabbatical to Research in Rome

STAFF REPORT

Last year Dr. Sergio La Porta was awarded a sabbatical for the Fall semester of 2014. He spent it in Rome, Italy, pursuing research and working with a colleague there. His family also joined him for the semester. When asked why he chose Rome, Dr. La Porta responded that it provided him with the opportunity to work with Dr. Zaroui Pogossian, an Armenian colleague, who teaches at John Cabot University in Rome. They are editing, translating, and commenting upon a text called the “Vision of Agat’ on,” a prophecy about the end of the world, that exists in different versions.

Dr. La Porta remarked that he really enjoyed being involved in the collaborative project which they plan to publish as a book. “Dr. Pogossian is a wonderful scholar,” he said, “and it was a pleasure to be able to hash ideas out with each other.”

During his stay, he also conducted research at the



Dr. La Porta and family in the Norman castle at Enna.

Pontificio Instituto Orientale, finished an article on Armenian monasticism, and presented a paper at an international conference on the Church of the Holy Cross on Aghtamar held in Paris.

Although Dr. La Porta was pleased with the work he was able to get done while on his sabbatical, he noted that the

highlight for him was to see his children go to public school in Rome and learn to adapt to living in a new language and culture.

Their school in Rome, he said, “was incredibly warm and supportive and we all had a marvelous time.” He was also able to take them to their grandfather’s town in Sicily and meet their relatives.

“Tradition, Legacy, and Culture” Exhibit Open at the Fresno Art Museum January 23-April 26



Armenian Art Exhibit curators Joyce Kierejczyk, left, and Carol Tikijian in front of art work by Varaz Samuelian. The works of eleven Armenian artists are featured in the exhibit.

ARAMAYIS ORKUSYAN  
STAFF WRITER

With the one hundred year anniversary of the Armenian Genocide fast approaching, the Fresno community has been teeming with events commemorating the tragic year that left the history of the Armenian people stained with blood.

Among the many local organizations participating in the commemoration of the Genocide Centennial, under the umbrella of the Armenian Genocide Committee-Fresno, the Fresno Art Museum is showcasing a new exhibit *Tradition, Legacy, Culture*, featuring works by internationally and regionally renowned artists of Armenian descent.

The exhibit, which opened on January 23, displays the artwork of John Altoon, Varujan Boghosian, Ara Dolarian, Charles Garabedian, Arshile Gorky, Khachik Khachatouryan, Ed Marouk, Rueben Nakian, Varaz

Samuelian, William Saroyan, and Arminee Shishmanian, and will remain on display through April 26.

When reflecting on the Genocide, images of sorrow and grief are among the first that come to mind. Yet, when I entered the exhibit for the first time, I was delightfully surprised to find that none of the artwork – with the exception of one – was themed with the Armenian Genocide.

Instead, bronze figurines of Armenian dancers and musicians filled the museum with folk rhythms that have comprised Armenian rituals and daily life since ancient times. Lively circular scribbles by Saroyan that resembled the shape of grapes, symbolic of Armenia’s deep roots in agriculture and ties to the Central Valley, blanketed the walls.

It was clear that rather than commemorating the Genocide through a focus on the atrocities of the past, the artwork displayed in the Fresno Art Museum was selected to celebrate the rich

heritage of the Armenian culture, which continued to flourish and thrive despite the trials and tribulations of the past century.

As I made my way around the exhibit, a certain sense of cultural pride overtook me, and I was reminded of the following lines from Paruyr Sevak’s poetry: “Simply we know how to build from the rock, a monastery; How to make fish from stone, how to make man from clay.” Craftsmanship, as noted by Sevak, is an integral part of the Armenian culture, and the artwork displayed in the exhibit was a testament to this fact. What most others would have viewed as trash, the artists had crafted into beautiful collages. Where others would simply see plain bronze or steel, the artists had envisioned elegant sculptures. Reminiscent of the expert hands that crafted the Armenian cross-stones, the skillfully constructed artwork displayed in the exhibit are a reminder that artistry is part of the Armenian identity.

The significance of the exhibit is perhaps best encapsulated in the quote from Saroyan that “The role of art is to make a world which can be inherited.” Although spread across the four corners of the world, art – through its ability to transcend geography – has acted as a silver thread that has kept us bound as one.

Simply attend any event where two Armenians meet and dance their way to exhaustion through a “shurj par” and you will witness a moment of shared cultural identity.

As we prepare to commemorate the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, maintaining the Armenian identity throughout the Diaspora becomes of paramount importance.

For the Armenian community of Fresno, the *Tradition, Legacy, Culture* exhibit has provided a method for doing just that.

Visit  
Hye Sharzhoom online at:  
[hyesharzhoom.com](http://hyesharzhoom.com)

TARKANIAN, FROM PAGE 4

his jersey was retired at the Save Mart Center last year,” Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro said. “We at Fresno State send our deepest condolences to Lois and the entire family. His many positive contributions to Fresno State are deeply appreciated by his colleagues and friends in our community.”

The family of Coach Jerry Tarkanian requests that donations in his memory be made to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, said Amy Tarkanian,

the coach’s daughter-in-law.

Donations may be made online at

<https://www.fresnostate.edu/advancement/giving/givenow.html> (check the “Other” box and type in: Tarkanian. Or checks — payable to Fresno State Foundation (memo: Gift in Memory of Coach Tarkanian) — may be mailed to: Office of University Development, California State University, Fresno, 5244 N. Jackson Avenue, M/S KC45, Fresno, CA 93740-8023.



## ASO Active in Community & Campus



ASO members at the Fresno State Men's Basketball game.

**TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN**  
STAFF WRITER

The Spring 2015 semester has begun with many educational and fun activities coordinated by the Armenian Students Organization Executive Committee. This semester is particularly extraordinary because the members are also actively participating in the community activities planned for the Centennial Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

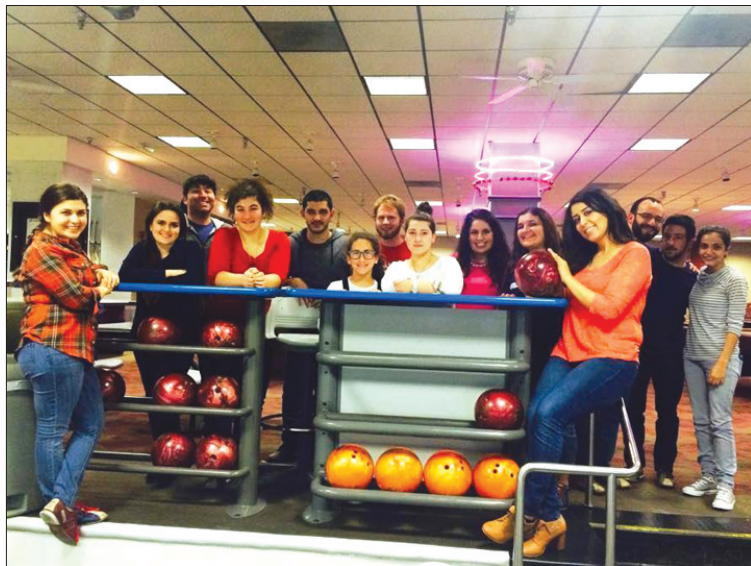
On January 24, the ASO members attended the Sayat Nova Choir concert, organized by Hamazkayin of Fresno. The forty-four performers, who came from Los Angeles, sang selections from traditional folk music at the Fresno Armenian Presbyterian Church.

"I enjoyed the performance very much. I am always excited whenever there is an opportunity to connect with my culture. I am glad that I am a member of ASO, and I am fortunate that the officers genuinely take the interest in serving their members by informing them about events such as this," commented Fresno State junior Aramayis Orkusyan.

Along with cultural events, ASO members demonstrated their Bulldog Pride on February 4, by attending the Fresno State vs. San Jose State Men's Basketball

game, with the Bulldogs taking home the win. Members enjoyed the game, which also included a half-time show by "Mutts in Motion" and fun music.

An event that has now become tradition for the ASO is the Spring semester bowling night, which took place on Saturday, February 14. Members came out to show their love for bowling while munching on pizza and enjoying the fun new features that have been installed in the bowling alley. Regardless of whether students made a strike or rolled the bowling ball straight into the gutter, the night was a refreshing time to relax from the already overwhelming semester and to enjoy one another's company.



ASO members enjoyed an evening of bowling on Feb. 14.

## Armenian Studies Book Donations Add to Library



A postcard depicting AGBU Founder Boghos Nubar Pasha.

STAFF REPORT

Amidst a recent donation of books on Armenian history and literature by Dr. Jeannette Hovsepian to the Armenian Studies Program was a remarkable find: a small book of 12 postcards from 1931, printed in France with captions in Armenian, entitled

*AGBU Memento of [its] Silver Anniversary.*

The cards were produced to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Armenian General Benevolent Union, presumably in coordination with the publication of a book highlighting the history and works of the organization printed

It was a great opportunity to welcome new ASO members and to break the ice, helping new members to get to know each other.

On February 28, ASO members and friends gathered at St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church to learn how to bake *simit* (Armenian sesame cookies). The event was an opportunity to introduce members to Armenian baking, and also created treats for the Armenian Studies Program Banquet on March 1, where the 40th Anniversary of ASO was celebrated.

As the ASO continues to plan their semester events, including an upcoming trip to the beach during Spring Break, they are also dedicating time towards planning activities for the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The ASO Genocide Commemoration Committee has promoted its theme of "A Century of Rebirth" through a new Armenian Genocide t-shirt, which has an Armenian Genocide Centennial logo created by Fresno State student Christopher Orozco on the front, and the image of Mother Armenia with Ararat, Etchmiadzin, and Tsitsernakaberd on the back.

The Committee is working on preparing other commemorative events and performances for the week of April 24.

## Eench Ga Chga

HAVERJ STANBOULIAN • STAFF WRITER

**If you could go back and visit an Armenian historical event, what would it be and why?**



**Ani Ekezyan**  
Freshman  
Major: Biology

If I could go back in time and visit an Armenian historical event it would be September 21, 1991, when the Republic of Armenia was restored after 70 years of Soviet rule. It would be an exciting and honorable experience to be present on the day Armenians regained their Independence. I would like to be present in a positive, memorable, and powerful day in our history that displays the strength, love, and pride that the Armenian people have.

my grandparents were after they escaped the Genocide and would like to visit Armenia to understand more about my culture.



**Tadeh Issakhanian**  
Graduate Student  
Major: Masters in Business Administration

I would go back to August 23, 1990, to the first session of the Supreme Council of Armenia. This was the day the declaration on the "Independence of Armenia" was adopted. It would be very special to witness the events of the day that led to the eventual proclamation of the Independent Republic of Armenia.



**Sean Minier**  
Senior  
Major: Business Administration, Computer Information Systems

I would want to experience the time when the Armenians immigrated to the United States after the Genocide. My grandmother Sara Kunjosian was from Kayseri, Turkey. My grandfather Sarkis Kunjosian was from Sivas, Turkey. They were only in their villages for a short period of time during the Genocide. My grandfather fled to Greece and my Grandma traveled to Syria with her mother. I would like to learn about where both



**Lucy Ekezyan**  
Freshman  
Major: Biology

I would go back to 301 AD when the Armenians officially adopted Christianity as their state religion. Witnessing this event would mean being able to see the chapter in our extensive and rich timeline that essentially shaped our way of life. While our decision to be Christian has sometimes proved costly, the consequences are greatly outweighed by the blessings gifted to our people for being Christian— the commitment and strength to our faith truly defines Armenians around the world.

### TREGONING, FROM PAGE 1

Tregoning began working for the City of Oakland where she continued for over 35 years. After retiring she attended college and studied History, Middle Eastern Languages, and Armenian History.

Mrs. Tregoning was very active and had great knowledge of cooking and baking, preparing the very best cuisine. She had many "themed" dinner parties and her preparations were always a hit.

Mrs. Tregoning is very much missed by all her friends and colleagues. In her trust she has provided for many school programs, charities, and special organizations, so that others can have the experiences that she had.

## "100 Years: Valley Armenian Heritage"

Weekly stories that will begin airing on KSEE 24 on Monday, February 23rd. Subsequent pieces will air on Wednesday's at 6:00PM & 11:00PM

**KSEE24 News**

**Stefani Booroojian**



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DOUZJIAN, FROM PAGE 1

Visiting Professor, Dr. Douzjian will be giving a series of lectures about her area of expertise, “The Armenian Genocide in Film.” The first of her three-part series, titled “Bridging History and Fiction: Serge Avedikian’s *Chienne d’Histoire* as Allegory for the Armenian Genocide” took place on Wednesday, February 11, in the Alice Peters Auditorium in the University Business Center. Prior to her analysis, Dr. Douzjian screened *Chienne d’Histoire* to give context to the ensuing discussion. Film director Avedikian, a native of Armenia, currently lives in France. The animated film was about 15 minutes in length and was beautifully created, with an unusual style unlike most films with the theme of Genocide. *Chienne d’Histoire* uses images, sound, and the compassion engendered by the images to evoke a response in the viewers. Dr. Douzjian highlighted the differences between fact and fiction, and how a fictitious story can be used to represent fact. She also pointed out that it is important to pull the facts out of the fiction or the original message

will be lost in the method of delivery. The subject of this short film was actual events that happened in 1910 in Constantinople, the evacuation and eventual termination of the stray dogs in the city. The dogs were sent to an island called “Barking Island,” after the noise made by the stranded canines. Dr. Douzjian explained the similarities between the methods used by the Turkish officials when removing the dogs and the methods used later during the Armenian Genocide. Dr. Douzjian noted similarities in the methods and behavior of the government in both cases. For someone who is familiar with the Armenian Genocide, it is easy to see it represented in the film through allegory. The plight of the dogs clearly represented the Armenians. However, much of the

film was open to interpretation. According to Dr. Douzjian, “The film only makes a single, entirely inconspicuous, reference to the Armenian Genocide.” However, she believes the reference, though a very loose connection to the Genocide, was not fundamental for conveying the film’s representation of the Armenian people and the Genocide. Dr. Douzjian selected the perfect film for her first lecture because it encouraged the audience to think and ask questions that are not usually brought up in such lectures. The film is unlike many other Genocide inspired works, which was a refreshing change. The lecture was followed by many questions and conversations reflective of the unique perspectives of the audience.

SAS, FROM PAGE 1

President Kevork Bardakjian (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor) and outgoing Secretary Ani Kasparian (University of Michigan-Dearborn) for their dedicated service to the Society. “It is a privilege to be elected as the new President of Society

for Armenian Studies. The SAS plays an important role as a forum for scholars to meet and exchange ideas. SAS members conduct research in many different fields, but in each case this is related to the study of Armenia and the Armenian people. This research is shared with other academics

Vartanantz Commemoration  
Marked by Valley Armenians



Keyan Armenian Community School children participated in the Vartanantz Commemoration on February 12.

Photo: ASP Archive

LAUREN CHARDUKIAN  
STAFF WRITER

1,564 years ago, in 451 AD, the Armenians, under the leadership of General Vartan Mamigonian, fought for their religious and political freedom from the neighboring Sassanid Persians. Although the Armenians were greatly outnumbered they fought valiantly. By the end of the battle there were 1,036 Armenian casualties and many Persian casualties. This historic event is known as the Battle of Avarayr. Though the Armenians did not triumph, the surviving soldiers continued their fight against the Persians for the next 30 years, utilizing guerilla-style tactics. The Persians eventually tired of the effort to forcibly convert the Armenians, and finally recognized the religious independence of the Armenians in the 484 Treaty of Nvarsak. The 451 AD battle is commemorated today as Vartanantz, which is celebrated every year in February by Armenians around the world. The Knights and Daughters of Vartan, Yeprad Lodge, organized this annual event together with local Armenian churches and organizations. This year’s commemoration took place on February 12 at Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, beginning with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy at 6:00PM. A program followed the service

with an introduction and opening remarks by the Master of Ceremonies, Ara Karkazian, Commander of the Knights of Vartan. Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School students participated in the celebration by performing songs and poems about Vartanantz, such as “Yev Zoragank Vartan,” and “Vartanantz Asbedner.” Following the performance, Fresno County Superior Court Judge Lisa Gamoian spoke about being Armenian and shared her personal experiences. She addressed how distinct and different Armenians are in this melting pot they call home. Gamoian believes that three values, “the Armenian deep-seated devotion to God, devotion to country, and devotion to the family,” are values that have been passed on from generation to generation. She spoke about growing up in an Armenian household, with traditions that were different than her American schoolmates, something that many Armenian-Americans can relate to. Just as the soldiers fought to keep the Armenian beliefs alive, the Armenian family and community work to keep those same beliefs alive while living in a land far from Armenia. The Knights and Daughters of Vartan provided a variety of food and refreshments after the event.

SANJIAN, FROM PAGE 3

in 2003 at 65,000-75,000, while the Syrian population at large had grown ten-fold in the period since 1938. Thus the percentage of Armenians as part of the total population had declined to about .03%. The dwindling number of Armenians left them in a more precarious position. Dr. Sanjian’s analysis and comparison of the Armenians in two of the most important communities in the Middle East provided an important preliminary assessment of the current situation in Lebanon and Syria. several activities in conjunction with the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The SAS annually publishes a peer-reviewed *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, edited by Sergio La Porta, and a *Newsletter*. The SAS website, societyforarmenianstudies.com, provides information about events and activities about the Society. The Secretariat of the SAS is based in the Armenian Studies Program in Fresno. For more information please call the SAS at 559-278-2669 or send an email to barlowd@csufresno.edu. This year the SAS is planning





Photo: Barlow Der Mugdechian

The partially completed Monument at Fresno State.

MONUMENT, FROM PAGE 1

intended to raise awareness and commemorate the Centennial of the Genocide.

Among the largest hubs for commemorative events, Fresno has gained the spotlight due to the efforts of the Armenian Genocide Centennial (AGC) – Fresno Committee. The AGC is a collection of community representatives–brought together for the Centennial year–collaborating to commemorate and raise awareness about the Genocide. Committee members include representatives from the San Joaquin Valley’s religious, educational, social, and political communities, as well as youth members. The committee aims to not only commemorate the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide, but to make a visible change in the community by educating the public about Genocide, and inspiring future

generations.

Through its dedication and effort, the AGC has organized many activities and events to fulfill the three pillars of its mission statement (commemorate, educate, inspire), including the *Tradition – Legacy – Culture* exhibit featuring eleven artists that opened on January 23 at the Fresno Art Museum.

In addition to organizing their own events, the AGC has taken the role of a large organizing body for all other auxiliary events that have been planned in commemoration of the centennial. In a conversation with AGC Chairman Dr. Sergio La Porta, he remarked about the importance of maintaining organization in the midst of all the events and activities that are being planned. Dr. La Porta highlighted the fact that one of the ideas behind forming the AGC was to create a centralized website, agcfresno.

org, where ideas and news of events would be accessible to the public.

The largest and most anticipated project of the AGC, however, has been the commissioning of the Armenian Genocide Monument to be erected on the campus of California State University, Fresno, which will be the first Armenian Genocide monument to be erected on any university campus in the United States. The monument will not only commemorate the 1.5 million martyrs of the Armenian Genocide, but it will also act as an educational tool to inform and educate the public about the Genocide as well as other genocides.

“The Monument will have QR codes that will link to [informational] websites about the Genocide,” stated Dr. La Porta. “Education can take place inside or outside of the classroom.”

Perhaps the most inspiring aspect of the AGC has been the youth involvement. A youth committee, the Hye Movement, has made tremendous contributions to the Fresno community by raising awareness through social movements and hashtag activism on social media outlets. The Hye Movement’s ability to reach out to Armenian youth has made it an indispensable part of the overall efforts of the AGC–Fresno Committee. In addition to the Hye Movement’s contributions to the Fresno community, the Hye Movement was responsible for a drive that collected over 5,000 items to be sent to orphanages in Armenia.

In a relatively short period of time, the AGC has made lasting contributions to the community. Its initiatives have made visible changes and demonstrated the ability of the collective spirit of the Armenian people. Although the committee will shrink considerably in size after the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, there is talk of maintaining parts of the committee to continue the educational efforts. We can only hope that the AGC is not a short-lived organization, but the beginning of an ongoing effort to bring positive change.

Photo: ASP Archive



ASO T-shirts for the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, modeled by Vachagan Vardanyan and Esther Oganyan.

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## 1915-2015 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide

### ASO Events the Week of April 20-24

**Monday, April 20**  
**Noon-2pm**  
Music by  
Aramayis, Mark & Gevork  
Information table/  
photo booth  
**Free Speech Area**

**Friday, April 24**  
**Noon-1pm**

Student recitations  
and music

**Armenian Genocide**  
**Monument-Fresno State**

## CineCulture to Feature Eric Nazarian

**Friday, March 27, 2015**  
**5:30PM**

**“Celluloid Exiles: A Brief History of the Armenian Genocide and Diaspora on Film”**

**Peters Educational Center Auditorium**  
**Free admission**



Eric Nazarian

Photo: ASP Archive

LA PORTA, FROM PAGE 1

Dr. La Porta was among the three Fresno State professors selected to speak in this year’s series. Modeled after the well-known “Ted Talks,” nominations for the series are solicited from students by asking “What professor inspires you?” The series features three faculty members who exemplify the core values at Fresno State—Discovery, Diversity, and Distinction.

Dr. La Porta spoke on the topic of “Who Cares? Genocide, Historical Memory, and Moral Responsibility” and addressed the important role of the Genocide not only in the lives of Armenians, but for civilization at large. The Armenian Genocide was the first event of its kind in the 20th century, setting a path for how civilization would progress. Dr. La Porta touched on the paradigm of genocide, patterns such as dehumanization, systematic killings, deportations, and concentration camps. New inventions such as the telegraph and railway lines were also employed for purposes of mass extermination. Such patterns have been repeatedly observed throughout genocides of the 20th century.

While the massacre of the

Armenian people was taking place, no appropriate term existed to describe the happenings. Thus, the events of 1915 played a large role in defining the term “genocide,” coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944. Though the word “genocide” did not exist, the international community was well aware of the inhumane acts taking place in Ottoman Turkey. Nearly 200 articles about the Genocide were published in *The New York Times* between 1915 and 1922, reports were published by missionaries, and U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau wrote about his experience in the Ottoman Empire. Later one of the largest relief efforts mounted in the United States was launched by the Near East Relief Fund to help the Armenian people. The fund collected what is today the equivalent of 1.5 billion dollars.

Today, as denial of the Armenian Genocide continues, civilization faces a moral responsibility to remember and acknowledge the massacre of 1.5 million people.

Dr. La Porta stressed the importance of remembering as a vital part of being human. “Remembering is not stopping us from going forward. It’s the catalyst that allows us to engage in acts of humanity.”

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