

HYE SHARZHOOM

Armenian Action

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38th Year

December 2016 Vol. 38, No. 2 (136) Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

ASP to Celebrate 40th Anniversary with Banquet March 19, 2017



Armenian Studies Program
29th Annual Banquet
Celebrating
the 40th Anniversary
of the
Armenian Studies Program

Special Guest
Dr. Mary Papazian, President
San Jose State University



Sunday, March 19, 2017

Reception-5:00PM • Dinner-6:00PM
Fort Washington Golf & Country Club 10272 N. Millbrook
\$50 per person • Table Sponsors \$2,000 • \$25 Fresno State students
Please respond by Friday, March 10, 2017

Armenian Studies Participates in Tsughrut Gospel Conservation



Left to right: Arusyak Baldryan, Lusine Markaryan, Dr. Gayane Eliazyan, Artavazd Ayyazyan, Arthur Petrosyan, and Gagik Ginosyan, from the village of Tsughrut.

Photo: ASP Archive

STAFF REPORT

The more than one thousand year old Gospel of Tsughrut (Պատրիկի Աւետարան-*Hovhannes Avetaran*) is a rare example of Armenian medieval art in terms of its iconography and simplicity of miniature expression, dating from 974 AD. Many times

referred to as the “Guardian of Tsughrut,” the Gospel has been carefully preserved and protected since 1830 by the Saponjyan family as the holy relic of the village.

The American Research Institute of the South Caucasus

SEE TSUGHURUT PAGE 6

Haigazian University President Dr. Paul Haidostian Discusses “Armenian Educational Life in Lebanon”

TADEH ISSAKHANIAN
STAFF WRITER

Rev. Dr. Paul Haidostian, President of Haigazian University, was a guest speaker for the Armenian Studies Program Lecture Series on Monday, November 14. The presentation on “Armenian Educational Life in Lebanon: Haigazian University,” was given in front of a large audience, including many Haigazian alumni and the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at Fresno State, Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval.

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, who traveled to Beirut last summer to give a presentation at Haigazian University, introduced Dr. Haidostian.

Dr. Haidostian, who has served



Photo: Hourig Attarian

Dr. Paul Haidostian, center, with students and faculty after his presentation at Fresno State.

as President since 2002, discussed the mission of the University in the context of Armenian life in Lebanon. Among the many challenges faced by the University

are those related to regional tensions, student achievement, and securing a stable financial

SEE HAIDOSTIAN PAGE 6

Society for Armenian Studies Holds Annual Meeting

STAFF REPORT

The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) held its 42nd Annual Meeting on Thursday, November 17, 2016 at the Boston Marriott Copley Place Hotel. SAS President Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian conducted the meeting, which was attended by scholars throughout the United States and abroad. Members heard reports on SAS activities in 2016 and had an opportunity to discuss future activities and plans.

While in Boston, SAS and the National Association for

SEE SAS PAGE 3



Photo: ASP Archive

Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Varak Ketsamian, Anna Aleksanyan, and Dr. Ümit Kurt.

Mouradian’s Armenian Genocide Class Engages Students

MICHAEL RETTIG
EDITOR

As the Fall Semester draws to a close, students and professors reflect upon the lasting impact of the lessons they learned. With the current turmoil in Turkey and Syria as a backdrop, Dr. Mouradian’s class on “The Armenian Genocide and its Aftermath” has provided a timely forum for students to learn about their past and its effect on modern issues.

“At the very core of my teaching philosophy is the hope that the study of history will help students better understand their own era and world, and ultimately be sensitized to racial, social, and economic inequality

and injustice,” said Dr. Mouradian. Student, Raffi Apkarian, found this to be a crucial take-away from the class. “It is not just about the Armenians; we can look at the actions of the perpetrators and the repercussions of the Genocide and recognize them in other events occurring around the world,” said Apkarian.

Dr. Mouradian began his class with an exploration of mass violence, imperialism, and colonialism in the 19th and 20th centuries.



Photo: Michael Rettig

Dr. Khatchig Mouradian

SEE MOURADIAN PAGE 2

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.

Hagop James Antranigian, for a copy of the book *From Hell to Heaven: Memoirs of the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian Volunteer Corps* (2015), 252pp. in English. This is the story of Armenag Bedigian-Antranigian, who suffered from the effects of the Armenian Genocide for almost two years in the Keghi region of Erzerum.

Dr. Paul Haidostian, President, Haigazian University, Beirut, Lebanon, for a copy of *Haigazian Armenological Review*, Volume 36 (Haigazian University Press, 2016), 700pp., in Armenian and English.

Mary Kachadoorian, Clovis, California, for a copy of *A History of Armenia* by Vahan Kurkjian (New York: AGBU, 1959), 526pp., in English.

Alice Kalemkiarian, Watertown, MA, for a copy of the book *History of the Armenian College and Philanthropic Academy of Calcutta* by Levon B. Kalemkiarian (2014), 255pp., in Armenian.

Sardarabad Armenian Book Service, Glendale, CA, for copies of three books by Malkhas (Artashes Hovsepien), tr. by Simon Beugekian from Armenian: *Awakening*, Volume 1 (2015), 490pp., in English; *Awakening*, Volume 2 (2015), 559pp., in English; and *Awakening*, Volume 3 (2015), 642pp., in English. Artashes Hovsepien was a representative of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in the areas of Van and Lake Urmia. He wrote the three volumes of *Awakening* as a chronicle of the Armenian revolution.

MOURADIAN, FROM PAGE 1

“We examined international law as it pertains to crimes against humanity and genocide, and then dived into Armenian life in the Ottoman Empire before World War I, the history of the Armenian Genocide, its aftermath, and finally a discussion on denial, resentment, the struggle for recognition, and justice.” Students were able to study Armenian life in different Ottoman provinces before the Genocide using the website Houshamadyan.com. Many chose to focus on the province where their ancestors originated.

Dr. Mouradian added a more personal dimension to this lesson by showing the class photos from his travels in Western Armenian provinces now in the Turkish Republic. These photos resonated with many of the students who, although aware of their family stories, were unaware of the present conditions of their ancestral homeland and those who remained.

“It is one thing to hear stories about the homeland from family members, but seeing photos of the locations really brought it to life,” said sophomore, Alina Arakelian. Dr. Mouradian utilized these photos and other multimedia tools to enhance the learning experience. “When I teach, I am mindful that a picture is worth a thousand words, a video is worth a thousand pictures, and sometimes, curiously, a word is worth a thousand videos,” explained Dr. Mouradian.

Connecting the past to the present was a common thread throughout the class. Dr. Mouradian often incorporated stories from his travels in Turkey and the Middle East in his lectures to highlight how the history still affects the lives of not only Armenians, but Turks and Kurds as well. He told the class about his opportunity to speak at the first Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Aintab and how the Kurds in attendance were

affected by the events of 1915.

Dr. Mouradian mentioned that Turks and Kurds often approached him in his travels and whispered in his ears that they had Armenian grandparents. “For many Armenians—including the Islamized, or ‘hidden’ Armenians in Turkey—the Armenian Genocide is a current issue. They feel its implications on a daily basis, in their here and now. In class, we were particularly attentive to this, discussing, for example, the assassination of Hrant Dink, the challenges facing the Armenian community in Turkey, the Islamized Armenians and their struggles, and the impact of genocide denial on Armenian communities worldwide,” explained Dr. Mouradian.

“The Armenian Genocide and its Aftermath” allowed for students and professor to learn from each other in a collaborative setting. Dr. Mouradian encouraged his students to share their thoughts and engage in discussion on the issues.

Each class meeting would begin with a presentation from a student on a particular topic that they had chosen in the first week of class. Apkarian presented on the confiscation of property during the Genocide. “I think it was my favorite topic because I found the process interesting and it correlated with the stories my grandparents told me about their experiences.”

The class provided a unique opportunity for students to understand the Genocide in a more intimate way while sharing their own insights on the subject. It was not only a rewarding experience for the students, but for Dr. Mouradian as well.

“I firmly believe in the saying that the day a person stops teaching is the day a person stops learning. This class was no exception. My students’ insights and perspectives enriched my own understanding of genocide and the long shadow it casts over generations.”

California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2017 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32215)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #33425)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D3				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #33533)	3	9:00A-09:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #33571)	3	2:00P-3:15P	TuTh	H. Ohanessian
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #33561)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	S. La Porta
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #33010)	3	3:30P-4:45P	TuTh	H. Ohanessian
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32214)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.

Get a Minor in Armenian Studies.

Check on requirements for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the current catalog.

<http://www.fresnostate.edu/catalog/subjects/armenian-studies/armenia-mn.html>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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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.

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Dr. Elyse Semerdjian Discusses “Ottoman History from the Margins” at Fresno State Presentation



Dr. Stacy Fahrenthold, left, and Dr. Elyse Semerdjian.

MICHAEL RETTIG
EDITOR

Studying history from the viewpoint of marginal rather than dominant actors has been one of the central focuses of social historians since the 1960s. These historians seek to add nuance to traditional histories by considering the experience of ethnic and religious minorities as well as women. On Monday, November 7, Dr. Elyse Semerdjian, Associate Professor of History and Islamic Studies and Director of Global Studies at Whitman College (Walla Walla, Washington), presented her research on “Ottoman History from the Margins: Reflections on Women and *Dhimmi*s at Aleppo’s Shari’a Court.” This event was organized by Dr. Stacy Fahrenthold and sponsored by the Department of History, the College of Social Sciences, and the Islamic Studies Symposia Series.

Dr. Semerdjian’s lecture challenged the dominant narrative by examining Ottoman history from the experience of prostitutes, non-Muslim women, and an Armenian convert to Islam, rather than from the perspective of the state. She stressed that traditional Ottoman history was written from an institutional framework and left little room for questioning. It essentially told the story of “what the state thought of itself.” Dr. Semerdjian was able to highlight

the neglected experience of marginal groups in the Ottoman Empire by utilizing Shari’a court registers, which were used by a wide variety of social groups for marriages, divorces, petitions, and disputes. These courts administered different laws, such as Sultan edicts, Shari’a, and customary law, which marginal groups were able to use to their advantage.

Dr. Semerdjian presented an example of an Armenian convert to Islam, Qamar, to demonstrate how a woman was able to manipulate the courts to improve her situation. Qamar’s husband Sarkis was absent from the country for a prolonged period, possibly on a trading venture, leaving her with no means to provide for herself. The Armenian canon code made it difficult for women to divorce, so Qamar approached the Shari’a court and declared her desire to convert to Islam. According to Dr. Semerdjian, Qamar’s conversion demonstrated that she “investigated the law enough to know that her rights were limited.” By converting to Islam rather than petitioning for a divorce by abandonment, Qamar left the court with her marriage to her Christian husband annulled “and a higher social ranking as a Muslim woman... Convert women navigated dual legal structures to maximize benefits when and where they could.”

Dr. Semerdjian was able to use the court records to shed light on

the experience of prostitutes and their place in society. Syrians in the 18th century tended to view prostitution as a societal failure, and thus prostitutes were worthy of forgiveness and reintegration into society. According to Dr. Semerdjian, the courts often punished the procurer more harshly than the prostitute, and even allowed for the prostitutes’ forgiveness. In one instance, a prostitute asked for God’s forgiveness and got married in the same document.

The third subtopic was an examination of the laws regulating Muslim and non-Muslim interactions in bathhouses. Dr. Semerdjian explained that bathing was a complex ritual because of the cleansing rules put in place to protect women’s modesty. Ottoman guilds had imposed rules separating the sexes, but they also began to separate bathhouses by religion to protect the sanctity and status of Muslim women from Christians and Jews. “When a non-Muslim woman is gazing upon a nude Muslim woman, she is gendered male because she is viewed as a conduit to the male gaze. There was the idea that she was a threat; that she might report what she had seen,” said Dr. Semerdjian.

Dr. Semerdjian noticed that these laws began to delegate more time for Muslims in bathhouses over the course of the 18th century, even in Christian and Jewish neighborhoods. She explained that the laws were created by men for women, and that women’s voices were largely absent. However, the fact that these laws were continuously reissued over the century signifies that women were violating these rules.

In utilizing the Shari’a court laws, Dr. Semerdjian was able to use a source written by men to highlight the agency of women and other marginal groups in a historiography where they are largely underrepresented. Dr. Semerdjian’s important research adds greater nuance to the dominant Ottoman historical narrative told from the perspective of the Sultan and the State.

Dr. Mouradian Presents Research on Armenians of China-1880-1950



Virginia Meltickian, left, with Dr. Khatchig Mouradian.

DIANA GASPARYAN
STAFF WRITER

Due to genocide and war in the Ottoman Empire and Russia in the early 20th century, many Armenians sought safe havens. Some found refuge in Europe or in the United States, while others traveled eastward to China in hope of finding a more secure life.

In China they were able to establish two active communities, one in Harbin, and the other in Shanghai. Dr. Khatchig Mouradian, Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies at Fresno State, explained how the communities formed, what challenges they faced, and how they interacted with local communities in his October 20, 2016 presentation, “‘Don’t Fall Off the Earth’: The Armenian Communities in China from the 1880s to 1950s.”

“The study of the Armenians in China provides insight into the process of forming a community from scratch and developing a cultural life to sustain and nurture it despite conflicts, wars, and adversity,” stated Dr. Mouradian. “This has been an under-studied area of history, and was a fascinating one for me to explore.”

There were successive waves of Armenians who immigrated to China in the period under study. The first wave was in the 1880’s, when hundreds of Armenians from Russia went to China to work for railway projects and start businesses. In the years that followed the Armenian Genocide of 1915, another wave of Armenians came from the Ottoman Empire, while others escaped the chaos in the Caucasus. They often used the Trans-Siberian Railway to Vladivostok, and then on to China.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

One of the largest Russian Diasporan communities was in Harbin, and so the Armenians found a familiar culture there. Some Armenian children had Chinese nannies, who had a great influence in teaching the children the Chinese language. The Armenians living in Harbin, Shanghai, and to a lesser extent Tientsin, eventually established businesses, opened restaurants, and formed social clubs thus creating a thriving, if small, community.

In 1949, after years of Civil War, the Chinese communists emerged victorious. The Armenians, alongside other Christians in China, moved once more. Some left for Soviet Armenia, while others moved to Australia, South America, or North America, and in particular to such cities as San Francisco and Fresno. By the 1950’s, the Armenian communities of China had nearly disappeared.

Virginia Meltickian, who was born and grew up in China in the period under study, was present at Dr. Mouradian’s lecture. Dr. Mouradian, who began his research nearly two years ago, utilized documents and photographs that Meltickian had donated to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

“One of the more important sources for my research was the Meltickian Collection. These photographs provide invaluable insight into the community’s social, religious, and cultural life,” said Dr. Mouradian.

In his lecture, Dr. Mouradian vividly brought to life the remarkable and unique history of Armenian communities in Harbin and Shanghai by telling the stories of those who were able to thrive in an unknown and new world.

SAS, FROM PAGE 1

Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) co-hosted a reception for SAS members and NAASR Leadership Circle members on Friday, November 18 at NAASR headquarters.

Representatives of both SAS and NAASR gave updates on their recent activities. Each SAS member introduced themselves and spoke about their research, while NAASR leaders spoke about their future plans for their organization.

Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to interact in an informal setting, while enjoying a delicious buffet dinner.

The SAS sponsored a panel during the regular MESA sessions on Friday, November 18, entitled “New Issues, Perspectives, and Sources in Armenian Studies,” chaired by SAS President Barlow

Der Mugrdchian (California State University, Fresno), with the participation of Anna Aleksanyan (Clark University) “Ritualized Rapes and Body Destruction of the Armenian Women During the Genocide” and Varak Ketsamian (Princeton University), “The Hunchakian Revolutionary Party from 1891-1895.” Dr. Ümit Kurt, a visiting fellow at Harvard University, was the discussant for the panel.

SAS also co-sponsored a roundtable discussion on “Knowledge Production, Exclusion, Inclusion: The Repositioning of Armenians in Ottoman and Turkish Historiography,” with the Ottoman and Turkish Studies Association.

Participants included Carel Bertram (San Francisco State University), David E. Gutman

(Manhattanville College), Alyson Wharton (University of Lincoln [UK]), Rachel Goshgarian (Lafayette College), and Yasar Tolga Cora (University of Michigan), and Lerna Ekmekcioglu (M.I.T.).

The SAS is administered by a seven member Executive Council: President, Barlow Der Mugrdchian; Vice-President, Bedross Der Matossian (Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln); Secretary, Lilit Keshishyan (UCLA); Treasurer, Arpi Siyahian (NuTech Ventures), and advisors Vartan Matiossian (Armenian National Education Committee), Sergio La Porta (California State University, Fresno and Editor of JSAS), and Vahe Sahakyan (University of Michigan).

The SAS website is societyforarmenianstudies.com.

Visit the Armenian Studies Program

Online Library

Books and documents in the Armenian Studies Program office.

the site can be accessed at “Library Catalog” fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies

ASO Bowling Night at USU



ASO members enjoyed a night of bowling, followed by dinner to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Photo: ASP Archive

ASO Spotlight

ALINA ARAKELIAN
STAFF WRITER

Two students who are active in the campus Armenian community are the focus of the ASO Spotlight.



Haverj Stanboulian
Senior

What is your major and your plan for the future?

I am a Biology major and I would like to be a professor and do research.

What kind of research are you interested in?

I study plant parasitic nematodes, "little worms," which are a large problem in agriculture. I hope to find a chemical in my research to eliminate these worms and still be safe enough for humans and the environment.

Where have you presented your research?

I presented my research at the 2016 SACNAS conference. It was great for networking and I got to communicate with a lot of graduate schools I would like to attend in the future.

How do you like being involved in the Armenian Students Organization and the Armenian community in Fresno?

ASO is a great community and it brings the Armenian youth together. Also, the Armenian lectures are a great addition to continue conversations between the Armenian students and scholars. It is a really great connection to our culture in a country other than Armenia.

What are some of your other pastimes?

In addition to Biology, I enjoy painting. I am actually minoring

in Art! I explore different media such as scratch boarding, pastels, and different types of paint. My favorite artists are Vincent Van Gogh and William Turner. My favorite painting is by Caspar David Friedrich, "A Wanderer Above a Sea of Fog."



Melanie Kojaartinian
Freshman

Could you summarize your background and how you came to Fresno?

I was born and raised in Paris and I moved to Boston at the age of 15. I went to an international high school in Cambridge where I graduated in June. I decided to attend Fresno State because my father moved to Fresno.

What is your major and your plan for the future?

I chose the International Business major because I would like to work in an international company, travel, and work in a multicultural environment.

In what ways is the Armenian community in Fresno similar and/or different from the Armenian community in France?

Both communities are quite similar, Armenians are very welcoming.

How do you like Fresno?

I like Fresno very much. People are very friendly, welcoming, and they really seek to help international students. I also like the organizations, clubs, and opportunities offered by Fresno State. In addition, I enjoy the diverse community because I am interested in making friends from different backgrounds.

Photos: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Society for Armenian Studies Holds Conference on "Armenians in America" in Boston on Nov. 17

STAFF REPORT

The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) held an interesting and informative conference on "Armenians in America," on Thursday, November 17, 2016, in Boston, Massachusetts. The Conference was held in conjunction with the SAS Annual Membership Meeting and Middle East Studies Association Annual Conference.

SAS President Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian opened the conference welcoming the participants, members of the SAS, and a large number of local Armenians. This is the third consecutive year that SAS has been holding conferences on specific themes in conjunction with the annual SAS meeting.

In the first panel on "Travel, Collective Memory and Homeland among Armenian-Americans," chaired by Marc Mamigonian (National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, NAASR), four participants presented papers.

Dr. Margaret Manoogian (Western Oregon University) discussed her research related to how Armenian travelers to historic Armenia expressed their attachment to their ancestral villages in her talk on "Connections for Families Disrupted: Travels to Anatolia by Diasporans." She based her research on interviews with those who had traveled to Turkey with Armen Aroyan over the past decades. Dr. Manoogian conducted her research in cooperation with Dr. Anny Bakalian (Emerita Associate Director MEMEAC, CUNY).

Dr. Carel Bertram (San Francisco State University) approached the question of how music plays an important role in identity through her talk "Coming to Terms with Home and Homeland." She discussed how music is one marker that acts differently than words to open up new areas of spatial consciousness.

Music and dance bring to life the village-family relationship. Her work was based on her own



Photo: ASP Archive

Front row, left to right: Marc Mamigonian, Carel Bertram, and Helen Makhdounian. Back row, left to right, Margaret Manoogian, Vahe Sahakyan, Anatolii Tokmancev, Shushan Karapetian, Sona Nersisyan, and Barlow Der Mugrdechian at the SAS sponsored conference "Armenians in America."

travel to historic Armenia as well as ethnographic research with those who traveled to Turkey with Aroyan.

Sona Nersisyan's talk focused on "Homeland Perception and Identity Construction: the Case of Los Angeles Armenian Community." She explored the homeland-Diaspora links, and concluded that the Diaspora identity is a multi-layered one, with perceptions of homeland often connected to language and literature. Nersisyan is a scholar with the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences of Armenia.

In the second panel on "Diversities of Armenianness in American and Diasporic Contexts," chaired by Dr. Vahe Sahakyan (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), Anatolii Tokmancev (UCLA) presented a talk on "Armenian Jehovah's Witnesses: Nationalism in a Strictly Non-Nationalist Sect." His approach was to understand how affiliation with the Jehovah's Witnesses affects Armenian identity. His research among the Glendale Armenians explored how ethnicity is not only a quality, but offers a perspective on the world.

Dr. Shushan Karapetian (UCLA) discussed how second and third generation Armenians in America approach the question

of Armenian language acquisition in her paper on "Language in Diaspora: Problematizing Ideology, Identity, and Symbolism." America is a predominantly monolingual society and thus she explored the impact of this on how Armenians acquire language. Her work assessed the overall landscape of the Armenian language in Los Angeles and evaluated how the language is being used in schools and in the community.

Helen Makhdounian, a graduate student at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, spoke on "Inheritance of Exile: Negotiating Memory, Home, and Belonging in Armenian-American Literature about the Lebanese Civil War." Makhdounian utilized Patricia Sarrafian Ward's novel *The Bullet Collection* (2003) to explore the nexus between memory and migration.

The Armenian Genocide plays a significant role in this exploration of changing perceptions and identities.

The Society for Armenian Studies is headquartered at the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno and its website is at societyforarmenianstudies.com.

The SAS can be reached by email at barlowd@csufresno.edu or by phone at 559-278-2669.

Radio Personality Barsamian Visits Fresno State



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Dr. Khatchig Mouradian, left, with David Barsamian.

ALINA ARAKELIAN
STAFF WRITER

Radio personality David Barsamian was a guest speaker

in Dr. Khatchig Mouradian's Armenian Genocide class on Wednesday, November 2. Barsamian is known for his weekly radio show "Alternative

Radio" which is in its 30th year. He is a winner of the "Media Education Award" and the ACLU's "Upton Sinclair Award" for independent journalism.

Barsamian began his lecture by highlighting the connection between the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust through the experience of German Consul Max Erwin Von Sheubner-Richter, who witnessed the deportations of Erzerum in World War I. Von Sheubner-Richter sent reports to Berlin informing authorities that the Armenians were being "attacked and exterminated" by the Turks and Kurds. Barsamian later discovered that Hitler dedicated *Mein Kampf* to Von Sheubner-Richter. Barsamian went on to explain

Fresno State Alumni Share Impact of the Armenian Studies Program on Their Careers and Lives

MARINE VARDANYAN-STAFF WRITER

Since its inception, the core of the Armenian Studies Program mission has been to educate students. The Program has impacted a large number of students by providing education, support, and numerous opportunities. As these students move forward in their lives, they carry with them their experiences from the Program.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Armenian Studies Program, some graduates of the Program were asked to share their reflections and advice.



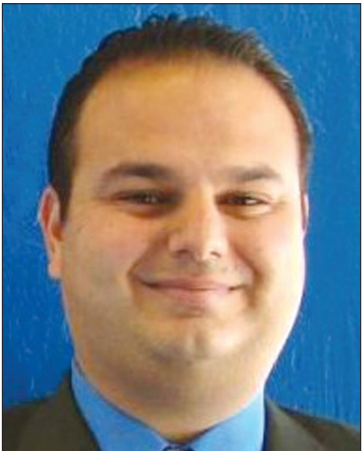
Tamar Karkazian
Business Administration
(2013)

Please tell us how being involved in the Armenian Studies Program influenced your choice of career?

My work in the marketing world is greatly impacted by my experience as a writer and editor for *Hye Sharzhoom*. As editor, I focused on how to make our articles appealing and engaging and that is a lot of what I do now. How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program make a difference in your life? I would say the biggest impact has been the lifelong friends I have made and the incredible experiences I have participated in.

What would you say to current students about the benefits of being involved with the Armenian Studies Program?

Getting involved with the Program will benefit students because it will encourage them to push past their comfort zone and learn about new things, whether they are familiar with Armenian culture and language or not.



Sevag Tateosian
Criminology
Armenian Studies Minor
(2004)

Please tell us how completing an Armenian Studies Minor influenced your choice of career?

At the time I was taking classes to fulfill the requirements of my Minor, I was co-hosting the *Hye Oozh* radio program at Fresno State, and now I am the host of the “Central Valley Ledger.” The Minor taught me lessons that I was then able to share with my

listening audience. Today I use these lessons to explain not only the history of the Armenians, but the history of Christianity and the Middle East.

What motivated you to begin and complete a Minor?

My grandparents always talked to me about Armenian history. The Minor was an easy way to learn about where my I came from and allowed me to have educated conversations with our elders. Today, I have an appreciation of life and most of that feeling comes from learning about my past.

What would you say to current students about the benefits of being involved with the Armenian Studies Program, taking courses, and completing a Minor?

Armenians have been an instrumental piece in building the great history of our Valley. By learning about each other, we can better understand the circumstances that brought the various cultures here. The Minor helps one better understand and appreciate Armenian history.



Hagop Ohanessian
Business Administration
Minors in Armenian Studies
and History
(2009)

Please tell us how completing an Armenian Studies Minor influenced your choice of career?

I am blessed to be teaching in the Armenian Studies Program. It is a wonderful experience and opportunity to be teaching the same courses that I once took. Completing a Minor has enriched my career as an educator. A Minor led to me to pursue graduate work in History and now a doctorate in Education.

What motivated you to begin and complete the Minor?

Armenian Studies 10 and Armenian 148 were my first two classes in the Program. After completing them and traveling to Armenia and Karabagh with the Program my sophomore year, I decided to complete the Minor.

What would you say to current students about the benefits of being involved with the Armenian Studies Program, and completing a Minor?

The Armenian Studies Program has a committed faculty in Professors Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Sergio La Porta, who have dedicated many years to teaching and research. Students have an opportunity to get involved in the Armenian Students Organization, *Hye Sharzhoom*, and the Program Lecture Series. The Program also offers scholarships for students who take Armenian Studies courses. My message to current and incoming students is to get involved. You do not want to miss out on this wonderful opportunity to engage yourself with a Program that has been around for forty years!



Zhanna Bagdasarov
Psychology
Armenian Studies Minor
(2005)

How did completing an Armenian Studies Minor make a difference in your life?

I am an Assistant Professor of Management at Fresno State’s Craig School of Business. Completing a Minor helped solidify my choice of a career in teaching and research and made me feel confident among knowledgeable Armenians. I gained an appreciation for different aspects of the culture that were unknown to me before. Earning the Minor opened my world to a culture about which I knew so little.

What motivated you to begin and complete a Minor?

I began by taking one course to fulfill a General Education requirement my first semester and quickly realized that my knowledge of the Armenian culture was very limited. I then took another course the following semester, which ultimately snowballed into taking all the courses offered. I completed the Minor without even realizing that my genuine interest in the courses earned me an additional degree.

What would you say to current students about the benefits of being involved with the Armenian Studies Program, taking courses, and completing a Minor?

Fresno State has a unique Program; the benefits are so much greater than one can ever realize. Invest the time to broaden your horizons, open your mind to new knowledge, and allow yourself to truly experience the myriad opportunities the Armenian Studies Program has to offer. You have nothing to lose, yet so much to gain. You won’t be sorry!

Melikyan Concert at Fresno State



Left to right: Prof. Hagop Ohanessian, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Sofya Melikyan, and Keyboard Concerts Director Andreas Werz.

Photo: Veronique Werz

ELINA KARAPETYAN
STAFF WRITER

The Fresno State Concert Hall was filled with excited chatter and buzz as the audience waited to listen to the talented and accomplished pianist Sofya Melikyan on Friday, October 14. For this special performance, the Armenian Studies Program cooperated with the Philip Lorenz Memorial Keyboard Concert Series to bring a memorable night to classical music enthusiasts.

“It has been a pleasure to continue the cooperation that we have had with Keyboard Concert Series Director Andreas Werz to bring outstanding Armenian talent to Fresno State every semester,” said Armenian Studies Program Director Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Armenia-born artist Melikyan has made a name for herself by performing in some of the world’s most exclusive venues such as Carnegie Hall in New York, the Palau de la Musica Catalana in Barcelona, and Salle Cortot in Paris. She has extensively toured throughout Europe, the United States, Japan, Canada, and Australia, and performed as a soloist with several orchestras, including the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra. Melikyan’s enriching performances have also been broadcast on television and radio in Armenia, Spain, France, and in the United States.

In addition to her extensive list of accomplishments, Melikyan has been recognized in the New England International Chamber Music Competition in Boston and the New York Artists International Competition.

During the first half of her

concert, Melikyan performed *Goyescas*, Op. 11 by Spanish composer Enrique Granados. This particular piano suite, known also as *The Gallants in Love*, is remarkably sophisticated and exceptionally difficult to perform, demanding both delicate dexterity and great intensity. Melikyan seemed to be in the moment, embodying the music in her performance. She was both passionate and emotional, giving her audience the most authentic experience by masterfully transitioning from intricate pieces to hauntingly powerful ones. She performed six pieces from the series.

In the second half of the concert, Melikyan performed pieces by internationally renowned composers including Lowell Liebermann, Arno Babadjanian, and Franz Liszt. She opened with Liebermann’s soft and elegant Nocturne No. 5, Op. 55 and later shifted to Babadjanian’s fast paced and demanding “Poem.” Melikyan’s talent was especially highlighted during this piece as she brilliantly mastered the composition. The last four pieces that she performed were by the prolific 19th-century Hungarian composer Franz Liszt.

After the concert, members of the audience were invited to a lovely reception in the foyer, prepared by members of the Armenian community. Discussions of the concert began and people characterized the music as “captivatingly beautiful,” and “enchanting.”

Melikyan is not just a musician, but also a storyteller. She continues to inspire others with her talent and contagious passion for music.

Hye Oozh - Saturdays 9:00 AM - Noon

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Hye Oozh is 90.7 KFSR’s weekly program dedicated to contemporary and traditional Armenian music and culture.

Current Hye Oozh DJs:

Tatevik Ekezian • Vartush Mesropyan
• Marine Vardanyan

CineCulture Screens “If Only Everyone”



Left to right: Arthur Khachatryan, Diana Gasparyan, Prof. Mary Husain, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Tadeh Issakhanian, Seroun Mouradian, Marina Chardukian, Kara Statler, and Dikran Dzhezyan.

Photo: Marine Vardanyan

KARA STATLER
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, November 4, the Armenian Studies Program teamed up with the CineCulture series to screen the film “If Only Everyone” in front of a large audience in the Leon S. and Peter Peters Educational Auditorium at Fresno State.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program was the invited discussant for the film and at the end of the screening reflected on the film and answered questions from the audience. Professor Mary Husain has included many Armenian films in the popular CineCulture series, which screens films on Friday nights for free for both a campus and community audience.

Directed by Nataliya Belyauskene, “If Only Everyone” is a film made in Armenia that was released in 2012 and deals with a young woman named Sasha (Yekaterina Shitova), who is searching for her father’s grave, so that she can plant a birch tree there. Her father, who was Russian, fought and died in the Nagorno-Karabakh war (also known as the Artsakh Liberation war).

In her search she encounters the leader of her father’s military unit, a man named Gurgen (played by actor Michael Poghosyan). She and Gurgen embark on their journey with two other men who

had also fought in the same unit.

The film was selected as the Armenian entry for the Best Foreign Language Oscar at the 85th Academy Awards and deals with how the Karabagh war affected the two main characters. Sasha lost both her parents in the war, her mother died in the Sumgait massacre of 1988 and her father in Karabakh and so she wants to find closure to her feelings of loss and grieving.

Gurgen still has feelings of guilt for the death of his comrades, including Sasha’s father, as they died rescuing him. However, when Gurgen finally is able to locate Sasha’s father’s grave, it is not in Karabagh, but across the border in Azerbaijan. The journey there is dangerous, but Sasha and Gurgen succeed in crossing the border. They are confronted by an Azeri farmer, who after hearing the reason for their journey, reveals that his son also died in the war. The farmer releases them and Sasha decides to plant a tree for that man’s son as well. The sharing of grief is a poignant moment in the film.

“If Only Everyone” was shot on location in Armenia and Karabagh and featured beautiful cinematography. It was full of humorous moments, and also sad reflections.

“If Only Everyone” captured the attention of the audience through its realistic and authentic exploration of the human spirit.

TSUGHRUT, FROM PAGE 1

(ARISC) held a public presentation by ARISC Fellow Arusyak Baldryan on October 25, 2016 at the Matenadaran in Yerevan, Armenia, to give an update about the grant, making it possible to implement the conservation and restoration of the manuscript in the village of Tsughrut.

This work ensured the continued preservation of the unique manuscript.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian, Berberian Coordinator of Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno and Baldryan, an MA student of UNESCO World Heritage Studies at Brandenburg Technical University of Cottbus Senftenberg in Germany successfully applied and received a grant for the restoration work.



The conservation of the manuscript has been implemented by senior conservators of the Matenadaran, Artavazd Ayyvazyan and Arthur Petrosyan, biologist Lusine Markaryan and with the supervision of Dr. Gayane Eliazyan, Head of the Restoration Department of the Matenadaran.

The conservation work was preceded by a biological analysis of the manuscript for the purpose of identification of fungi, other biological bodies, and to evaluate the overall state of the manuscript.

Armenian 148 Course Offers Insights Into Culture

DIANA GASPARYAN
STAFF WRITER

The Armenian Studies Program offers a variety of courses, but Masterpieces of Armenian Culture (Armenian 148) is unique because it is the only course that fulfills an upper division Interdisciplinary General Education requirement in the area of Arts and Humanities. One result is that more non-Armenian juniors and seniors can learn about Armenian culture.

Students in the Armenian 148 class study various examples of the classic works of writers such as Grigor Narekatsi, Hovhannes Toumanian, Siamanto, Daniel Varoujan, and many more in English translation. They are also able to explore the Armenian stories of Hayk and Bel, Ara the Fair and Shamiram, the Legend of Aram, and the Armenian National Epic David of Sassoun.

“The course is a way for students to discuss how Armenian culture and identity are represented through literature,” said Professor Hagop Ohanessian, who has been teaching this course for three years.

Non-Armenians who take the course learn about the ancient Armenian culture and about Armenian history.

One of the main lessons of the course is to see how the writers themselves explore their identity and how this leads to the maintenance of Armenian culture.



Prof. Hagop Ohanessian

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

This is accomplished by reading excerpts in English from various writers and discussing how those works connect to culture and identity.

“There is a lot to learn in this class. Learning about another culture always has an impact,” said senior Nabil Saeed.

Junior Anthony Avedisian stated how interesting it is that the Armenians have such a long history and he appreciates being given the opportunity to learn about it.

“It helps me connect to my history,” said Avedisian. Many students in the course relate to these feelings, because the course helps build a sense of pride.

Other students were interested in expanding their knowledge of the Armenians. “It is fascinating to learn about how ancient

Armenian history is and about how rich the literature is, but I was most interested in learning more about the Genocide,” said junior Erika Kogan. The Armenian Genocide is a popular topic, which draws students into the class.

After taking the course many students found it remarkable how Armenians have defended their faith and their land, and have stood up for their families.

Education is a key aspect in informing the Armenian youth about their historical roots and about Armenian identity so that the culture can continue to be passed down to future generations.

The Armenian 148 course has many positive aspects and offers many opportunities for students to learn about Armenian culture.

HAIDOSTIAN, FROM PAGE 1

future.

Haigazian University was founded in 1955 in Beirut, Lebanon and named in honor of Dr. Armenag Haigazian, a highly respected educator with a Ph.D. from Yale University. He, like many Armenian intellectuals during the Armenian Genocide, was arrested by Ottoman authorities and eventually died in the Syrian Desert.

According to Dr. Haidostian, the establishment of the University on October 17, 1955 was “one of the best examples of how you can reverse things in history,” a history that had seen numerous Armenian colleges destroyed during the years of the Genocide.

Dr. Haidostian spoke not only about the foundation of the University and its humble beginnings, but also about the history of the Armenians of Lebanon and their importance to the Armenian Diaspora. A large percentage of Armenian leaders: clergy, educators, and writers, came from Beirut. Beirut was a spiritual home for the Diaspora due to its geographic proximity to

the lands of historic Armenia and Cilicia in the north and because it became the headquarters of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, the Armenian Catholic Church, and the Armenian Evangelical Church.

Dr. Haidostian spoke about the challenges facing the University and Lebanon. As a constantly evolving nation and one with “only one friendly neighbor, the Mediterranean Sea,” according to Dr. Haidostian, the University must function and thrive in an ever-changing environment. One challenge is how to provide a good quality education equivalent to what a student would receive in the United States, while simultaneously preserving the Armenian identity and Christian witness of the institution. Today, 43% of Haigazian students are Armenian with the rest from very different backgrounds and religions. Haigaizian University maintains an atmosphere that includes everyone and preserves the multiple identities.

Despite the challenges, Haigazian University alumni have found many successes,

holding top positions in major companies and many government agencies within Lebanon. The accomplishments of a Haigazian graduate were even documented in the movie “The Lebanese Rocket Society,” which told the story of math and physics Prof. Manoug Manougian, who in the early years of the University established the Lebanese Rocket Society (LRS) with his students. The LRS eventually prepared and launched a rocket called the Cedar IV, which would become the first successful rocket launch in the Arab world. A replica of this historic rocket now sits in front of the University’s administrative building.

Haigazian University’s importance to the Armenian Diaspora and Dr. Haidostian’s commitment to the University and its students are undeniable. The lecture gave an insight into higher education outside of the United States and life within Lebanon all within the context of the Armenian Diaspora. Haigazian University will continue to thrive and grow with Dr. Haidostian at the helm for many years to come.

The project has been significant and the Acting Director of the Matenadaran Mr. Ara Khzmalyan and Fr. Zakaria Bakhumyan, a representative from Holy Etchmiadzin stated, “with this project the stereotypes have been broken. Now we know that it is also possible to take care of the innumerable Armenian

manuscripts preserved in family houses, locally.”

This was the first time that the Matenadaran Conservation Department was able to implement conservation work outside of its laboratory and has given them experience for future projects.

There are a large number

of important and valuable manuscripts that are badly in need of recovery and are preserved by families in remote villages.

The next step is to search for new funds for a long-term project to continue the work started with the generous support of ARISC.

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The Armenian Genocide Monument at Fresno State



The Armenian Genocide Monument was opened with a ceremony on April 23, 2015, when over 5,000 community members, faculty, staff, and students gathered at the Maple Mall area of the Fresno State campus. Today it has become a campus landmark with visitors from throughout the state and the world.

Photo by Fresno State Biology Professor Dr. Fred Schreiber.

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BARSAMIAN, FROM PAGE 4

that it is important to continue to remember the Armenian victims of the Genocide and to learn from the experience.

Barsamian then examined how the American media selectively focuses on the atrocities committed by enemy powers rather than its own allies. According to Barsamian, some victims are considered more worthy than others in the attention they receive from the media.

He explained that propaganda consistently portrayed the citizens of enemy countries being persecuted by their own governments as worthy victims to cover in the news.

“There is not a week that goes by that our best newspaper doesn’t publish an article about some human rights violation in Iran. America has a tendency to focus on the abuses of its enemies rather than its own,” he explained. He similarly argued that the American media does not focus on atrocities committed by India against Kashmir or Israel against Palestinians because of their close political ties.

“We have a textbook example with the Standing Rock Sioux Native American people fighting

for their land in North Dakota... they are currently being attacked by state security forces.”

When Barsamian asked the audience if they had ever heard of this event, only a few nodded in agreement. It demonstrated that such an event does not garner the amount of public attention it should because the American media does not want its citizens to be aware of the civil rights violations carried out by their government.

Barsamian concluded by highlighting the dichotomy between the “worthy” and “unworthy” victims in the context of the Armenian Genocide Centennial Commemoration.

Barsamian described how the Turkish government moved the commemoration of the Battle of Gallipoli to April 24 in 2015 in order to overshadow the coverage of the Armenian Genocide.

“Prince Charles and many other allied leaders chose to commemorate the Battle of Gallipoli in Turkey rather than give the Armenians the press that they needed to gain their recognition,” said Barsamian. “This action demonstrated that countries decide which victims are worthy or unworthy based on political considerations.”

Hye Sharzhoom

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Narek Hakhnazaryan was launched onto the international scene after winning the Gold Medal at the 2011 Tchaikovsky International Cello Competition in Moscow. Born in Armenia and educated at the Moscow Conservatory and the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, he has already performed in venues such as Carnegie Hall in New York, Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Salle Pleyel in Paris, Wigmore Hall in London, Konzerthaus in Vienna, and Konzerthaus in Berlin. Hailed as a “seasoned phenomenon” (*The Washington Post*) and praised for his “intense focus and expressive artistry” (*The New York Times*), he was recently invited to join the prestigious BBC New Generation Artists Scheme.

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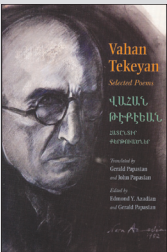
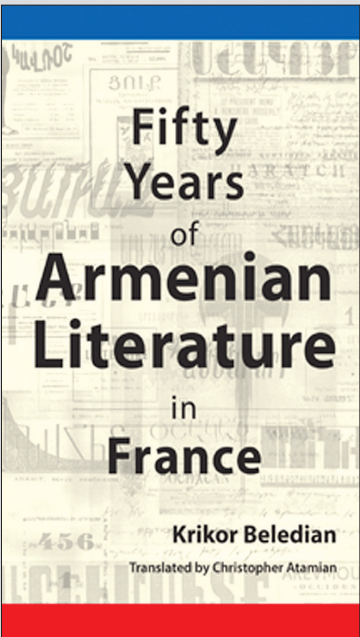
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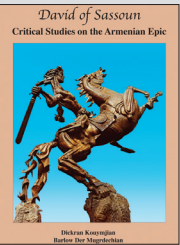
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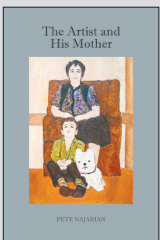
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