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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.

Linda Abraham, Seyfo Center, Simi Valley, for copies of *The Assyrian Genocide Seyfo: When, Where, and How* (2011), by David Gaunt. This book provides an overview of the little known Assyrian Genocide.

Hrant Dink Foundation, Istanbul Turkey, for copies of: *Adana with its Armenian Cultural Heritage* (2018), 127pp., in English and Turkish; *Develi with its Armenian Cultural Heritage* (2018), 143pp., in English and Turkish; *Sivas with its Armenian Cultural Heritage* (2018), 163pp., in English and Turkish; and *Armenian Studies Past to Present* (2018), 57pp., a report that outlines the worldwide state of Armenian Studies.

Ara Sarafian, Gomidas Institute, London, for a copy of Dr. Sarkis Karayan’s *Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914: A Geographic and Demographic Gazetteer* (London: Gomidas Institute, 2018), 664pp., in English. This volume is the product of more than twenty years of research and documents the more than 4,000 Armenian towns and villages in pre-World War I Ottoman Turkey.

Sharon Toroian, Fresno, for a copy of the May 19, 1981, *Fresno Bee*. The front page of the paper covered the death of noted author William Saroyan.



Dr. Richard Hovannisian

HOVANNISIAN, FROM PAGE 1
the activities organized in Fresno to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Homenetmen. His talk was co-sponsored by the Homenetmen Fresno Sassoon chapter, the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, and the Hamazkayin Taniel Varoujan chapter.
Dr. Hovannisian gave a fascinating presentation interweaving many topics, such as his family history and the early history of the First Republic of Armenia, with an overall theme of Armenian identity.
Dr. Hovannisian began his talk by discussing his own personal journey on how he discovered more about his Armenian identity. He then reflected on the challenges facing Armenia today, comparing the challenges Armenia faces today with those that Armenia faced after gaining independence in 1918.

The First Republic of Armenia was born in the chaos of war and Genocide and faced daunting challenges to simply survive its first year. By September 1920, the Republic of Armenia had been abandoned by the great powers and by December of that year the Republic collapsed.
In order to save the territory that remained, eleven thousand square miles, the Armenian

government was forced to hand over power to the communists, but that did not help Armenia reclaim the territory promised by the Allies that was lost.
Dr. Hovannisian showed photos of significant Armenians, whose contributions enhanced the early Republic of Armenia.
Dr. Hovannisian was the first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA. He received his B.A. and M.A. in history from UC Berkeley and his Ph.D. from UCLA.
His dissertation, “On the Road to Independence, 1918” was a ground-breaking work looking at the formation of the Armenian Republic.
It led him to write a four-volume history of the Republic of Armenia, a project which he thought initially would take three years, but which turned out to be a thirty year journey.
Dr. Hovannisian joined the UCLA faculty in 1962 and was associate director of the UCLA von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies from 1978-1995. He has published more than thirty books, seven on the Armenian Genocide.
Dr. Hovannisian was born in Tulare, CA and did not speak Armenian fluently until he attended the Jemaran Armenian school in Beirut, Lebanon. He grew up in an English-speaking

California State University, Fresno

Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2019 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32149)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B. Der Mugrdechian
• Arm 2A-Intermediate Armenian (Class #36557)	3	09:00A-09:50A	MWF	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #33208)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D3				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #36120)	3	12:00P-12:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #33301)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	H. Ohanessian
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32148)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian

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HYE SHARZHOOM

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Ümit Kurt, Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies

household and didn’t know much about his heritage or Armenian history. Since there were only a few Armenians in Tulare, he did not have many Armenians to interact with.
Dr. Hovannisian did not know his father’s genocide story until just before his father’s death because his father never wanted to talk about the horrors he faced.
Dr. Hovannisian talked about the history of Homenetmen, the Armenian General Athletic Union, which was founded in Constantinople in November 1918.
At the end of the lecture, Dr. Hovannisian was presented with an award by the Homenetmen Fresno Sassoon Chapter.

Hye Sharzhoom is an ethnic supplement of *The Collegian* and is the newspaper of the Fresno State Armenian Students Organization and the Armenian Studies Program and is funded by the Associated Students. Articles may be reprinted provided *Hye Sharzhoom* is acknowledged. *Hye Sharzhoom* welcomes prose, poetry, articles and other material from its student readers. For further information concerning the newspaper or the Armenian Studies Program contact us at:

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Steven Sim and Ani Hovannisian Present Talk and Video on Research on Armenians in Historic Armenia



Photo: Christine Pambukyan

Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Steven Sim, Ani Hovannisian, and Dr. Hagop Ohanessian.

ANNIE RUBIO
EDITOR

Few people would stop to stare at a pile of rocks scattered across a field. Even fewer would be able to distinguish that a historic monastery used to exist there. Scottish explorer Steven Sim has spent nearly 40 years doing just that. From his days as an architecture student, he made the startling discovery that many of the historic sites in Turkey are actually Armenian. However, very few have been left standing. Five years ago, Sim and producer Ani Hovannisian met by happenstance in Turkey and began a productive collaboration into research on the Armenian heritage in Turkey.

On Tuesday, November 13, the Armenian Studies Program organized a talk by Sim and Hovannisian on “*The Hidden Map* of Historic Armenia,” as part of its Fall Lecture Series. The standing room only audience was treated to a special preview of the video *The Hidden Map*. The video follows Sim on his journey throughout Turkey and also discusses how the pair met. The video also focused on Hovannisian’s journey to discover her own ancestral roots in historic Armenia.

The Hidden Map showed how Sim began his trip to Turkey searching for Armenian historical monuments. His journey began when he was searching for the Khtzkonk Monastery in eastern Turkey. Sim’s travel-guide noted

that the historic complex had five churches. However, Sim found only one structure remaining when he visited, a mere 10 years after the guide was published. This led him on a decades-long search for other historic Armenian sites, only to discover that most were in ruins.

One day, Sim met Ani Hovannisian in an abandoned Armenian home. The pair struck up a friendship and began searching for Hovannisian’s ancestral village of Bazmashen, in the region of Kharpert. Her family memoirs detailed the many houses and schools in the region, and that there was no Turkish presence in the village. However, when they finally visited the site there was little trace of the village, with only a few rocks remaining, and a few shards of red pottery.

Some Armenian monasteries are being renovated and turned into museums. According to Sim, “there is nothing intrinsically wrong with that, but when the curator is the Turkish state, it can lead to unfortunate things.” These museums are portraying a skewed vision of historic Armenia.

As Sim explained, “there is a policy in Turkish academia to misrepresent, or just ignore, Armenian objects.” He visited an Armenian graveyard near Van that had been misrepresented as a stoneworking area by Turkish archaeologists. When comparing the actual location to the historical drawing of the area, it was clear that the area was not correctly drawn and certain gravestones were misrepresented, or just left out completely.

“It’s not just big monuments that Turkey has destroyed, it’s small things as well,” stated Sim. He referenced a statue of King Gagik Bagratuni, which had previously been held in the Ani museum. It was too large to evacuate, so the Armenians buried it in hopes of saving the statue. Although it was later found, it disappeared again enroute to a museum in Ankara. Later in the 1990s, only a piece of the shoulder remains.

Sim and Hovannisian hope that *The Hidden Map* will encourage the preservation and recognition of Armenian culture and heritage in Turkey. Because of the denialist policy and lack of preservation of Armenian history, many feel scared to embrace their heritage. The Turkish government has renamed many villages to remove the Armenian names, and actively destroyed historic monuments. Even so, Sim continues to travel throughout Turkey and has taken over 100,000 photos of historic Armenian artifacts and monuments.

“Although Armenia today may not exist as a real place in Eastern Turkey, and may no longer ever be recognized as a place that existed in academic literature, I’m still going to continue to go there,” concluded Sim.

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and Photo Archive

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<http://www.fresnostate.edu/artshum/armenianstudies/library/index.html>

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and faculty at Fresno State.

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Dr. Kurt Analyzes “Ordinary”
Perpetrators in the Genocide



Dr. Sergio La Porta (left) with Dr. Ümit Kurt.

ANNIE RUBIO
EDITOR

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Behind every genocide are perpetrators, ones who promote and contribute to the acts of mass violence. However, a majority of these perpetrators are not top military officials, but rather the mass population who idly stands by. This has become a focus of Kazan Visiting Professor Dr. Ümit Kurt’s research: how such “ordinary” people can become involved in genocidal strategies. Although he has studied its application in several instances of mass violence, he found a large gap when looking at Armenian Genocide studies.

Dr. Kurt, in his second lecture as Kazan Visiting Professor for the Fall semester, analyzed the motivations of such “ordinary” perpetrators and applied them to several perpetrators living in Aintab during the Armenian Genocide. His talk, “Proactive Local Perpetrators: Mehmet Yasin (Sani Kutluğ) and Ali Cenani,” was given on Tuesday, October 16.

As Dr. Kurt said, “this story is not only the story of the big guys, it’s the story of every kind of ordinary guy.” Before he discussed his research, Dr. Kurt framed his lecture with an important clarification that explaining the actions of these men does not justify them by any means. “We are just trying to understand how any kind of normal, ordinary person can become a murderer.”

To begin his analysis, Dr. Kurt discussed the motivations of these “ordinary” perpetrators. While there was a strong anchor in ideological reasoning, there were also prospects for material gain as well. Muslims in Aintab were eager to act on deportation orders so that they might advance their own personal interests. “Participation of local people is generally considered a necessary condition to ensure the effectiveness of genocidal policies,” Dr. Kurt explained. With this in mind, he moved on to examining specific members

within the Aintab branch of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP).

Dr. Kurt analyzed the actions of Ali Cenani, the president of the local CUP branch. Cenani organized massive deportations of Armenians from Aintab, even those who were specifically exempted from such orders. He would specifically draw up false charges in order to frame the Armenians as a dangerous force. Cenani also distributed weapons to the Muslim community and instigated massacres in Aintab. Throughout all of this, he was collecting personal property of the Armenians.

Similar actions can be seen in the life of Mehmet Yasin, a military dispatcher at the railway station near Aintab. He was responsible for supervising convoys of Armenians and their deportation by rail. However, the reality was cruel treatment at the hand of those in charge. Yasin would not only allow massacres of the deportees, but also participated himself, collecting their personal property after the fact. Yasin was also obsessed with maintaining deniability, both physically and culturally. He prevented any Armenians from creating a paper trail, going so far as imprisonment and death. Dr. Kurt commented that this “sends a message to other Armenians who keep records.” Yasin also wanted to go so far as changing place names, both of villages and their people, in order to remove traces of a multinational Turkey.

Dr. Kurt described the role of “ordinary” perpetrators as part of a symbiotic relationship. “Genocidal process may be designed by the central authority, but it’s inevitably guided by the locality.”

Without the efforts of local officials such as Cenani and Yasin, the genocidal strategies could not occur. It was not a special role, nor did it require unique circumstances. “It could have been me, it could have been you, and it could have been everyone.”

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Sarafian on Armenian Demography



Left to right: Claire Kasaian, Emily Sirabian, David Safra-zian, Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, Ara Sarafian, Cole Egoian, Kara Statler, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Marina Char-dukian, and Hovsep Harutyunyan.

Photo: Christine Pambukyan

DAVID SAFRAZIAN
STAFF WRITER

“Much of Armenian history has been expunged from Turkey, not only in a physical sense, but also in the sense of memory as the names of Armenian villages have been systematically erased,” stated Ara Sarafian. “States write history, and they can write people out of history, and if Armenians don’t write their own history, then their history will also be erased.”

Sarafian, director of the London-based Gomidas Institute, visited Fresno State on Thursday, October 25, to present the new publication *Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914: A Geographic and Demographic Gazetteer* by Dr. Sarkis Karayan. The book provides detailed information collected over more than 20 years of research documenting the more than 4,000 Armenian towns and villages which existed before the Armenian Genocide.

Dr. Karayan, who was born in Lebanon, began his research into the topic of Armenian demography when educator Dr. Stanley Kerr asked him, “how does one really know how many Armenians were killed in the Armenian Genocide of 1915.” Dr. Karayan concluded that to know how many were lost, you first had to know how many Armenians there were in the Ottoman Empire prior to 1915.

The accepted number of Armenians lost in the Genocide is approximately 1.5 million Armenians, but according to Dr. Karayan, the numbers were greater. Dr. Karayan used Ottoman Turkish sources, and also Armenian documentation to come to his conclusions. According to Dr. Karayan, there were about 2.4 million Armenians

living in the Ottoman Empire in 1878, although the official Turkish position is that there were significantly fewer Armenians, in the range of 800,000-1,200,000. This position, repeated by some scholars in the United States, is another dimension of the Turkish denial. After 1915, there were about 2.2 million Armenians who disappeared, so there were more Armenians killed than initially thought. Dr. Karayan’s research helps to undermine the official Turkish historiography of the period.

Dr. Karayan used Armenian sources, which had never before been used, in compiling his demographic data. Among the important records are those found in the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey. He also used the records of Western European travelers, who visited throughout the Ottoman Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. His meticulous research will provide the basis for further scholarship in the field.

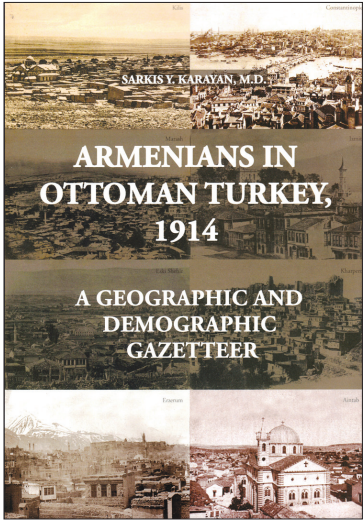
Dr. Karayan was determined to find the statistics on every village that was inhabited by Armenians in Ottoman Turkey and Armenia. Sarafian stated that *Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914* is a significant work because now there is a reliable source for information about the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in the English language, thus making it more accessible.

Each village or town in historic Armenia and Turkey has both an original Armenian name and a new Turkish name, that is meant to erase the memory of Armenian history. Sarafian demonstrated this by showing various maps with the names of these villages and detailed population statistics of Armenian, Kurds, and Turks who lived in each area.

“Even Turkish people are interested in the topic of demography because they have been denied access to this information about the Armenian Genocide,” concluded Sarafian.

Dr. Sarafian would like to take the book to Turkey, to allow Turks to consider what their own government has said about the Genocide.

The book has an important historical role to play, but it also has a significant political task to combat continued denial of the Armenian Genocide.



Full House at Jazz Musician Hamasyan Concert

ANNIE RUBIO
EDITOR

Music is a universal language, with messages and emotions that can be understood regardless of one’s background. Modern artists are always seeking new ways to push the boundaries of their craft, to continuously innovate. Armenian jazz pianist Tigran Hamasyan artfully melds modern and traditional sounds into his music and he also ties in many elements from the folkloric heritage of Armenia.

On Friday, October 19, Hamasyan performed as part of the World Music Series of the Philip Lorenz International Keyboard Concert series at Fresno State. The concert was presented in partnership with the Armenian Studies Program and JazzFresno. The performance sold out, with many students and community members on the waitlist for tickets. With a full house, excitement filled the Concert Hall.

Hamasyan did not speak much during the concert, but rather let his music speak for itself. He performed a wide selection of songs from his latest albums, *For Gyumri* (2018) and *An Ancient Observer* (2017).

Hamasyan’s set list displayed his wide range of skills and abilities. He not only performed on the piano, but mixed several songs as part of the live performance. Hamasyan layered several tracks on a synthesizer, and then would switch to the grand piano after building up the base of the song. After finishing this already impressive display,



Photo: Christine Pambukyan

Left to right: Keyboard Concert Series Director Andreas Werz, Tigran Hamasyan, and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian after the October 19 concert at Fresno State.

he added a final layer of his rich vocals. Each new addition left the audience in a state of awe, realizing the magnitude and diversity of his talents. After each new song, the audience responded with thunderous applause.

Hamasyan is known for combining unexpected sounds into his music. He incorporates various sounds, and is able to beautifully compose songs around them. In this performance, audience members were treated to his singing, whistling, and even beatboxing. The concert was not only a chance to listen to Hamasyan’s music, but a chance to watch him as well. His performances were filled with his intense energy. It was not only heard in his music, but also seen in his movements. He would bounce with energy, sometimes literally standing up while playing. Other times, he would sway with his melodies.

Hamasyan’s career has included a number of accolades, including a top piano award at the 2013 Montreux Jazz Festival and the grand prize at the prestigious 2006 Thelonious Monk Jazz Piano Competition.

Born in Gyumri, Armenia, in 1987, Tigran grew up in a household that was full of music. The family later moved to Los Angeles where Hamasyan attended the University of Southern California. He later lived briefly in New York before settling once more in Armenia.

After his final song, Hamasyan received a standing ovation from the audience and was called back out for an encore performance. His encore left the audience stunned as he displayed his intense beatboxing and piano skills. Afterwards, audience members enjoyed a reception and had a chance to meet with Hamasyan.

Hye Sharzhoom Begins 40th Year of Publication



STAFF REPORT

The world has changed substantially in the past forty years. In 1979 Armenia was still part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Jimmy Carter was President of the United States. Iranian militants seized the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and held hostages. Mother Teresa won the Nobel Peace Prize. The Pittsburgh Steelers won the Super Bowl. The Academy Award for Best Picture went to “The Deer Hunter.”

And in April of 1979, *Hye Sharzhoom* was published for the first time on the Fresno State campus. Armenian Studies Program Director Dr. Dickran Kouymjian and a small group of

dedicated students conceived of *Hye Sharzhoom* as the voice of the Armenians at Fresno State. That first special edition was devoted to the Armenian Genocide, and to its recognition. Few would have predicted that forty years later *Hye Sharzhoom* would still be going strong.

Each generation of students has passed on the torch, as *Hye Sharzhoom* continues as the oldest continuously published

student newspaper in the world. *Hye Sharzhoom* is operated by students under the guidance of current Armenian Studies Program Director Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, who also was a staff writer for the first issue in 1979. This semester a new group of students is continuing the tradition.

For students, *Hye Sharzhoom* has also been a learning experience and has provided an opportunity to interact with faculty and the community. They cover stories, learn how to hone their writing skills, and offer their opinions.

Due to the support of its loyal readers, *Hye Sharzhoom* has been distributed free to more than 5,000 people throughout the world. While the bulk of the readership is in the United States, *Hye Sharzhoom* reaches distant shores as well. There are subscribers in Armenia, the Middle East, Australia, Europe, and in South America.

Wherever there are Armenians, there is *Hye Sharzhoom*.

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Saroyan House Museum Attracts Many Visitors



Photo: TopHandMedia

The Saroyan House Museum at night.

DUSTIN VARTANIAN
STAFF WRITER

It was William Saroyan’s wish that his home in Fresno would one day be turned into a research center. Thirty-seven years after his passing his wish was realized. Saroyan’s home for the last 17 years of his life became the first Museum and Research Center in the world dedicated to him.

The process to convert Saroyan’s home into a museum was not easy. According to Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Saroyan’s original wishes were at first ignored by the Saroyan Foundation after his passing in 1981. Prof. Der Mugrdechian explained that after Saroyan’s passing the Foundation decided to sell the property and use the proceeds to establish a special Saroyan exhibit at the Fresno Metropolitan Museum.

Saroyan’s house was therefore sold into private hands and passed through several hands until 2015, when Artur Janibekyan, founder of the Renaissance Cultural and Intellectual Foundation, purchased the house and decided to fulfill Saroyan’s dream. The official opening ceremony of the Museum was on August 31, 2018, which would have been Saroyan’s 110th birthday. A plaque on the Museum states that Saroyan’s home had been placed on the Fresno City and County Registers of Historic Places in 1989.

The Saroyan House Museum is not an ordinary museum that contains physical objects from the author, rather, the Museum focuses on Saroyan’s life story. According to the Renaissance Cultural and Intellectual Foundation, the mission of the Museum is to “educate and promote the legacy and works of William Saroyan and also reveal his talents as an artist; presenting them in a nontraditional style through technology.”

The House Museum has a unique futuristic feel to it. Inside, Saroyan’s life story is told through different uses of technology. However, on the outside the House Museum appears to be just an average home located in the middle of an ordinary neighborhood.

Before entering, I pictured the inside of the house to look like how it did when Saroyan lived there. When I first stepped inside, I realized that this was not the case. An image of Saroyan’s face was projected on the wall. The

image, composed of lines from Saroyan’s drawings, changes to reflect Saroyan from different points in his life, ending with Saroyan House Museum logo. An illuminated white wall, filled with rocks that Saroyan had collected from around the globe, is the next stop. Each stone represents a memory that Saroyan had, and Saroyan quotes are interspersed on the wall with the rocks.

The main hall of the Museum contains several separate sections. One wall has ten monitors on which movies or TV shows based on Saroyan’s works or interviews with the author are playing. There are also documentaries about him, including some made in Armenia.

One of the long walls in the main hall is interactive, as images along the wall light up as the viewer passes by. One of these walls is devoted to images from Saroyan’s life, presented chronologically from his birth to his death. It was interesting to think how much of a world phenomenon Saroyan was because of all the photos of him with people from around the world.

The other main wall is

devoted to Saroyan’s drawings and paintings. This is a little realized part of Saroyan’s legacy. Each of these drawings or paintings consists of lines and shapes done in an abstract style. I wondered what Saroyan was trying to communicate. A fourth wall displays book covers from Saroyan’s books, many of which he designed.

Finally, the most fascinating area in the museum is the hologram room. One stands in front of a room that appears to be Saroyan’s office with his desk and typewriter. Suddenly, Saroyan’s voice is heard and then Saroyan appears as a hologram. He then continues to speak while he strolls around his office. It was amazing observing this world-famous author being brought back to life. Saroyan said one of the most interesting quotes I have heard from an author: “My advice to young writers today would be for God’s sake don’t take anybody’s advice because then you’re not a writer. If you’re a writer you don’t need anyone’s advice, you don’t want anybody’s advice.”

The Saroyan House Museum is a place where the more time you spend, the more you will be able to learn. There are so many captivating aspects of Saroyan’s life that can be learned by visiting the House Museum.

Altogether, the Saroyan House Museum is a must see for visitors from Fresno or from any place in the world.

Reservations to visit the Saroyan House Museum can only be made online by visiting the saroyanhouse.com website, and clicking on the “Make a Reservation” button.

The Museum is open Tuesdays-Saturdays.



Entrance to the Saroyan House Museum.



The Saroyan hologram room.

Photo: TopHandMedia

Dr. Kurt Discusses Micro-History of Aintab in Third Kazan Lecture



Dr. Ümit Kurt, sixth from left, with students and faculty after his talk.

Photo: Christine Pambukyan

STAFF REPORT

The July 23, 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire was a significant moment in the history of the Empire. There was great hope that the reinstatement of the 1876 Constitution would guarantee equal rights among all of the citizens of the Empire, including the Armenians. The new ruling party, the Committee of Union and Progress, represented these early hopes, but over the course of the succeeding seven years, hopes for fundamental changes were progressively dashed. Ultimately the Armenians of the Ottoman Empire would be subjected to a Genocide.

History often addresses the role of great figures or great events, but often it is individuals, whose decisions shape the course of events. On Tuesday, November 6, Dr. Ümit Kurt presented one such example in his lecture entitled, “The Curious Case of Ahmed Necmeddin Bey: A Look into the Sociopolitical Climate in Aintab on the Eve of 1915.” This was Dr. Kurt’s final lecture in a three-part series of lectures as the Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies for Fall 2018.

Dr. Kurt’s research focuses on the city of Aintab, which held a significant Armenian population on the eve of World War I. Dr. Kurt, using a micro-historical approach, studies the role and agency that individuals had in the Armenian Genocide. Thus, his talks offered new insight by studying the periphery of the Empire.

How the Ottoman Constitution was perceived by Armenians, Turks, Arabs, Jews, and Greeks represented the central thesis in Dr. Kurt’s talk. He explained about how ordinary citizens reacted towards the Constitution, ultimately dividing the people of Aintab into two groups—those in favor of the new Constitution and those firmly opposed.

The story of Ahmed Necmeddin Bey is central to this story as he ultimately was posted to the area of Salamiyya in Syria during the 1915 deportations and massacres of Armenians. Contrary to what might have been expected from an Ottoman official, Necmeddin Bey actually played a benevolent role in the period by saving many of the Armenians of Aintab from annihilation.

The historiography of the Armenian Genocide has often been told only through foreign sources, whether through Ottoman Turkish archives or through European archives, therefore neglecting the agency provided by Armenian sources. Sometimes these sources in Armenian are the only ones that touch upon important events. In his lecture, Dr. Kurt presented his arguments using as a source the diaries of two men, Krikor Bogharian and Fr. Nerses Tavukjian, both from Aintab and both of whom survived the initial deportations of Armenians. Their diaries shed light on the motivations of Necmeddin Bey and explain some of his actions.

Necmeddin Bey began his political career as *kaimakam* (district governor) of the area of Aintab. Because of his diligence as *kaimakam*, he was looked upon as a reputable and honorable man by both Armenians and Turks. Appointed during the reign of Abdul Hamid II, Necmeddin Bey was opposed to the Revolution and refused to follow the orders of the CUP. A group of CUP agitators then surrounded his house in Aintab and beat him, and even threatened him with death. Necmeddin Bey escaped and later was transferred to Syria. He continued in political service, even though he was a dedicated autocrat from the Abdul Hamid period.

Necmeddin Bey was able to hold onto power because the CUP did not have its own bureaucratic and administrative cadres. Even after the revival of the Constitution, many bureaucrats throughout the Empire were still loyal to Abdul Hamid II’s regime. Although, the CUP attempted to purge the bureaucratic ranks they were not able to discharge everyone because they lacked their own cadres to fill these posts.

Necmeddin Bey was appointed as *kaimakan* of Salamiyya in 1915, and his efforts to improve living conditions for Armenians there and in particular his attempts to save Aintab’s prominent Armenian families still holds a place in the memory of Aintab’s Armenians. The diaries of Bogharian and Fr. Nerses both

Masterpieces of Armenian Culture Course Has Diverse Students



Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, standing, with students of the Armenian 148, Masterpieces of Armenian Culture, class.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

DUSTIN VARTANIAN
STAFF WRITER

For thousands of years Armenia's history has been filled with literary masterpieces. Oral epics such as *Hayk and Bel* and *David of Sassoun* are a rich part of the fabric of Armenian culture. There are also stories that explain the process of Armenia's conversion to Christianity. In addition, Armenia's literature has several masterful poems written by a variety of famous poets. The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State gives students an opportunity to understand Armenia's literature and culture by offering a course called Armenian 148—"Masterpieces of Armenian Culture."

"Masterpieces of Armenian Culture" is a survey of the works of Armenian authors from the fifth century to the twentieth century. The class also studies epics and oral history that date back as early as the 9th-7th century B.C. The epics and oral history help one to understand who the Armenians are and also about how they see themselves.

"In this class we survey Armenian literature as a mean of understanding Armenian culture," stated Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, who teaches one section of the course. In order to understand Armenian culture, one must have knowledge of Armenia's past. Even though Armenian 148 is not a history class, it teaches students the history of the Armenians through literary works such as stories, epics, poems, and historical writings.

Each student has a favorite part of the class. "The most interesting type of literature I have learned about are the epics. I liked learning about all the characters and my favorite character is the talking horse in *David of Sassoun*," said Elias Guerrero.

Professor Ohanessian has many favorite topics in the course, including how Armenian

poets and authors were directly impacted by the Armenian Genocide. Dr. Ohanessian also stated that he appreciated "how Armenian writers are influenced by their life experiences."

The Armenian 148 class is diverse and students have different reasons why they enrolled in this course. Some did so because the class fulfills an upper division General Education requirement. Others are in the class because they had previously taken other Armenian courses, which interested them in taking Armenian 148 as well.

Some students are Armenian and wished to learn about the history of their ancestors. "I wanted to learn more about my Armenian culture. I really don't know much about it so, I thought this class would help," said Matt Alam.

Ani Sargsyan said she would now like to take other Armenian Studies courses while at Fresno State. She is planning to complete an Armenian Studies Minor because she found this class so interesting. "I am taking the Armenian Studies Minor because Armenian 148 was so interesting. I like learning about Armenian culture," stated Sargsyan.

There are also some students who are taking the class simply because of their interest in Armenian culture. "I have always been interested in Armenian culture and I know people who are Armenian and I am interested in other cultures in general," said Abigail Cunanan.

Dr. Ohanessian enjoys having a diverse group of students in his classroom. "I think it is necessary to have a diverse student population in this course. It is an upper division General Education course which attracts many students. In my experience I find that both Armenian and non-Armenians are engaged and curious about learning more about Armenian culture and taking other courses we offer."

Society for Armenian Studies Conference Brings Scholars Together to Discuss the Rep. of Armenia

SAS, FROM PAGE 1

Der Matossian (University of Nebraska, Lincoln) delivered the opening remarks at the conference. He stressed the significance of bringing together scholars to discuss important new research on the First Republic.

The Conference was organized into two sessions: "The First Republic in the International Context," and "Gender, Personalities, and Culture During the First Republic."

The first session, chaired by Tsolin Nalbantian (Leiden University), consisted of three presentations. George Bournoutian (Iona College) spoke on "The Territorial Demands of the Armenian Republic: Reality versus Naïveté." His comments focused on Armenian demands for land after the 1918 Mudros Armistice.

Bournoutian discussed the role of two Armenian representatives at the Peace Conference, Boghos Nubar Pasha and Avetis Aharonian, and their competing visions for the territory of a future Republic of Armenia. However, their vision competed with the interests of the Allies, especially France, which had already claimed Cilicia for itself. Bournoutian explained the difficult decisions faced by the Armenian representatives and the complexity of the changing political landscape. In the two years that it took to make a final settlement at the Treaty of Sevres, the realities on the ground had completely changed. The promises made by the Allies, in which the Armenians trusted, ended up unfulfilled.

Vartan Matiossian (Armenian National Education Committee, New York) spoke on "The Recognition of the First Republic of Armenia in South America (1918-1920)." Matiossian's presentation discussed the efforts of one Armenian, Etienne Brazil, to convince South American countries to recognize the Armenian Genocide in the aftermath of World War I. His efforts resulted in the recognition of Armenia by Brazil and Argentina in 1920, but the League of Nations ultimately rejected recognition of Armenia. Etienne Brazil served as a representative of the Republic of Armenia in South America, although there was at the time only a very small Armenian community in South America. His one-man efforts left a large impact.

Ari Şekeryan (University

KURT, FROM PAGE 5

refer to Ahmed Necmeddin Bey's deeds in saving the Armenians. "If we would like to judge history justly, we should not forget Necmeddin Bey's deeds and his virtuous acts; we should give him his due.... Necmeddin Bey helped save a few thousand Armenians and a majority of them were from Aintab," wrote Bogharian.

Dr. Kurt concluded the lecture by noting that although Necmeddin Bey saved many Armenians, it may not have been



Dr. George Bournoutian, right, speaking at the SAS conference held in San Antonio.

of Oxford) spoke on the topic of "Rethinking the Establishment of the First Republic of Armenia: Reactions of the Ottoman-Turkish and Armenian Press in Istanbul."

Şekeryan utilized Armenian and Turkish newspaper from the period of May-October 1918, to illustrate his argument about the differing expectation between Turks and Armenians regarding the question of the Republic of Armenia. The Armenians in Istanbul wanted to regain the trust of the Turks, by publishing articles that expressed their fidelity to the Turkish state. For the Turks, it was a question of what they may lose in the establishment of the Republic of Armenia.

The second session, entitled "Gender, Personalities, and Culture during the First Republic," was chaired by Barlow Der Mugrdechian (California State University, Fresno). The session included two presentations.

Seda D. Ohanian (National Academy of Science of Armenia) discussed "Armenian Women in the Parliament of the First Republic (1918-1920)." Her talk shed light on the little researched fact that three women served in the first parliament of the Republic of Armenia. Ohanian gave an overview of these women and their accomplishments.

One woman, Katarina Zalian Manoogian made a significant impact in the life of the Republic. This was at a time when in the United States women still did not have the right to vote. Ohanian also discussed the Parliament of the modern Republic of Armenia, arguing that although progress is being made in including more women, there is more work to be done.

The final presentation was by Jakub Osiecki (Jagiellonian University in Krakow), who spoke on "The Trip of Apostolic Visitor

for entirely altruistic reasons. Those Armenians saved were most often artisans and craftsmen, who were useful in the construction projects organized by Necmeddin Bey. But ultimately his decisions led to the survival of some of Aintab's Armenian population.

Dr. Kurt presented a nuanced interpretation of a man who held a position of power within the Ottoman bureaucracy, and who had many options, but chose to exercise that power to aid the Armenians.

rev. Antonio Delpuche to Yerevan as the Attempt to Establish Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Vatican." Osiecki's paper focused on relations between the Catholic Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church in the period of the early twentieth century. Statistics indicate there were some 66,618 Armenian Catholics and 45 Armenian rite churches in the Republic of Armenia in 1920. While this may seem significant, in reality Armenia was isolated by Georgia and Azerbaijan. The only visit of a high-ranking Catholic clergyman to Armenia in this period was the result of having been officially invited to Georgia. Osiecki discussed the visit to Armenia by the Vatican representative Antonio Delpuche.

Richard G. Hovannisian (UCLA, USC, and Chapman University) was invited to offer concluding remarks at the Conference.

Dr. Hovannisian pointed out that the study of the First Republic of Armenia is now entering a new phase as new insight is being provided by scholars.

Hovannisian, the author of a four-volume history of the Republic of Armenia, emphasized how the study of the Republic has changed over the years. Hovannisian encouraged scholars to continue to reevaluate the Republic of Armenia in light of new archival sources.

The Society for Armenian Studies represents scholars and teachers in the field of Armenian Studies.

The aims of the SAS are to promote the study of Armenian culture and society; to facilitate the exchange of scholarly information pertaining to Armenian studies around the world; and to sponsor panels and conferences on Armenian studies. It publishes the peer-reviewed *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*, available on its website: societyforarmenianstudies.com.



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CUP CONFERENCE, FROM PAGE 1

Prof. Der Mugerdechian convened the Conference on Friday, October 12, and gave opening remarks outlining the background of the topic.



Raymond Kevorkian

The keynote address was given by Dr. Raymond Kevorkian (Université Paris VIII, Saint-Denis [Emeritus]) on “The Young Turk Regime: Ideology in Command.” Kevorkian, who penned the authoritative The Armenian Genocide: A Complete History (2011) discussed certain aspects of the ideology that prevailed among Young Turks, observing in particular that the need for a centralized state was, for them, a fundamental and unquestionable principle. In particular Kevorkian developed the concept of how the CUP viewed the relationship between the state and army, and of society and the state.



Hans-Lukas Kieser

Dr. Hans-Lukas Kieser (University of Newcastle, Australia) presented his paper on “Talaat Pasha and Ziya Gökalp.” Both Talaat and Gökalp played a fundamental role in the development of the CUP ideology. Gökalp was the spiritual father of Turkish nationalism, whose impact is still being felt in Turkey. Dr. Keiser elaborated on the political friendship and interaction between these two leaders.

Dr. Kieser explored Gökalp’s impact on nationalism in the Republic of Turkey, both before and after World War I. He provided an in-depth study on Gökalp in the 1910s, when he promulgated

the ideology of pan-Turkism which was adopted by the CUP. After 1923 Pan-Turkism became meaningless in its territorial dimension, but Dr. Keiser argued that Kemal Atatürk’s “Turkish History Thesis” was strongly influenced by it.



Duygu Coşkuntuna

Duygu Coşkuntuna (Princeton University) spoke on “Homeland and Nation Revisited: A Discourse Analysis of the Memoirs of the Young Turks.” Her talk sought to explain the frame of mind of the CUP from 1908-1918. She utilized their memoirs, and the memoirs of their contemporaries in her research. Coşkuntuna discussed the establishment of the CUP concept of “homeland,” emphasizing the vagueness of its imagined boundaries. She provided a framework for the “making” of Turkishness and the results of that concept.

The second session of the Conference took place on Saturday, October 13, and was chaired by Dr. Sergio La Porta, Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State.



Yektan Türkyılmaz

Yektan Türkyılmaz (Forum Transregionale Studien, Berlin) gave his presentation on “Evaluating the Determinants of the Variations in the CUP and ARF Relationships across the Provinces.” His paper explored the close contacts and even cooperation between the perpetrator political organization (the CUP) and the most prominent political organization of the victim group (the

CineCulture Features Fresno State Premiere of “Roots”

CLAIRE KASAIAN

STAFF WRITER

The Armenian Studies Program and the CineCulture film series presented the Fresno premiere of the movie “Roots” on Friday, November 2, to an audience of Fresno State students and community members. Directed by Vahe Yan, the 89-minute movie was filmed on the eve of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Lilit Martirosyan, who producer “Roots,” was invited from Armenia to be a discussant for the film. She is a 1996 graduate from the Yerevan State University, Oriental Studies Department, but found her true passion in the entertainment industry. She has extensive experience in the film industry and also organizes, coordinates and produces various TV projects, concerts and events.

“Roots” is about Aram, who was born in Armenia but moved to Boston at an early age. He is a journalist and blogger who travels to Armenia for the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide to report about the special events.

During his trip he meets Anet, who is from France. Ironically Anet, is one of Aram’s most avid blog followers, and always

ARF). These relationships and interactions were experienced not in a unitary and stagnant fashion, but in a rather diversified and gradually transforming manner. Dr. Türkyılmaz drew on ARF, Ottoman, British and missionary archival documents, periodicals and memoirs for his paper.



Dikran Kaligian

Dikran Kaligian (Worcester State University) spoke on “When Revolutionaries Must Govern: The Vicissitudes of ARF-CUP Relations.” After the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 the Committee of Union and Progress gradually took control of the government of the empire, and began working with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, both in Parliament and in the countryside. Dr. Kaligian discussed the often-contentious relations between the two parties as the CUP attempted to generate public support for the constitutional system in the face of reactionary opposition while the ARF pursued rights and reforms for the Armenian community.

Ümit Kurt (Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem) presented his paper on “The Structure of the CUP in Aintab.”

Dr. Kurt’s talk focused on how the Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Armenians, Greeks, and Jews of Aintab greeted the Committee of Union and Progress’ (CUP)



Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugerdechian, producer Lilit Martirosyan, Dr. Mary Husain, and Dr. Hagop Ohanessian.

comments on his posts.

The story is centered on their budding whirlwind romance in their motherland during one of the most iconic commemorations in Armenian history.

After the showing Martirosyan answered questions from the audience. She also spoke about some of the challenges in the process of making the film.

Martirosyan explained that the two main characters, Aram and Anet, were not professional actors.

She said non-professionals were cast in the movie because it was felt that the connection

between the two would be more raw and more real.

“I loved how this movie was filmed while the real events were going on. Finding your Armenian identity, which I felt was the theme of the film, was portrayed very well. When you live in the Diaspora and visit Armenia it changes your life forever,” said student David Safrazian.

Another student, Dustin Vartanian, said “I thought it was a unique that the movie was both informational and entertaining at the same time. It’s cool how they combined two story plots into one film.”

EXHIBIT, FROM PAGE 1

Jeffrey and Jason Ahronian, who are both graduates of Fresno State, are proud of designing and creating an Exhibit that would be exciting for the community. They were assisted in the planning and development of the Exhibit by Prof. Barlow Der Mugerdechian, Richard Ahronian, and Richard Hagopian. Planning for the Exhibit began in November of 2017 after the Ahronians had visited the Fresno Fair and work on the Exhibit was completed by October 1.

The Ahronians worked closely with Brian Tatarian, President of the Friends of the Big Fresno Fair, and John Alkire, CEO of the Big Fresno Fair. They liked the idea of an expanded Armenian Exhibit and gave the Ahronians flexibility on designing the project. Jeffrey and Jason collected the information, took photos, wrote text, and helped design the layout on the wall and the interactive computer displays.

A reception was held on Thursday, September 6 at the Fresno County Historical Museum

to introduce the community to the Exhibit and representatives of various community organizations attended. Brian Tatarian announced that the Exhibit received the coveted Blue Ribbon award, which is the highest honor to be awarded by the Western Fairs Association (an organization consisting of more than 120 of the finest fairs in North America).

The Armenian Exhibit consists of a large pictorial wall with information about Armenian history, the Armenian Genocide, and about the migration of Armenians to Fresno and the San Joaquin Valley.

The Armenian Exhibit also features two kiosks which provide information and photos of prominent Valley Armenians, such as Jerry Tarkanian, William Saroyan, and Kirk Kerkorian. Many other well-known Armenians in the community are included in the Exhibit.

More than 40,000 people visited the Historical Museum during the Fair, among them many Armenians throughout the

SEE EXHIBIT PAGE 8



Ümit Kurt

declaration of the Second Constitutional Era and the restoration of the Constitution and the Parliament on 24 July 1908 with excitement and much hope.


Dr. Kurt first examined the structure of the Aintab CUP branch, its organizational formation, members and relationship with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in the city. He also explored the nature of the relationship between Armenians and Muslims in the pre-World War I period.

The scholars who participated in the international conference “The Committee of Union and Progress: Founders, Ideology, and Structure” brought new insight into the CUP. Their research will be the basis for future studies on the topic.

The Armenian Studies Program
presents

“The Missing Pages: The Modern Life
of a Medieval Manuscript,
from Genocide to Justice”

Dr. Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh
(University of California, Davis)



In 2010, the world’s wealthiest art institu-
tion, the J. Paul Getty Museum, found itself
confronted by a century-old genocide. The
Armenian Church was suing for the return
of eight pages from the Zeytun Gospels, a
manuscript illuminated by the greatest me-
dieval Armenian artist, Toros Roslin. Pro-
tected for centuries in a remote church, the
holy manuscript had followed the waves of
displaced people exterminated during the
Armenian genocide. Passed from hand to
hand, caught in the confusion and brutality
of the First World War, it was cleaved in two. Decades later, the manu-
script found its way to the Republic of Armenia, while its missing eight
pages came to the Getty.
The Missing Pages is the biography of a manuscript that is at once art,
sacred object, and cultural heritage.

Thursday, April 4, 2019 • 7:30PM

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31th Annual Banquet

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Sunday, March 17, 2019

Reception-5:00PM • Dinner-6:00PM

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The Knights and Daughters of Vartan
“Man & Woman of the Year” Banquet

Honoring Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian
and
News Anchor Stefani Booroojian



Saturday, March 30, 2019
Fort Washington Country Club
10272 N. Millbrook, Fresno

For educating the community on topical issues in matters
regarding our rich Armenian cultural heritage.

Proceeds to Benefit the Knights and Daughters of Vartan Charitable
Projects, the Armenian Studies Program, and the Armenia Medical Mission

\$65 per person-\$650 per table of ten. No tickets sold at the door.
Cocktail Reception 5:30 PM-Hors d’oeuvres & Wine; 6:00 PM-Dinner & Dancing

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Kevork Oflazian 559-289-2265-koflazian@yahoo.com

MAN OF THE YEAR, FROM PAGE 1

Der Mugrdechian has been teaching at Fresno State for thirty-four years and has been the Director of the Program since 2008. He teaches a variety of Armenian Studies courses. He has served as President of

the Society for Armenian Studies and has led student study trips to Armenia.


Stefani Booroojian is a Fresno native and one of the most recognizable names in KSEE 24 News history. She has been on KSEE24 for 27 years and at the

anchor desk since 1984. During that time, she has reported on many changes and events in the Central Valley.

She has recently made multiple trips to Armenia to report on the country and on projects that have ties to the Valley.

The Armenian Series at Fresno State
General Editor: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian

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EXHIBIT, FROM PAGE 7

San Joaquin Valley who traveled to the Fresno Fair to see this new exhibit.

The Ahronians raised private funding from the community, which made the completion of the Exhibit possible. They have plans to expand the Exhibit every year with more photos and information.

The community has been very receptive and supportive.

The Ahronians wanted to have everyone who visited to feel some kind of attachment to the Exhibit. They have received many positive reactions and so feel they have reached their goal.

The Exhibit is open daily during the Big Fresno Fair held in October, but a tour of the Fresno County Historical Museum year-round can be scheduled year-round, by calling (559) 650-FAIR.

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