

HYE SHARZHOOM
Armenian Action
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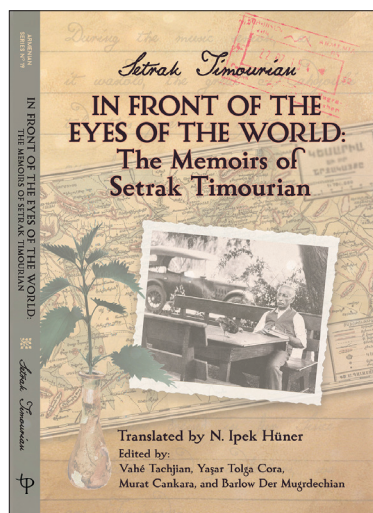
45th Year

October 2023

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

Timourian Memoir Published by Armenian Series at Fresno State



Front of the Eyes of the World: The Memoirs of Setrak Timourian, Volume 19 in the Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno. The book was translated by N. Ipek Hüner and edited by Vahé Tachjian, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Murat Cankara, and Barlow Der Mugardehian.

The significance of the memoir is explained in this excerpt from the editors, "Today, when we attempt to study Ottoman-Armenian history, to reconstruct the social landscape and daily life of Ottoman-Armenians through primary sources... memoirs like the one written by Setrak

Over 100,000 Artsakh Armenians Forcibly Displaced to Armenia After Azerbaijani Attack

STAFF REPORT

The more than three thousand year presence of Armenians in Artsakh was forcibly ended as Azerbaijan attacked the Republic of Artsakh on September 19, 2023.

and the international community resulted in no action to prevent the emptying of Artsakh.

Armenians moved as quickly as possible to escape to Armenia. Convoys filled with refugees embarked on a tortuous and dangerous trek to reach Armenia.

Eleven Students Participate in Armenian Studies Summer Study Trip to Armenia-May 23-June 8

CAREEN DERKALOUSDIAN
STAFF WRITER

“I am grateful to be part of the Armenian community and to experience everything the country had to offer. I now feel that Armenia is full of rich history and beauty which I am privileged to have experienced. The impression I was left with of other Armenians is that they want to share the beauty and culture of Armenia with other Armenians no matter where in the world they are from,” said Julia Eritzian.



Left to right: Christa Eritzian, Careen Derkalousdian, Carina Tokatian, Caleb Arizmendez, Jonathan Chardukian, Michael Mazman, Julia Eritzian, Ariana Garabedian, Dustin Vartanian, Christina Pambukyan, Charles Garabedian, and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian at Khor Virap Monastery in Armenia.

in Western Armenia,” said Carina Tokatian.

Knarik Clara Margossian Estate Donates \$50,000 to Armenian Studies



Dr. Varouj Altebarmakian with Knarik Clara Margossian.

STAFF REPORT

The Armenian Studies Program received a generous donation of \$50,000 from the estate

of Knarik Clara Margossian, who passed away in Fresno on February 7, 2023, at the age of 104. Margossian's gift will be

SEE MARGOSSIAN, PAGE 7

Armenian Students Organization Elects New Executive Officers



Left to right: Careen Derkalousdian, Karina Messerlian, Alec Karayan, Armand Karkazian, and Simon Zhamkochyan.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

first meeting of the 2023-2024 school year on Thursday, August 31. Elections for officers were held with the following results:

SEE ASO, PAGE 6

NATALIE AGAZARIAN
EDITOR

The Armenian Students Organization (ASO) held their

Armenian Studies Program Hosts International Conference on “Microhistories in Armenian Studies”

NATALIE AGAZARIAN
EDITOR

Often, history is approached through a macro-lens. It addresses mass issues within a large population from a social, socioeconomic, cultural, or political standpoint. Yet, this broad prospect may undermine the importance and purpose of microhistory. Microhistory has a different role in the academic field. It provides a refined, niche perspective on an otherwise conventional topic, and delves into a profound understanding of an individual group of people or series of events.

SEE CONFERENCE, PAGE 4



Seated, left to right: Victoria Abrahamayan, Hans-Lukas Kieser, and Hazal Özdemir. Standing, left to right: Barlow Der Mugardechian, Ümit Kurt, Samuel Dolbee, Ara Sarafian, Robert Sukiasyan, and Hagop Ohanessian.

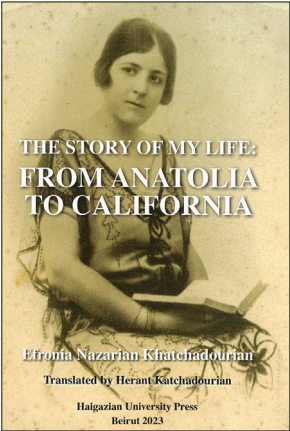
Photo: ASP Archive

Armenian Studies Program
Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Joel D. Hirst, Vienna, VA, for a copy of his book, *An Excess of Nationalism: A Novel about Armenia* (2023), 115pp., in English.

Vatche Ghazarian, Ph.D., Portsmouth, RI, for a copy of *The Post WWI Rise of Turkish Nationalism and Resumption of Genocidal Policies* (Portsmouth, RI: Mayreni Publishing, 2023), 586pp., in Armenian and English. The book is a collection of primary sources documenting the treatment of Armenians and Greeks in Turkey. It is comprised of 601 first-hand accounts, derived from letters and telegraphs sent to the Armenian Patriarchate in Constantinople and records of their visits there.

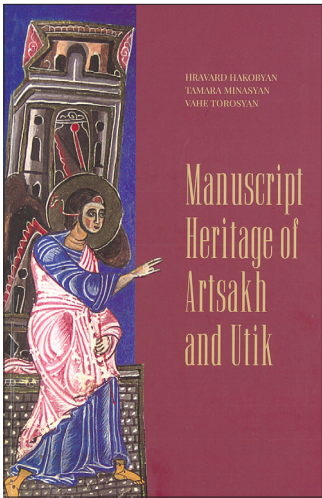
Dr. Herant & Mrs. Stina Katchadourian, Stanford, CA, for a copy of *The Story of My Life: From Anatolia to California*, by Efronia Nazarian Khatchadourian, tr. by Herant Katchadourian (Beirut: Haigazian University Press, 2023), 248pp., in English. This is a memoir of Efronia Khatchadourian’s life from her birth in Aintab to her eventual life in the United States.



Gary A. Kulhanjian, Rancho Cucamonga, CA, for a copy of his new book *A Kaleioscope of Armenian Immigration to America: Origins of a Modern Diaspora* (Los Angeles: Harrcrawf and Carroll Publishers, 2023), 670pp., in English. The book aims to reveal the experiences of the Armenians as they established a new Diaspora in the United States. The book also explores the experiences of other immigrant groups in the United States.

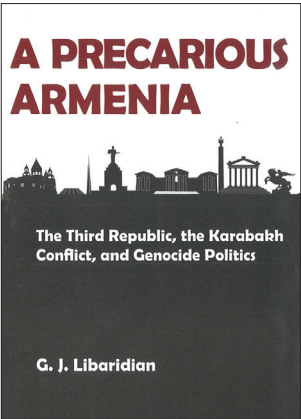
Dr. Harutyun Marutyan, Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, Yerevan Armenia, for the following: *Dictionary of the Van Dialect* by Dr. Haykanoush Mesropyan (Yerevan, 2018), 247pp., in Armenian; the *International Journal of Armenian Genocide Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2021 and Vol. 7, No. 1, 2022 (in English); *Ջեղասպանագիտական հանդես* (Journal of Genocide Studies), Year 9, No. 2, 2021 and Year 10, No. 1, 2022 (in Armenian) *Turkification of Armenian Children During the Armenian Genocide*, a collective monograph, edited by Edita Gzoyan, Regina Galustyan, Shushan Khachatryan, and Elina Mirzoyan (Yerevan, 2022), 247pp., in Armenian; and *Խաղաղության Հայկական Գինը* (The Armenian Price of Peace), by Naira Sahakyan (Yerevan, 2023), 299pp., in Armenian.

Dr. Karen Matevosyan, Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan, Armenia for a copy of his book *Անի եւ Անեցիները* (Ani and its Citizens) (Yerevan, 2021), 462pp., in Armenian. The book is dedicated to the city of Ani, and also its nearby settlements, monasteries, and its population. The book is composed of two sections: the first dedicated to the history of the city, especially in the period of the Bagratuni, and the second section is devoted to the citizens of Ani. Ani’s population consisted of craftsmen, and various other workers.



Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan, Armenia for a copy of *Manuscript Heritage of Artsakh and Utik*, by Hravard Hakobyan, Tamara Minasyan, and Vahe Torosyan (Yerevan, 2022), 334pp., in English, with beautiful photos. The book presents the manuscripts produced in the historical provinces of Armenia, Artsakh, and Utik in the medieval period. The majority of the manuscripts are now housed in the Mesrop Mashtots Matenadaran. The book is intended for specialists as well as the general public.

Ara Sarafian, Gomidas Institute, London, for copies of *Zabel Yessayan on the Threshold: Key Texts on Armenians and Turks as Ottoman Subjects* by tr. and edited by Nanor Kebranian (Gomidas Institute, 2023), 144pp., in English and *A Precarious Armenia: The Third Republic, the Karabagh Conflict, and Genocide Politics* by G. J. Libaridian (Gomidas Institute, 2023), 580pp., in English.



Joan Schoettler, California, for a copy of *The Honey Jar: An Armenian’s Escape to Freedom* (2023), 173pp., in English. This is a story told in verse, which relates the story of eight-year-old Bedros and his family as they are forced to flee the Armenian Genocide. *The Honey Jar* depicts a journey from desperation to freedom.

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2024 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32649)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #33447)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D2				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #33659)	3	9:00A- 9:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Culture (Class #33730)	3	10:00A-10:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Culture (Class #33514)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	H. Ohanessian
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Culture (Class #37742)	3		DGT CAMP	
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32648)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian

GET A MINOR IN ARMENIAN STUDIES.
CONTACT PROF. BARLOW DER MUGRDECHIAN

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.

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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Premiere of “Aurora’s Sunrise” in CineCulture Series on Campus



Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian, director Inna Sahakyan, and Dr. Mary Husain.

Photo: Natalie Agazarian

NATALIE AGAZARIAN
EDITOR

Alfred Hitchcock once famously claimed: “In feature films the director is God; in documentary films, God is the director.”

Director Inna Sahakyan of Bars Media referenced Hitchcock’s words when introducing her New York Times Critic’s Pick documentary “Aurora’s Sunrise” at the Fresno premier screening, which took place on Friday, September 1, before an audience of more two hundred and fifty people. “Aurora’s Sunrise” was featured as part of the weekly CineCulture program at Fresno State and co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program. These two on-campus programs collaborate to screen various films in an effort to “create bridges of cultural understanding.”

The event was organized and hosted in partnership with Bars Media and the Zoryan Institute. The documentary was created by Bars Media Studio (Armenia) in co-production with Gebrueder Beetz Filmproduktion (Germany) and Artbox Laisvalaikio Klubas (Lithuania). The film was made possible by the academic contribution of the Zoryan Institute and is based on its Oral History Archive.

“Aurora’s Sunrise” is a documentary filmed based on the first film of the Armenian Genocide in 1919 titled “Auction of Souls.” The silent film featured Arshaluys “Aurora” Mardigianian in an interpretation of her own Genocide experience, while Sahakyan’s documentary delves into the true story of Mardigianian’s survival and arrival to America.

The evening began with a short informational video provided by the Zoryan Institute depicting the realities of genocide and imposed censorship throughout the world. The Zoryan Institute in Contemporary Armenian Research and Documentation was founded in 1982 and “serves the cause of scholarship and public awareness relating to issue of human rights, genocide, and diaspora-homeland relations.” They work to bring awareness to the Armenian Genocide through oral history interviews with Genocide survivors, which

contributed to the development of “Aurora’s Sunrise.”

“Aurora’s Sunrise” not only brought attention to the Armenian Genocide, but did so in an artistic and heart-gripping manner. The film explored the “nature of humanity” through the use of innovative technology and personal accounts. According to Sahakyan, “The balance of heavy, light, and indirect mediums spoke to all audiences and contributed to the film’s appeal.” The production team “directed from a color palette,” one that paralleled the events portrayed. The colors and mediums connected memories from the past and present, intertwining symbolism, history, and personal experience.

Red was a prominent color throughout the film. In the bright memories of Aurora’s childhood, red is represented in the colored silks her father made and is an homage to her family roots in silk making. Later in the film, red is used to blatantly depict bloodshed. When Aurora arrives in America and makes her film debut in “Auction of Souls,” she is seen walking on the red carpet, symbolizing the glamor of the American life she became engulfed in. Each of these scenes display the complexity of the production in its ability to take a single color and use it to connect Aurora’s memories of nostalgia, pain, and new beginnings.

Along with the color palette, the mixed mediums within the documentary also provide insight into the context of each scene. Sahakyan recalled that it was an “early choice” to use animation in the film. Despite the time-consuming manner of animation, the production team firmly embraced the concept of utilizing a softer method to communicate harsher events. In order to maintain mass appeal, it was important to not only depict truth, but to also maintain the attention of audiences.

The production team also obtained the remaining eighteen minutes of footage from “Auction of Souls” and integrated scenes from the film into their documentary. They utilized these clips to not only present the original film, but to compare it to Mardigianian’s true experience through her interviews in the documentary.

Dr. Katia Karaguezian Discusses Her New Book: *Forbidden Homeland: Story of a Diasporan*

HANNAH PALOUTZIAN
STAFF WRITER

“How can I get students to read the book?” said Dr. Katia Karageuzian during a discussion of her new book, *Forbidden Homeland: Story of a Diasporan*. Her presentation was part of the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series and was held on Friday, September 8, 2023, with many Fresno State students in attendance.

At her presentation, Dr. Karageuzian discussed the journey and reasons behind writing and publishing her book, stating, “it insisted to be written.” Her book dives into the intricate details of her family’s past, while also connecting her personal history to present-day Armenian related issues.

Dr. Karageuzian was born in Beirut, Lebanon, before she immigrated to the United States with her family in 1984. While attending school in Southern California in 1988, Dr. Karageuzian became friends with a couple of Armenian students. She discusses this more in the chapter of her book titled, “Malatya?” One day, as her two friends, Mariana and Siranush, were speaking Armenian to each other, Dr. Karageuzian blurted out, “You know, I am Turkish-Armenian too,” which she said even surprised herself. This statement led to what felt like “the shadows that had been following her all her life were finally closing in.” By digging into her family’s history, she uncovered a plethora of information connecting her family to Armenia, and to relatives located in modern-day Turkey who stayed behind following the Armenian Genocide.

Dr. Karageuzian briefly discussed the Hamidian Massacres that took place from 1894-1896 and the Armenian Genocide from 1915-1923. After discussing the horrific events that claimed the lives of nearly 2 million Armenians, Dr. Karageuzian said that, “the Genocide never stopped, it just took on different forms.” Her comment was in reference to the continued denial of the Armenian Genocide by the



Photo: Natalie Agazarian

Dr. Katia Karaguezian, third from left, with students and faculty following her September 8 presentation at the University Business Center, Fresno State.

Republic of Turkey, as well as the continued struggle occurring in Artsakh.

“I am a piece of the Armenian nation’s dispersed and unrepresented majority – communities of descendants of orphans shipped to faraway lands. The overwhelming living, breathing body of evidence of an unpunished crime against humanity: the Armenian Diaspora,” said Dr. Karageuzian in “A Last Word,” the final chapter of her book.

Dr. Karageuzian’s presentation included showing visual material that was taken from her book. Some of these were family photos and others were historic maps of Armenia. One image depicted her grandfather’s clothing store, Tavitian Bros., which had been located in one of the busiest centers in Beirut before it was destroyed during the Lebanese Civil War. She also showed photos of apartment buildings in Bourj-Hamoud, with one photo of an Armenian flag flying between two apartment buildings’ balconies. She expressed how much she missed Lebanon, but was grateful to live in a country where Armenian-related issues can be discussed freely.

Dr. Karageuzian stated that living in a free country such as America also allows for false information to be spread as well. She discussed Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey’s continued efforts to publish false

information and to distribute maps stating that historical Armenia is a part of Azerbaijan, in order to continue the war in Artsakh. “Armenia needs to release its arsenal of historic facts,” said Dr. Karageuzian.

When talking about Armenians needing to speak the truth about current events occurring in Artsakh, Dr. Karageuzian said, “Truth alone does not matter... it needs to be accompanied with spirit.”

Dr. Karageuzian discussed how for the longest time people were too worried about getting the Armenian Genocide internationally recognized, and that other issues affecting Armenians arose rather swiftly. The 2020 Artsakh War, for example, became an issue that has been ongoing for the past three years. Now, almost exactly three years later, Azerbaijan has launched another war on the innocent people of Artsakh. Azerbaijan is aided by the Republic of Turkey in their ac-tions.

As Dr. Karageuzian said at her presentation, “the Genocide never stopped, it just took on different forms.”

The presentation of *Forbidden Homeland: Story of a Diasporan*, provided a glimpse into Dr. Karageuzian’s personal experience, and connected her family’s Armenian history and heritage to Armenia’s history, as well as today’s Armenian-related struggles.

Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno

<https://cah.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies/resources/armenianseries/index.html>

Mardigianian mentioned that some of the storylines were concocted and brutalities were minimized in “Auction of Souls” that are different than her actual experience in surviving the genocide.

“Auction of Souls” fabricated a love story to incorporate emotional intricacies into the film and depicted censored versions of the true horrors the Armenian people faced. These

were creative choices done by Hollywood to ensure the film appealed to all audiences, and Mardigianian noted how the film soon became about money and publicity rather than the cause behind its success. Her testimony coupled with the original footage speaks about truth and legitimacy, and the documentary serves as an important modern method in increasing Genocide awareness.

After eight years of work,

“Aurora’s Sunrise” was finally produced. It not only recounts the personal story of Aurora’s reconciliation with her past, but it is an important historical documentary that highlights the realities of genocide. With its captivating storyline, mediums, and music, “Aurora’s Sunrise” marked Armenia’s official entry to the 95th Academy Awards and will continue to have screenings throughout the world.

Michael Krikorian in the Faculty of the Department of Music



Michael Krikorian

Photo: ASP Archive

EDDY THURBER
STAFF WRITER

Hye Sharzhoom welcomes Dr. Michael Krikorian, one of Fresno State’s newest music professors. Dr. Krikorian was born and raised in Fresno, graduating from University High School and receiving his Bachelor’s degree in Piano Performance from Fresno State, where he took a number of Armenian Studies courses. He now serves as Assistant Professor of Piano and Music Technology in the Department of Music.

Dr. Krikorian took Armenian Language classes and an Arts of Armenia class taught by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, the Berberian Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program. Dr. Krikorian also took Armenian Studies 10- Introduction to Armenian Studies with Dr. Sergio La Porta.

Both of Dr. Krikorian’s parents were born in America. “My mother’s father, Isaac Yenovkian, was a survivor of the Genocide. His father had come to America in 1913 to work, and had planned to return to his family in Turkey when the Genocide began in 1915. My grandfather’s brother was taken as a slave and died. His mother was abducted and killed, and he lost his grandmother. He was eventually found and protected by good Samaritans and taken to Kharpet where they found his aunt, Mariam Yenovkian, who had been deported there. She placed him in the American Near East Relief Orphanage where they were able to connect him years later to his father in Chicago. He, his father, and his stepmother relocated to Fresno in 1947.

Even from a young age, it was Dr. Krikorian’s dream to return to Fresno and teach at his alma mater. He received his Master’s degree from the Manhattan School of Music and then returned to California for his DMA (Doctorate in Musical Arts) from the University of Southern California (USC). As a child in Fresno, Dr. Krikorian grew up attending St. Paul Armenian Church in Fresno, regularly participating in the Armenian Church Youth Organization (ACYO) and serving on the altar as an Acolyte. Foreshadowing his future achievements, he resonated deeply with the music of the church, the traditional Armenian

sharakans [sacred hymns] and the Badarak [Divine Liturgy].

Dr. Krikorian initially aimed to pursue a career in scoring for visual media, but states that “along the way my passion for playing the piano really came into focus...I went to the Manhattan School of Music and practiced all day and all night.” After performing for some time, Dr. Krikorian began teaching as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Keyboard Studies Department at USC.

Dr. Krikorian fell in love with teaching and realized “if I have an opportunity to do this for a living, that would be a dream job!” He recalled a project he completed for his Arts of Armenia class on Komitas, the noted Armenian musician and composer, who eventually inspired him to establish the Komitas Trio. The trio is composed of Krikorian on piano, Garik Terzian on cello, and Aroussiak Baltaian on violin.

“Komitas, a survivor of the Genocide and a symbol of the Armenian people, used the power of music to assert life,” states Dr. Krikorian. Having played with Terzian at a concert and meeting Baltaian through him, Dr. Krikorian approached Terzian with the idea of forming a trio with the goal, “to play all the piano trio literature but also to champion works by Armenian composers, and what a better name for a trio than Komitas.” They hope to perform again soon.

Dr. Krikorian spoke of his regular visits home and his deep roots in Fresno. “Being able to return to Fresno was always my dream, and so when I was offered the position, it was a no-brainer for me. Of course, I jumped on the opportunity. Coming back feels like a homecoming. I grew up here, it’s always felt like home... ..it felt very comfortable coming back,” said Dr. Krikorian.

“[Fresno State] has always felt special to me. There is a wonderful sense of community among the students and faculty, and I feel privileged to be a part of it. It is an honor to serve as colleagues with many of my former professors – they have been some of the best mentors I have ever had, and I feel grateful for the opportunity to work alongside them in strengthening our community and empowering our students,” concluded Dr. Krikorian.

Armenian 1A-Elementary Armenian Language Course Attracts Diverse Students at Fresno State

HANNAH PALOUTZIAN
STAFF WRITER

Armenian 1A, Elementary Armenian, is a four-unit course offered every Fall Semester by the Armenian Studies Program. The class is taught by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian and is a language course for beginners.

Western Armenian is a dialect that was spoken by Armenians who lived in the Ottoman Empire prior to the Armenian Genocide. Survivors of the Genocide emigrated to the United States, the Middle East, Europe and other areas of the world, but continued speaking Western Armenian.

Today UNESCO considers Western Armenian an endangered language.

Therefore, when students take the Armenian 1A course, they are keeping alive the language of Armenian Genocide survivors.

Twenty-four students in Prof. Der Mugrdechian’s Armenian 1A course completed a survey concerning the students’ interests in taking the course.

The answers were varied, with students each having different reasons for taking the course.

Sophomore Leelit Quintero stated that she is taking the course because she plans to Minor in Armenian Studies. “I am half Armenian and I wanted to better my Armenian language skills.”

Daniel Gooboian, who is also a sophomore, stated, “I am half Armenian and want to



Armenian 1A language students with Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, center.

Photo: Hannah Paloutzian

communicate with some of my family members.”

Senior Anthony Gomez said that he wanted to take Armenian 1A because he “never really heard about Armenian culture other than the Genocide and I wanted to learn more through this language course.”

Chris Petrosian stated that he is taking the course “to dive deeper into Armenian culture and hopefully play a part in preserving the language.”

Students were also asked to explain what they hoped to gain from the experience of taking Armenian 1A.

Junior Jasmine Awad said that she hopes “to get a basic understanding of the culture and language.” Freshman Jazmin Calixto said that she hopes to

“gain more experience about a different culture/language.”

Keyla Estrada, also a freshman, stated that she hoped “to be able to hold a basic conversation and to learn a little bit more Armenian.”

Throughout the rest of the fall semester, the students will continue to learn the unique Armenian alphabet, basic Armenian grammar, and general conversational skills.

This semester, the twenty-four students from diverse backgrounds and educational interests have enrolled in Armenian 1A to learn a new language and about a new culture.

Armenian 1B is offered in the spring semester for students to continue learning the Armenian language.

“Microhistories in Armenian Studies” Conference at Fresno State University, Fri-Sat 22-23 Sep 2023

Genocide in the Mind: Minister Rıza Nur’s Travesty of Armenian History

Introduction

The Career and Role of Dr. Rıza Nur

His “Genocide in the Mind” Writings

- Ermeni Tarihi
- Türk Tarihi
- ...What about Atatürk’s “Türk Tarih Tezi”?

History “Repaired”

- The History of Anatolia’s Armenians recovered.



“The Armenian had remained like a malign tumor in our body and needed to be removed by a surgical operation.”

“It is against nature that a Christian people, which is a minority only, lives in Asia. It is like an alien body in Asia. For the Armenians, there is no solution except to bow to the unavoidable heavy consequences of this unnatural state; or to convert to Islam; or to disappear.”

“We Turanians, we are the pure, unmixed [and autochthonous] population.”

A slide from keynote speaker Hans-Lukas Kieser’s presentation.

CONFERENCE, FROM PAGE 1

organized a two-day international conference, “Microhistories in Armenian Studies,” on the Fresno State campus. The conference was organized by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Dr. Ümit Kurt and was financially supported by the Florence Elaine Hamparson Memorial Fund.

The conference featured a keynote speech by Hans-Lukas Kieser (Univ. of Newcastle, NSW) and six presentations: Victoria Abrahamyan (University of Neuchâtel), Ara Sarafian (Gomidas Institute), Sam Dolbee (Vanderbilt University), Robert Sukiasyan (Yerevan State Univeristy, the American University of Armenia, and the Shoah Foundation), Ümit Kurt (University of Newcastle, NSW), and Hazal Özdemir (Northwestern University).

Fresno State President Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval opened the conference and provided a statement of support to the Armenian community in light of the war in Artsakh.

Each scholar in the conference presented a niche area of research in the field of Armenian Studies. “The Armenian Studies Program is important in generating information, awareness, and preservation of the Armenian culture to Armenians and non-Armenians,” said Ara Sarafian.

“Scholars cannot change the past, but can change the understanding of the past,” said keynote speaker Hans-Lukas Kieser. His presentation was titled, “Genocide in the Mind: Minister Rıza Nur’s Travesty of Armenian History.” Keiser narrowed in on one particular perpetrator of the Armenian

Genocide, Minister Rıza Nur, and how his political cohort “made violence against Armenians a norm.” Keiser pointed out how Nur and his cohort were keen to manipulate the words and actions of the CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) against minority groups. Their motive and belief, according to Nur, was that “the Armenian [was like] a malignant tumor in our body and needed to be removed by a surgical operation.”

“The Contested Armenian Participation in the Syrian Great Revolt, 1925-1927” was the topic of Victoria Abrahamyan’s presentation, which covered the role of the Armenian community in Damascus in this period. Thousands of refugee Armenians had settled in Syria after World War I and the loyalty of these

Updates from the Armenian Studies Library and Archive



Soviet Armenia travel guide.

Armenian Studies Program Archive

SOSSE BALOIAN YANEZ
SPECIAL TO HYE SHARZHOOM

In the last year, I have had the privilege of joining the Armenian Studies Program staff as a research assistant working with the Program’s Library and Archive.

The first collection I worked on was the George Injikian Personal Papers donated to the Program in 2018 by George Injikian’s daughter, Gina Injayan.

The collection of published works spans the years 1953 to 1989 and includes poems, short stories, essays, and Injikian’s novel *The Bronx with parallel realities*.

Another recently added collection was the Sarkis Sarkisian Archives donated in 2022 by Sarkisian’s daughter, Ellen Sarkisian Chestnut.

The Sarkisian Archive is comprised of the research Chestnut utilized to write her first book, *Deli Sarkis: The Scars He Carried*. The research is held in four labeled binders

which include: photographs, oral histories, transcribed interviews between Sarkis Sarkisian and Ellen Chestnut, maps, letters, and much more.

One of the collections I find particularly interesting as an Armenian-American growing up in the twenty-first century, is the “Soviet Armenia Travel” Magazine Box.

The Program archive contains several travel guides and souvenir books dating to the period prior to Armenia’s independence in 1991.

This collection offers a glimpse into travel to Armenia in the Soviet Union.

It has been surreal to work in the office sitting just a few feet away from my great grandfather’s books – the Arpiar Markarian Collection.

It is hard to believe that I have just scratched the surface of the breadth of treasures within the ASP Library and Archive.

The Armenian Studies Program online Library Catalog can be accessed at <https://opac.libraryworld.com/opac/home.php>.

CONFERENCE, FROM PAGE 4 refugees was questioned amidst post-War uncertainties, the formation of the Syrian state under French tutelage, and the frustrated attempts to create an independent Arab state.

Ara Sarafian focused on the Armenians in Kharpert in 1880 in his presentation “Levon Gjigian, Leslie A. Davis, and Armenian resistance at Morenig, 1915.” His presentation explored the significance of memoirs in the study of Armenian history, in particular the memoir of Levon Gjigian.

Samuel Dolbee, impressed by the “strong Armenian community” in Fresno, spoke on “Hovhannes Doumanian and the Last Ottoman Agronomists.” As a professor of climate studies, his work investigates how the deportations of Armenians impacted the region from an agricultural standpoint, as well as the “involvement of Armenians in Turkish agriculture.” Utilizing the memoirs of master agronomist Hovhannes Toros Doumanian, who trained other Armenians in agronomy, Dolbee concluded that most agronomists in the region were Armenian. As a result of the deportations, an era that Dolbee and other scholars refer to as the “Ottoman Twilight,” there was no one to maintain the crops and

waves of locusts began eating the crops. This also resulted in the spread of malaria in the region.

On Saturday, September 23, the conference opened with “A Scheme for Extortion and Targeted Eliminations of Surviving Sivas Armenian Community Leaders in the Summer of 1915,” by Robert Sukiasyan.

His presentation was divided into four sections: an overview of Armenian, Ottoman, and Missionary sources; the situation in the Sivas/Sepastia provinces prior to the Armenian Genocide; the organization of the deportations; and the deportation station of Kötü Han on the border of Sivas. Sukiasyan’s Armenian sources included eyewitness and research accounts from Garabed Kapikian and Aram Andoian in the mid-1800s.

These sources unveil the Turkish system’s attempt to deport and eliminate the Armenian elite.

They present aspects of the Armenian deportations that were absent or removed from official documents, contributing to the ethnic cleansing of Armenians that continues today.

Sukiasyan’s paper further divulges into the methods of valuable extractions, security commissions, targeted individuals, and elimination methods.

Pianist Arsen Jamkotchian Newest Addition to the Department of Music at Fresno State

ANI SARGSYAN
STAFF WRITER

“It is really fun to perform with the students, because I love the music. They love the music – it is written well,” said Dr. Arsen Jamkotchian.

Dr. Jamkotchian is a newly hired collaborative pianist in Fresno State’s Department of Music. He was born and raised in Glendale, California, and moved to Fresno in February of this year to begin his job. Dr. Jamkotchian has an extensive background in music, receiving his undergraduate degree in both Piano Performance and Computer Science at Chapman University. He continued his studies at the prestigious Eastman School of Music in New York, where he completed his Master’s degree and Doctorate of Musical Arts degree, while minoring in Pedagogy.

Like many other children, Dr. Jamkotchian was pushed to explore music by his parents, but soon discovered that it was a passion of his own. Starting on the piano around the age of 7, which is considered late for most pianists, he realized he needed to catch up. In college while hearing other musicians perform, he felt he needed to make up for the lost time.

“I spent a lot of sleepless nights, just practicing. My teacher in my undergraduate years, Grace Fong, was really great about filling in the gaps I had and helping with my technique and my artistry,” said Dr. Jamkotchian. He has worked with many other mentors and musicians such as Lyubov Sorochkina and Natalia Antonova.

“Everyone had a big impact on me because they all helped me through certain stages,” commented Dr. Jamkotchian.

One of Jamkotchian’s most recent achievements was at the Rosalyn Tureck International Bach Competition in New York City where he placed second.

“I have always had a weird mindset about competitions in general, because music is so artistic, yet having people judge how you play and choose a better musician didn’t really make sense to me,” said Dr. Jamkotchian, who believes that artistry and musicality is not something that



Arsen Jamkotchian

Photo: ASP Archive

can be scored on paper, rather it is subjective to the listener.

“Throughout my career, my emphasis has been on getting the audience to feel, rather than being too concerned with playing every single note correctly. As impressive it is to watch and to listen to, sometimes you leave a concert like that unaffected. I always want to give it my best, even if it’s a little messy. I want people to leave like they experienced a new world or escaped reality,” said Dr. Jamkotchian.

Before coming to Fresno, Dr. Jamkotchian was teaching in Los Angeles, mainly to beginners and intermediate students.

“But what I feel I could provide best is teaching in higher education,” said Dr. Jamkotchian. “I enjoy this position very much because much of my work is getting to play music and work with students, but I would love to become a faculty member in the future.”

At Fresno State, Dr. Jamkotchian accompanies the choirs, rehearsing with them around four times a week. He also accompanies students for their recitals. They work together on scheduling rehearsals, and sometimes students come in needing a pianist for a recording. That is when Dr. Jamkotchian gets to work. This hectic schedule is rewarding in the end because he works with students to create beautiful music.

When asked what made him decide to come to Fresno State

and what he thinks of it, Dr. Jamkotchian replied, “Fresno for me has always been this place in between San Francisco and Los Angeles. I had come up here once for a concert and a conference. The reason why I am here is because the opportunity presented itself. I like that it is close enough to go see family as well. I am still warming up to Fresno.”

Dr. Jamkotchian has focused on the works of Arno Babajanian and gave a lecture recital on him for his doctorate. “We were to pick a topic and talk about it for half an hour and then the remaining time we would perform. I wanted to incorporate some of my culture into something I could teach and hopefully make people more aware of. I started talking about his music at conferences and webinars. Babajanian is a big passion for me. I played some of his music and gave a lecture in Puerto Rico last summer and the people loved it. They were interested in where to find his music and excited to teach their own students about him. My whole goal was to spread that, and it felt good.”

Along with becoming a faculty member, Dr. Jamkotchian’s future goals include holding a big recital one day.

“I always try to perform as much as I can. I find more in playing other people’s music, than writing my own. It would be nice to play in the Saroyan Hall or Carnegie Hall... my ultimate goal,” concluded Dr. Jamkotchian.

“It is important to show that financial exploitation is happening at the state level,” asserted Ümit Kurt during his presentation “The Fate of Armenian Family Wealth: Confiscation of Property in Ottoman Aintab during the First World War.” Kurt discovered quotes on the deportation from Harutyun Nazarian, as evidence of the transactions proving that the Aintab Liquidation Commission participated in “state burglary.” These quotes include the item, quantity, price, and buyer of each transaction. Kurt’s findings show “how mobile and immobile properties were auctioned by the Aintab Liquidation Commission

during the deportations and Genocide.”

Hazal Özdemir’s talk was on “Undesirable Subjects In and Out of the Empire: Mobility, Nationality and Un-Making of an Ottoman Subject,” which focused on “Ottoman subject un-making.” Armenians during the reign of Abdul Hamid II were often encouraged to leave the Empire, under the condition that they sign documents renouncing their Ottoman citizenship. Özdemir also investigated the question of violence, “to investigate how the government utilized administrative and legal tools to set boundaries for Ottoman

citizenship.”

The methodological approach of micro-historical studies paves the way for the marginalized voices to be heard and their stories to be told. The individual papers presented by each scholar generated a sense of unity among Armenians, as they could learn of the deeper history of their people.

The full conference proceedings are archived on the Armenian Studies Program YouTube channel. Day 1– <https://www.youtube.com/live/r1qALVvI6FE?si=BpNUXiGS91NfbVcK> and Day 2 – <https://www.youtube.com/live/03zpxtSnvWs?si=qYlyA8u1ZHR7kyp9>.

ASO, FROM PG. 1

Alec Karayan, President; Armand Karkazian, Vice President; Careen Derkalousdian, Secretary; Simon Zhamkochyan, Treasurer; and Karina Messerlian, Publicist. Collectively, the board is unified in its goals of strengthening the participation of students in ASO, collaborating with Armenian student groups on other campuses, and providing fun and informative events for the student community.



ALEC KARAYAN
PRESIDENT
PLANT SCIENCE MAJOR AND
MINOR IN AG BUSINESS

What would you like to accomplish as an ASO Executive officer?

I would like to continue the success that this organization has had throughout its history. I would also love to bring in new members that have not previously attended ASO events, offer fun events, and serve the members of ASO. I feel that I can benefit the organization by introducing new ideas and utilizing the connections that I and other board members have within our community to strengthen our organization.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

In my free time, I work in the agricultural field and love to spend time outdoors. I used to be hesitant in taking on leadership roles, but being in ASO made me realize the potential I have in this role and how fun it is coordinating with the other executives.



ARMAND KARAKAZIAN
VICE PRESIDENT
AG BUSINESS MAJOR

What would you like to accomplish as an ASO Executive officer?

I would like to make ASO more friendly to the Armenians that don't really have Armenian friend groups. I would like to unite the Armenians at Fresno State with new events, more student participation, and more fun.

Why are you interested in ASO?

I think the ASO is important at Fresno State. Not only do we get to meet new Armenians, but we also carry out some of the Armenian traditions. This is a way for me to give back to my Armenian community and to the

leaders who have inspired me growing up.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I enjoy fishing, playing sports, and attending car shows. I look forward to catching up with the old faces, and meeting some of the new faces in ASO.



CAREEN DERKALOUSDIAN
SECRETARY
BIOCHEMISTRY MAJOR
AND MINOR IN
ARMENIAN STUDIES

What would you like to accomplish as an ASO Executive officer?

I would like to collaborate with the other board members in planning events to bring our Armenian youth together and also to raise awareness on campus regarding Armenian issues.

Why are you interested in ASO?

I have had so much fun attending ASO events and have made so many new friends through this organization. My positive experience with ASO motivates me to continue being an active member and officer to make sure new and returning members have the best experience possible.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

In my free time, I enjoy working out as well as reading and researching about Christian apologetics.



SIMON ZHAMKOCHYAN
TREASURER
FINANCE MAJOR

What would you like to accomplish as an ASO Executive officer?

I would like to make ASO more friendly to the Armenians that don't really have Armenian friend groups. I would like to unite the Armenians at Fresno State with new events, more student participation, and more fun.

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Executive officer?

I hope to further build upon the community of Armenians here at Fresno State.

Why are you interested in ASO?

I have been interested and involved in ASO because I have met many new people within the Armenian community and I want to do my part in bringing other Armenian students together.

What are your goals for the ASO?

My main goal for ASO is to create an environment where all types of individuals from different backgrounds can come together to experience Armenian culture and build long-lasting connections.



KARINA MESSERLIAN
PUBLICIST
LIBERAL STUDIES MAJOR
AND MINOR IN
ARMENIAN STUDIES

What would you like to accomplish as an ASO executive officer?

As publicist, my goal is to promote ASO on social media by sharing information about upcoming events, trips, and social opportunities. I hope our posts garner attention from ASO members, Fresno State Students, and the larger Armenian community.

Why are you interested in ASO?

It is important for me to be an active member in our organization. I have met new people and have made unforgettable memories! I think ASO is a great way to bring Fresno State's Armenian and non-Armenian students together and gives us opportunities to celebrate our culture.

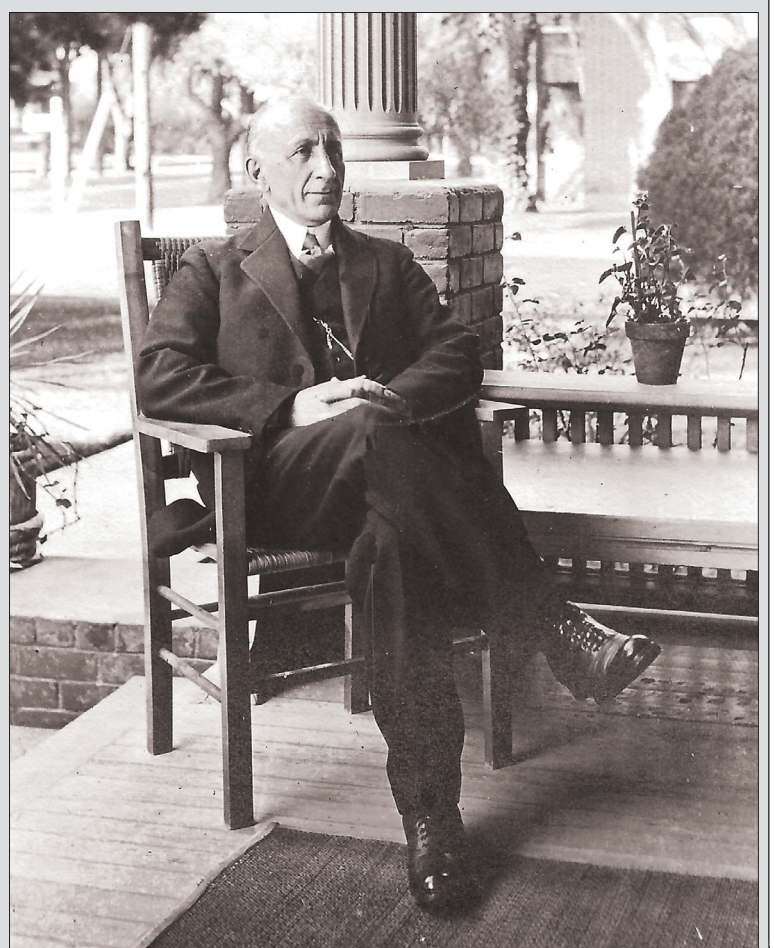
Tell us something interesting about yourself.

Outside of ASO, I am very involved in Fresno's Armenian community. I am an Eagle Scout, part of Fresno's Homenetmen Scouting Unit, and am also a member of the Armenian Youth Federation.

Photos: ASP Archive



Left to right: ASO Executive members Careen Derkalousdian, Simon Zhamkochyan, Alec Karayan, Armand Karkazian, and Karina Messerlian. The Armenian Students Organization held an Information Day on Thursday, September 21, in front of the Armenian Genocide Monument on the Fresno State campus. The purpose of the event was to have students learn about the 31st anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Armenia, September 21, 2023, and to raise awareness among the student population about the situation in Artsakh. Informational flyers were distributed to hundreds of students who passed by the Monument.



Setrak Timourian on his front porch in Pasadena, CA.

Photo courtesy: Nazelie Elmassian

including his sojourns in Europe, in London and short stays in New York.

His travels to Constantinople and then later to the United States chronicle his life as a carpet merchant and the many challenges that he faced.

He also recorded his own views on the important events of the day.

In February of 2022 the Ararat-Eskijian Museum and The Armenian Dress and Textile Project (ADTP) organized a special two-day, international hybrid conference "1860 Gesaria (Kayseri) to Los Angeles 2022: Mapping Culture & Sharing Stories," an exhibit which

highlighted the early 19th-century Armenian life and cultural history featured in Setrak Timourian's memoir.

Copies of *In Front of the Eyes of the World: The Memoirs of Setrak Timourian* are available for purchase from: Abril Bookstore, <http://www.abrilbooks.com/in-front-of-the-eyes-of-the-world.html> or on Amazon.

All of the books in the Armenian Series can be found at the following website: <https://cah.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies/resources/armenianseries/index.html>.

MEMOIR, FROM PAGE 1

Timourian stand before us as shining beacons, illuminating our way forward."

"In Front of the Eyes of the World is a valuable addition to the Armenian Series at Fresno State," said Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian, general editor of the Armenian Series. "The memoir sheds light on an important period of Armenian history and is an invaluable record of one man's indomitable spirit and enthralling life story."

The new book is an example of a genre of writing which has been under-studied. The manuscript is written in Armeno-Turkish, i.e., in Turkish using Armenian script. This was quite common

among Turkish speaking Ottoman Armenians, but has since become a rare item.

In Front of the Eyes of the World: The Memoirs of Setrak Timourian gives the reader a fascinating and detailed story of the life of Setrak Timourian, who was born in 1860 in Kayseri.

He documented in a thorough manner, his life, the life of his family, and his many adventures. Timourian lived during an eventful period in Armenian and Ottoman Turkish history and thus provided insight into the life of Armenians.

The memoirs cover Timourian's life from the 1860s to the 1930s, and stretches from Kayseri, to Istanbul, and Fresno,

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MARGOSSIAN, FROM PAGE 1
used to establish an Armenian Studies scholarship in her name at Fresno State, which will benefit students enrolled in Armenian and Armenian Studies courses.

Margossian’s family was from Van, Armenia, and her parents marched with other refugees to Yerevan, following the retreat of Russian forces in Van in 1915. Later the family moved to Rostov-on-Don, where Clara was born on August 21, 1918. The family emigrated again in 1935, moving to Tehran, Iran and eight years later they made a permanent move to the United States.

The Margossian family was involved in the watch-making business and Clara worked all her life as an accountant and manager in the family business, located in the JC Penney department store on the Fulton Mall. She retired in the early 1980’s.

Margossian was deeply attached to Armenia and Artsakh and keenly followed news from there. She had previously donated generously to the Armenia Fund, with the goal of building new apartments in Gyumri and providing humanitarian aid to Armenians in Artsakh. Her one

million dollar donation provided housing for the displaced families and families who lost their breadwinners during the 2020 Artsakh war.

After her death, the Margossian Trust has continued her philanthropy. In Armenia, the Trust donated to the Tavush Diocese in Armenia to construct a social/educational center for children in the city of Bert. The center will be located on the property of the St. Hovannes Church, which was constructed several years earlier by another Fresno benefactor, John Stevens.

The Trust is providing for a new dormitory at the Dzidzernag camp for 14-18-year-olds in the Gougarats Diocese of Armenia and is also sponsoring a TUMO Center for Creative Technologies “Box” project in Spitak, Armenia. The TUMO “Box” is an easy-to-move, low-cost and technically equipped mini-TUMO.

The Margossian Trust is supporting projects to assist Armenians in Lebanon to obtain food and medicine, to provide for student education, and in support of the Bird’s Nest Orphanage. The Trust also supports many other projects in Tripoli and Beirut.

10th Annual Armenia Summer Study Trip-2023



Students taking an art class at the Mesrop Mashtots Matenadaran in Yerevan.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

ARMENIA, FROM PAGE 1

A group of 11 Fresno State students embarked on a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Armenia from May 23 to June 8, 2023, led by Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program. The students were filled with excitement, especially those who were visiting Armenia for the first time. The student participants were Caleb Arizmendez, Jonathan Chardukian, Careen Derkalousdian, Christa Eritzian, Julia Eritzian, Ariana Garabedian, Charles Garabedian, Michael Mazman, Christine Pambukyan, Carina Tokatian, and Dustin Vartanian.

The trip was organized as a three-unit class, “Armenia Today,” through the Division of Continuing Education. Financial support for student participants was provided through the Leon S. Peters Foundation and Fresno State Instructionally Related (IRA) grants.

After two lengthy flights, from Los Angeles to Paris, and then from Paris to Yerevan, the plane touched down at the Zvartnots International Airport. We were finally home.

After exiting customs, we were greeted by our kind and welcoming bus driver, Artak. Not long after, we arrived at the Ani Plaza Hotel, which would be our home for the next two weeks. Although it was late at night, the streets of Yerevan were lively and the locals stared at us with curiosity. The group made plans to meet in the morning and set off toward their rooms, excited for what the next day would hold.

In the morning, the group met up for a delicious and abundant breakfast buffet in the hotel dining room. This first day was spent exploring the bustling streets of Yerevan. Prof. Der Mugrdechian led the walking tour of the city, which felt like walking through history. Our first stop was the Gatoghige Church, just across the street from the hotel on the corner of Abovian and Sayat Nova. It was our first glimpse of the beautiful architecture that traditional Armenian churches

The Armenian Studies Program expresses its appreciation to the Knarik Clara Margossian Trust for its donation. Margossian has left a legacy that will last for generations.

that this single Armenian cave had to offer, not to mention the several other historical sites we visited such as the fortress of Amberd and the Temple of Garni.

We also visited museums such as the Matenadaran Manuscript Library, where we were allowed special access to the manuscript vault and restoration areas. We visited the Armenian Genocide Museum at Tsitsernakaberd, and there were met by Dr. Harutyun Marutyan, director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, who gave students a special guided tour of the grounds.

In every church and monastery, God’s presence was undoubtedly felt. One that stood out to many was the St. Mary church in Odzun, where it is said that the infant swaddling clothes of Jesus Christ are buried. We arrived in the early evening, just as the bright sun was peeking through the clouds, giving the church’s pink tufa stone a glowing appearance. The village children were playing in the church field and their sweet laughter could be heard. Upon entering, we noticed a simple but beautiful altar, with the image of the Virgin Mary and infant Jesus Christ above it. Students lit candles and said their prayers. After making the sign of the cross and exiting the church, we walked to the two memorial obelisks, which are next to the church. These obelisks depict the history of Christianity, with scenes from the Old and New Testaments as well as the Armenians’ acceptance of the faith. On our way back to the bus, a priest offered to pray for us.

Student Christine Pambukyan in her essay writes that “After being blessed by the priest at the church of Odzun, a beautiful double rainbow appeared, adding a surreal beauty to our experience. It was as if our blessings and prayers had been heard. I hope to revisit the region again one day.”

The monasteries of Haghbat and Sanahin in northern Armenia were set in the beautiful forests of the Lori region. We also visited several other churches, including the Geghart Monastery, Noravank, and the St. Gregory Church. From Geghart’s vibrant greenery and

SEE ARMENIA, PAGE 8



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Left to right: Ariana Garabedian, Julia Eritzian, Christa Eritzian, Christine Pambukyan, Careen Derkalousdian, Caleb Arizmendez, Dustin Vartanian, Charles Garabedian, Jonathan Chardukian, Carina Tokatian, and Michael Mazman in front of the 7th c. St. Mary Armenian Church of Odzun.



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Students visited the National Library of Armenia and met with director Anna Chulyan and Nerses Hayrapetyan.

ARMENIA, FROM PAGE 7

rocky mountain sides to the fiery red cliffs surrounding Noravank, the views from these churches were breathtaking! At Geghart, we viewed the intricately carved khachkars as we walked towards the church. The inside of the church was dark, with some light shining in through an opening in the ceiling. A small choir arrived and began to sing the Hayr Mer [the Lord’s Prayer]. Their beautiful voices filled the air, with the grand acoustics of the church echoing their melodies. It was a moving performance. Another touching sight to see was witnessing those praying on their knees in the St. Gregory Church, the largest Armenian church in the world, built in 2001 in the heart of Yerevan. The unwavering faith of our people is incredible.

Thanks to Prof. Der Mugrdchian, we had the honor of meeting His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of all Armenians at Holy Etchmiadzin. The students were able to ask him questions and engage in conversation. The Very Rev. Fr. Garegin Hambarzumyan gave us a tour of the Etchmiadzin museum, full of artworks and artifacts related to past Catholicos. One of the artworks we viewed was the Armenian alphabet engraved in gold and bejeweled, which had been commissioned by the late Catholicos Vazken I. Gesturing towards the art, Fr. Garegin stated that our alphabet starts with Asdvadz (Ա) [God] and ends with Christos (Ք) [Jesus], a statement that the students found very

profound. From Etchmiadzin, we were also able to see a clear view of Mount Ararat, with its white, snowy peak contrasting the blue sky.

Most evenings, the group would come together for a delicious meal and share highlights from the day. The restaurant would be full of our laughter as we shared our favorite anecdotes and different perspectives. We would walk the lively streets of Yerevan at night, full of crowds speaking our beautiful language and enjoying our fantastic cuisine. Yerevan nights are surely an aspect of Armenian culture that have captivated us all.

On June 8th, as we boarded our flight back to Los Angeles, our hearts were full and our minds expanded. There is history waiting to be told in every corner of Armenia, and we were able to witness it firsthand. Our traditional music, dishes, and ancient history are preserved. We continue to worship God and pray in our ancient churches. We continue to have faith. Every sight that we saw and learned about further fueled our love for our rich culture and beautiful country. We forged lifelong friendships on this trip and made memories that will be cherished forever. Long live Armenia—our Armenia.

“One of the lasting impacts of my visit to Armenia is the deep appreciation I gained for the country’s rich history and culture. Before my trip, I considered myself to be knowledgeable about

Armenia’s historical significance and cultural heritage. However, immersing myself in the country allowed me to see the enduring legacy of the Armenian people and their achievements throughout the ages. Visiting places like ancient Christian monasteries and archeological sites gave me a sense of connection to the past and made me realize the importance of preserving such historically significant places.”

Michael Mazman

“That is what fascinated me the most in Armenia: stories made tangible through artifacts and architecture. Even Tsitsernakaberd’s location, in prime view of Mt. Ararat, tells a story. As our tour guide highlighted, their juxtaposition symbolizes the parallels between the two accounts: Noah’s Ark and the 1915 Genocide. Both represent stories of mass extermination but also stories of salvation.”

Carina Tokatian

“Traveling to Armenia has given me memories that I will never forget. I am grateful I obtained this opportunity to travel abroad. It made me perceive the country and the locals differently than I did prior to visiting. I now feel closer to the culture regardless of the physical distance between America and Armenia. I hope to return soon to fulfill missionary work as a contribution to Armenia’s development.”

Christa Eritzian

“This trip was my second time visiting Armenia. This time I had a more educated lens as I revisited monasteries and got to visit new regions of Armenia that I had not had a chance to before. I also got to see family I had not visited in years and experienced Armenia in a way I know I will not be able to recreate.”

“Overall, this trip has certainly changed my view of the modern country of Armenia; I do not have much of an ancestral connection to the country being a Western Armenian, but, as Dr. Hrag Papazian helped me realize, having a tangible homeland as an Armenian is an incredibly important thing for us to have access to, especially when that homeland is ancestral and full of our rich history.”

Jonathan Chardukian



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Students visited the Mer Hooys-House of Hope program several times on their trip. Mer Hooys was established in 2012. <https://mer-hooys.org/>

Bequest of \$10,000 to Armenian Studies from Grace Kazarian Estate

STAFF REPORT

The estate of the late Grace Kazarian has made a donation of \$10,000 to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

Grace Kazarian was born to parents, George and Agavni Kazarian on May 8, 1928 in the Lone Star area of Fresno and passed away on November 21, 2022. She attended local schools and graduated from Fowler High School. Kazarian worked

as a dental assistant for many years and later was a secretary receptionist in local offices.

Grace and her sisters Armena and Marguerite were long time supporters of the Armenian Studies Program.

Grace Kazarian was a member of the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School, and also the Metropolitan Museum, and did volunteer work for those organizations.

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Armenian Studies Program
“Echoes of Kef Time”
discussion after the screening with director Avo Kambourian
Friday, October 27, 2023 • 7:00PM
University Business Center, 5245 N. Backer Ave, Fresno State
Free Admission and Free Parking

Richard Hagopian, a legendary Armenian-American musician, pioneered one of the most fruitful genres of Armenian cultural folk music and the joyous, dance-filled events that his band was notorious for holding: Kef Time. But times change, and the once sold out shows faded into history. Echoes of Kef Time dives into Richard's quest to pass on the music to his grandchildren, Phillip and Andrew, before it's too late and tracks them against the rich cultural backdrop of the music and the community as they attempt to honor his legacy and revive the tradition for another generation of Armenian-Americans.

Directed by Avo John Kambourian
Produced by Bryce Ferendo & Robin Wang | Cinematography by Daniel K. Matsumoto
Edited by Chueh Hui Huang & Julia M. Quieno | Sound by Bita Arefnia & Caleb Smith

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