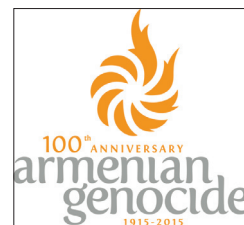


HYE SHARZHOOM
Armenian Action
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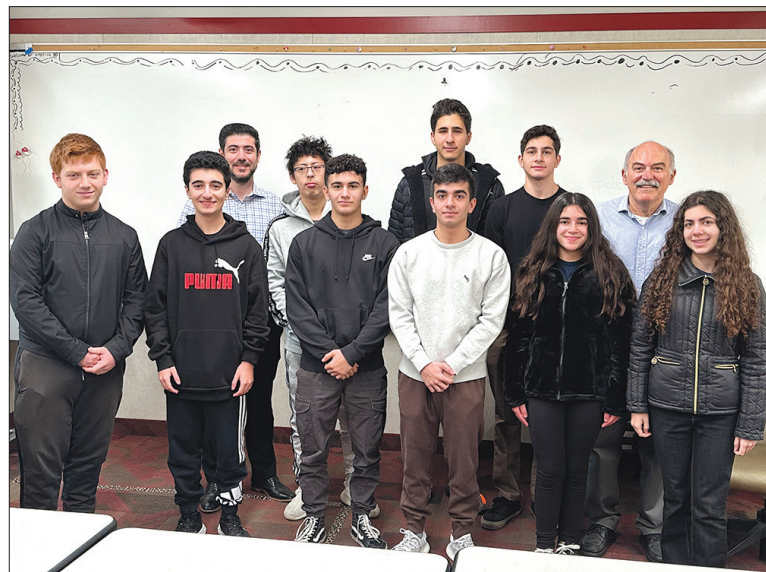
45th Year

March 2024

Vol. 45, No. 3 (165)

Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

University High School Students Learn About Armenian Culture



Left to right: Abraham Hayrapetyan, Sarkis Adjinian, Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, Nathan Yu, Gagik Khachatryan, Edgar Gasparyan, Hrayr Sadoian (front), Alen Aghakhanyan, Alina Tateosian, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and Sarine Der Simonian.

Photo: ASP Archive

Photo: ASP Archive

STAFF REPORT

Students at University High School on the Fresno State campus had the opportunity to enroll in a special Armenian Studies course as part of their Winter Intersession, from January 3-12, 2024. Taught by Fresno State Armenian Studies faculty Prof. Barlow Der Mugardechian and Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, the students explored various aspects of Armenian culture including Armenian art, literature, and history.

Ten students: Sarkis Adjinian, Alen Aghakhanyan, Sarine Der Simonian, Edgar Gasparyan, Abraham Hayrapetyan, Gagik Khachatryan, Hrayr Sadoian, Alina Tateosian, Robert Volkov, and Nathan Yu, participated in the intensive course, which took place from 8:00-11:00AM each day of the intersession.

Prof. Der Mugerdechian introduced students to the arts of Armenia, including manuscript painting, architecture, and the study of Armenian *khatchkars* (stone-crosses). During each of the sessions, students were encouraged to draw their own examples of Armenian art. Prof. Der Mugerdechian distributed drawing paper and colored pencils and asked students to produce their own interpretations of the various art forms studied.

The course began with an overview of the modern country of Armenia. Prof. Der Mgrdechian presented a power-point highlighting the historic sites in Armenia and the natural beauty of the countryside. He explained that art is a part of everyday life in Armenia, as there are numerous museums and churches in the

SEE UHS, PAGE 6

Armenian Studies Program 36th Annual Banquet Set for March 17

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

36th Annual Banquet
celebrating
*the 45th Anniversary
of Hye Sharzhoom*
and the
*50th Anniversary of the
Armenian Students Organization*
recognizing graduating seniors
receiving an Armenian Studies Minor
and
Armenian Studies Scholarship recipients

Sunday, March 17, 2024
Reception-5:00PM • Dinner-6:00PM
Fort Washington Country Club
10272 N. Millbrook • Fresno, California

*\$60 per person • Table Sponsors \$2,000 • \$30 Fresno State students
Please respond by Friday, March 8, 2024*

Kef Time Legacy Band Presents Kef Time III- Third Year of Traditional Armenian Music

NATALIE AGAZARIAN
EDITOR

A new generation with ancient tunes, a fusion of fresh and familiar faces, an alluring ambiance – Kef Time Fresno returned for its third consecutive year on Saturday, January 27, at Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church.

With an astonishing sellout of tickets in one day, Kef Time serves as a testament to the strength of the Armenian people, and more so the Armenian youth, whose motivation and pride is to keep the legacy of their ancestors alive. This next generation of Armenians presents the community with an opportunity for the emergence of new leaders carrying on old traditions, thus demonstrating a profound respect to the history and



Photo: ASP Archive

Left to right: Jim Karagozian, Michael Kamalian, Phillip Hagopian, Andrew Hagopian, and Mal Barsamian.

future of the Armenian people.

“Today, the younger generation has taken over, which makes me very happy. It makes my heart

feel good to see the younger generation take an interest in this

SEE KEF TIME PAGE 7

Fresno State Alumni Joel and Jill Mazmanian Establish Annual Scholarship for ASP Students

STAFF REPORT

Fresno State alumni Joel and Jill Mazmanian have established an annual scholarship in the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

Joel and Jill both attended Fresno State in the early 1990's. Joel finished his college career at Boston University and Jill stayed on to earn her accounting degree from Fresno State's Sid Craig School of Business. Her proudest college moment was being awarded the Dean's Medal upon graduation in 1995,



Photo: ASP Archive

L. to R.: Jacie, Jordan, Jill, and Joel Mazmanian in Armenia.

SEE MAZMANIANS, PAGE 6

Armenian Students Organization Brings Students Together with Many Fall Semester Activities

CAREEN DERKALOUSDIAN
STAFF WRITER

The Armenian Students Organization had a successful Fall semester, starting the school year off strong with a BBQ cookout in September, complete with *kebab*, Armenian music, and games. They continued their momentum with a Homecoming Tailgate in October and an annual Friendsgiving Potluck in November. From turkey to mac n' cheese to pilaf, ASO members brought an assortment of tasty dishes and enjoyed some friendly, heated competition with

SEE **ASO**, PAGE 6



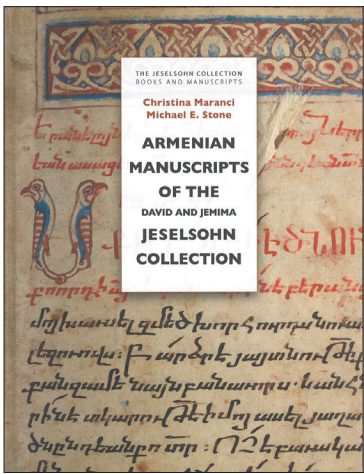
Photo: ASP Archive

ASO members enjoyed an evening bowling at Fresno State.

Armenian Studies Program
Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

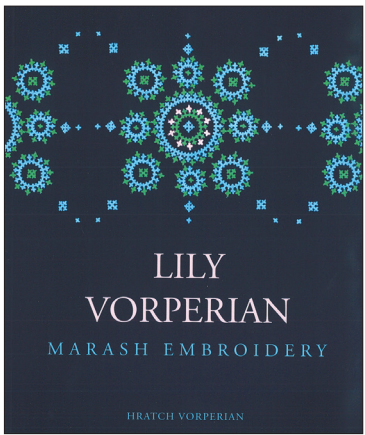
Th Armenian Studies Program would like to thank the donors, authors, and publishers for the following books, periodicals, videos, and archival gifts, either offered personally, or to the Program.

Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, for a copy of *Armenian Manuscripts of the David and Jemima Jeselsohn Collection*,

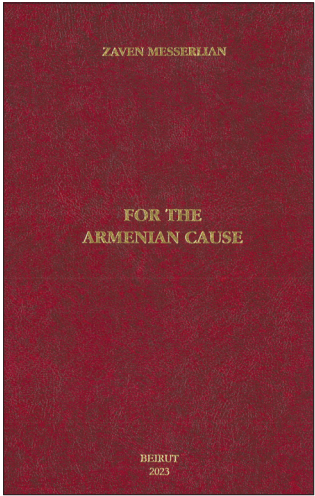


by Christina Maranci and Michael E. Stone (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 2023), 383pp., in English and Armenian. The David and Jemima Jeselsohn collection consists of manuscripts and books dating from the Middle Ages to the present. The book examines the contents of five Armenian manuscripts, with Maranci writing about the miniatures and Stone contributing to the codicological and paleographic research, including the translation of the colophons from Classical Armenian into English.

Hratch Vorperian, Burbank, CA, for a copy of *Lily Vorperian: Marash Embroidery* (2022), 115pp., in English, with illustrations. The book is a tribute to Lily Vorperian's talent as a designer and artist in the stitching of Marash embroidery. The book includes photos that illustrate the many styles of embroidery that Lily Vorperian created. The book presents a repre-sentative collection of the different styles and designs of various size and color combinations of her work.

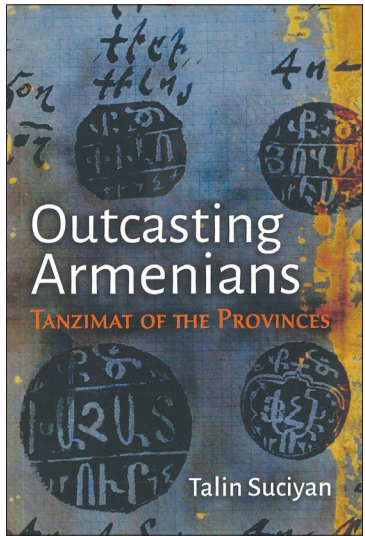


Zaven Messerlian, Beirut, Lebanon, for a copy of *For the Armenian Cause* (Beirut: Sipan Printing, 2023), 183pp., in English.



Messerlian graduated with an MA in Middle Eastern History in 1963. Whenever he read an inaccurate fact about Armenia and its history, or about the Armenian Genocide, he started to write letters to authors, editors, publishers, and later to institutions, statesmen and political leaders. Over the years he wrote many letters to high ranking personalities in many different countries. Many replied, others did not. The book contains these letters of correspondence, published originally in Armenian and now translated for publication.

Dr. Talin Suciyan, Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich, Germany, for a copy of *Outcasting Armenians: Tanzimat of the Provinces* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2023), 279 pp., in English. The history of Tanzimat in the Ottoman Empire has primarily been recounted as a unique period of equality, reform, and progress. Suciyan reexamines this era by exploring the temporal and territorial differences between the Ottoman capital and the provinces. Drawing upon archival materials from the archives of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Ottoman archives, this book argues that the accounts of vulnerable, disadvantaged Armenians are vital to an accurate representation of the Tanzimat era.



California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

Fall 2024 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1A-Elementary Armenian	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	Staff
(Class #72730)				
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugerdechian
(Class #74275)				
General Education-Breadth, Area D2				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies	3	9:00A- 9:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
(Class #73439)				
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Culture	3	9:00A-9:50A	MWF	Staff
(Class #73911) Digital Synchronous				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Culture	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	Staff
(Class #73499)				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Culture	3	DGT CAMP		H. Ohanessian
(Class #74299) Asynchronous				
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108A-Arm History I	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugerdechian
(Class #73803)				

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

HYE SHARZHOOM

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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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Simon Maghakyan Discusses Ways to Save the Monuments of Artsakh

“Heritage in Peril:
Safeguarding Artsakh’s Cultural Monuments
in the Aftermath of Invasion”



Simon Maghakyan

Monday, January 29, 2024

ANI SARGSYAN
STAFF WRITER

“The living heritage has been displaced, and might be able to continue the intangible heritage in many ways... but the tangible heritage, especially the immovable ones, were left behind,” said Simon Maghakyan.

On Monday, January 29, 2024, guest speaker and investigative researcher Simon Maghakyan presented his findings on Artsakh’s cultural monuments in the aftermath of the Azerbaijani invasion in September 2023. The talk was titled “Heritage in Peril: Safeguarding Artsakh’s Cultural Monuments in the Aftermath of Invasion.” This Armenian Studies Program lecture was held via Zoom and moderated by ASP Berberian Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

There are approximately 500 sites, with individual monuments numbering close to 6,000, that were left behind in the wake of the forced evacuation of the Armenian population of Artsakh in September 2023. Included in that group is the “jewel” of medieval Armenian architecture, Gandzasar Monastery (13th c.), which is no longer a place of prayer.

Since September 2023, Maghakyan reported that there have been countless occurrences of unnecessary destruction of Armenian monuments by the Azerbaijan military, not only ancient and medieval, but important parts of the landscape, such as the “Cross of Stepanakert,” overlooking the city. The removal of crosses from churches and historical sites, such as the cemetery near the Armenian Ghazanchetsots Cathedral in Shushi, have also been documented. Since other areas near the Cathedral were hardly disturbed, it can be inferred that the cemetery was a specific target of the Azerbaijani operation.

Maghakyan says current monitoring projects include satellite monitoring which is done by Caucasus Heritage Watch (<https://caucasusheritage.cornell.edu/>), based in Cornell University. Another organization, affiliated with the Yerevan State University, Monument Watch (<https://monumentwatch.org/en/who-we-are/>), utilizes a different methodology by doing indirect crowdsourcing.

Maghakyan continued his presentation by communicating the basis of the fear of cultural erasure. Since there already has been substantial destruction of Armenian sites by Azerbaijan, especially under the pretext of construction, connections and patterns can be made from past events to the ones taking place now.

The destruction that took place in the historically Armenian populated region of Nakhichevan is a significant example of erasure. The world’s largest medieval Armenian cemetery in Julfa, which housed thousands of intricately carved *khatchkars* (cross-stones), many dating to the 16th century, was completely flattened by Azerbaijan in late 2005. This cemetery memorialized many people who were not only important in Armenian history, but in world history. Azerbaijan had no appreciation for these key players in history because they were proof of Armenian existence. Their motivation for erasure lies in securitization and performance legitimacy.

Maghakyan has also conducted research working with Caucasus Heritage Watch using new methodology – borrowing satellite images from the declassified Cold War era. These images provide documentation of the before and after of important historical and cultural sites.

Maghakyan then discussed some actions that could be taken to preempt a Nakhichevan scenario from happening again. Raising the cost of destruction through sanctions against the Aliyev regime is one approach, and incentivizing preservation and eliminating segregation is another.

Another method of action that could be envisioned for the future when situations are not so tense is “being more open about some of the commonalities that do exist among the two cultures instead of trying to make them sound as if they’ve never had any contact with each other may be a path forward.” More importantly, he added “understanding how much heritage mattered for the displaced population of Artsakh, and how hurtful it would be if they were to find examples of erasure” is a motivator itself for Armenian stakeholders to ensure that this does not happen again and leave no stone unturned in the process.

Dr. Watenpaugh Brings New Perspective to the Armenian and Native American Genocides

CAREEN DERKALOUSDIAN
STAFF WRITER

“I argue that through a focus on the lived experience of children during genocide, we can build a comparative framework for the global study of indigenous genocide,” said Dr. Keith Watenpaugh. “I make this argument because during most genocides, there is a systematic and shared pattern of the treatment of children.”

On Thursday, February 1, 2024, Dr. Keith Watenpaugh, Professor and Founding Director of Human Rights Studies at the University of California, Davis, discussed the parallels between the Armenian and Native American genocides. His talk, “Eradicating Culture, Erasing Lives: Children and the Armenian and Native American Genocides” focused on the erasure of childrens’ ethnic identity through state-governed boarding schools. The presentation, organized by the Armenian Studies Program, was held at the University Business Center and made possible through the Florence Elaine Hamparson Armenian Memorial Fund.

A year prior to the 100th commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, Dr. Watenpaugh received a phone call. On the line was Houri Boyajian, a friend of his mother-in-law, Sona Zeitlian, award-winning educator and author. Boyajian shared with Dr. Watenpaugh a thick manuscript – the memoir of her father Karnig Panian, an Armenian Genocide survivor. The manuscript details Panian’s survival of the Armenian Genocide and the subsequent attempt of Turkish officials to transform him and other orphaned children into Turks. In 2015, this memoir titled *Յուշեր Մանկութեան և Որբութեան* (Memories of Childhood and Orphanhood), was published as *Goodbye Antoura*, a book that is among Stanford University Press’ bestsellers. It is taught in high schools and read by Dr. Watenpaugh’s students in his comparative genocide course, the country’s largest of its kind.

Upon the order of Cemal Pasha, one of the main orchestrators of the Armenian Genocide, Panian and other children who were orphaned by the genocide were rounded up for “public health reasons” and taken to orphanages, where they were to be Turkified.

Dr. Watenpaugh discussed a passage from *Goodbye Antoura* in which Panian provides merely a glimpse of the inhumane treatment he and the other orphans suffered. Dr. Watenpaugh also noted the rigorous Muslim education, forced conversion, and brutal beatings that they had to endure. Simply whispering a prayer or speaking Armenian resulted in excruciating consequences.

Within his field of genocide studies, Dr. Watenpaugh explains that there has been a discussion, or argument, regarding indigenous genocide and whether or not it



Left to right: Christa Eritzian, Careen Derkalousdian, Dr. Keith Watenpaugh, Andrew Hagopian, Alec Karayan, and Harutyun Amirkhanyan.
Photo: ASP Archive

should be labeled as such. He argues that what happened to indigenous people in the United States should be considered genocide as it is comparable to what the Armenians faced in 1915.

“For me, these similarities were not coincidences,” said Dr. Watenpaugh. “They were a part of a process of genocide.”

Dr. Watenpaugh highlighted one of these similarities – that many Native American children were taken to schools resembling Panian’s. When comparing photos of Panian’s orphanage with photos from “Indian” boarding schools, he stressed that the images are very similar, with young children being shorn of their hair and dressed in uniforms. He also frequently saw photos of children lined up in front of brick buildings as an “ubiquitous image.”

Upon comparing these images, Dr. Watenpaugh sought to find a memoir similar to Panian’s written by a Native American author. With the help of his colleagues, he found the memoir *Pipestone: My Life in an Indian Boarding School*, written by Adam Fortunate Eagle, who was taken to the institution just 20 years after Panian was forced into Turkification. Fortunate Eagle’s experience parallels that of Panian. He recalls being told that his civilization was worthless. He was forced to dress in a certain way and was prevented from speaking the language of his people, the Chippewa.

Dr. Watenpaugh also described the Dawes Act of 1887, which sought to solve the “Indian Problem” by erasing the cultural and political identity of Native Americans. Those familiar with the field of Armenian Genocide studies can recognize that similar, dehumanizing verbiage was used by the Ottoman Turks to refer to the Armenians as a “problem” that needed to be eradicated.

Dr. Watenpaugh mentioned a quote by Richard Henry Pratt, who was an American military officer and founder of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1879. Pratt’s notorious quote reads: “Kill the Indian, Save the man.”

Dr. Watenpaugh emphasized that in saying this, Pratt was not referring to killing the man, but was instead talking about eradicating his culture. Dr. Watenpaugh highlighted this erasure of culture as a key similarity between Panian’s and Fortunate Eagle’s experiences and regarded this as a central policy of genocide, not a byproduct.

Dr. Watenpaugh concluded his talk by arguing for a necessary reconceptualization of the Armenian Genocide experience as one of indigenous genocide.

Dr. Watenpaugh believes that this reframing will represent solidarity with other indigenous peoples struggling against state-based denial and fighting for recognition.

Visit the Armenian Studies Program
Online Library and Photo Archive

The site can be accessed at
<https://cah.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies/resources/library/index>

Hye Oozh
Saturdays • 9:00AM - Noon
Fresno State’s Armenian Radio Show
90.7 FM-KFSR
with host Vartush Mesropyan

Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno Publishes Three New Books



CONOR YOUHEI HUSTEDDE AND
BARLOW DER MUGRDECHIAN

The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State continues to be a prominent publisher of all things Armenian with installments 18, 19 and 20 of the Armenian Series. The series began with their first book, “Young Saroyan: Follow and Other Writings,” released in 2009 and continues its rigorous publishing efforts with each volume examining new aspects of Armenian life, culture and history.

“The Armenian Series is important because it publishes works that have a general interest in the field of Armenian Studies. It is the most active university Armenian series in the United States,” said Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

Published through The Press at California State University, Fresno, the series continues with three new must-reads: “Western Armenian Music: From Asia Minor to the United States,” “In Front of the Eyes of the World: The Memoirs of Setrak Timourian” and “Death Marches Past the Front Door.”

“These three books are exciting because they add a great deal to the Press. They cover Armenian music, memoirs, and the story of Swiss eyewitnesses to the Genocide. Each is interesting and will be of wide interest,” Der Mugrdechian said.

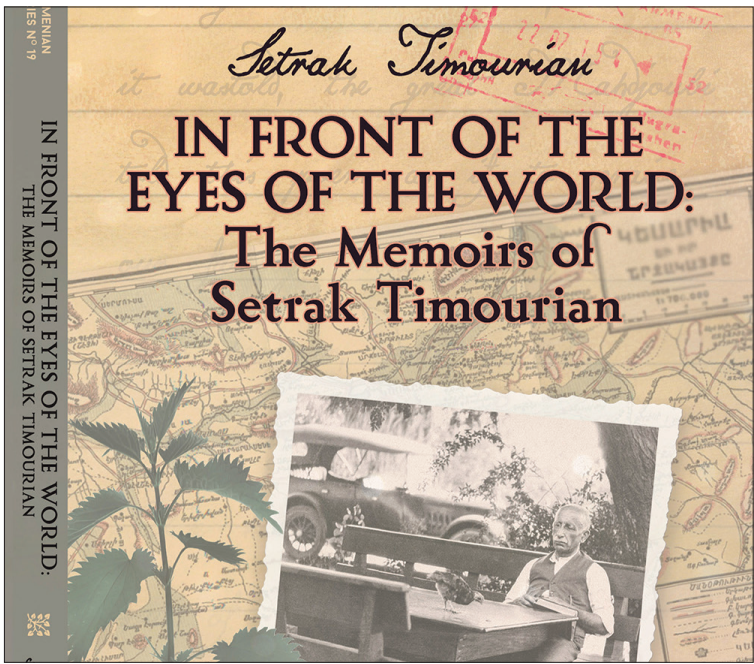
“Western Armenian Music: From Asia Minor to the United States” by Hachig Kazarian
Armenian Series #18 -

Available now from Abril Books

Silenced for over one hundred years, the Western Armenian music brought to America by the first Armenian immigrants has become an integral part of Armenian culture in the United States. “Western Armenian Music: From Asia Minor to the United States” examines the many facets of Western Armenian music and how it has been neglected due to the Armenian Genocide of 1915 and the deleterious effects upon the Armenian people. The author discusses such topics as the Modal System used in Armenian folk and sacred music since the 8th century; traits and characteristic elements of Armenian music; the 19th-century Armenian musical notation created by Hampartsoum Limonjian; and the two opposing styles of Western

Armenian music performed in the United States. Western Armenian Music also describes how the children of the first-generation Armenian immigrants started Armenian bands as an effort to keep Armenian culture alive in the United States. As a way to preserve the music of the first immigrants to the United States, this volume also includes over 100 Armenian dance songs with notations.

Hachig Kazarian was born in Detroit, Michigan, to immigrant parents of the Armenian Genocide. He is a retired secondary instrumental music educator with 46 years of teaching experience, which includes a suburban Detroit school system and the Clark County schools in Las Vegas, Nevada. He received his professional credentials from the Juilliard School of Music, where he earned a B.S. and M.A. degree in clarinet performance. He also attended Eastern Michigan University, where he received an M.A. degree in Music Literature/Ethnomusicology.



Kazarian has performed Western Armenian music for many Armenian churches, societies and patriotic organizations throughout the United States. He has been a leading role model for many young Armenian-American clarinetists for decades and performs as an Armenian immigrant musician taught him.

The motivating factor for producing this book was the lack of concrete information and the misunderstanding of this beautiful form of Armenian music, “Western Armenian Music from Asia Minor.”

“In Front of the Eyes of the World: The Memoirs of Setrak Timourian”

Translated by N. Ipek Hüner and edited by Vahé Tachjian, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Murat Cankara and Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

Armenian Series #19 –

Available now from Abril Books

“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. Born in 1860 in Kayseri, Timourian documented his life, the life of his family and his many adventures. He lived during an eventful period in Armenian and Ottoman Turkish history and thus provided insight into the life of Armenians. 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 views on the important events of the day. The memoir is an invaluable record of one man’s indomitable spirit and enthralling life story.

“Death Marches Past the Front Door – Clara and Fritz Sigrist-Hilty: Swiss Eyewitnesses to the Armenian Dante-Inferno in Turkey (1915-1918)” by Dora Sakayan

Armenian Series #20 –

Available now from Abril Books

April, 1915. On the day of their church wedding, the civil engineer Fritz Sigrist and the nurse Clara Hilty take the train from Werdenberg, Switzerland and travel through the war zone across the Balkans to southeastern Turkey. After Turkey’s involvement in World

AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Students Visit Fresno State



AGBU school 8th graders at the Genocide Monument.

STAFF REPORT

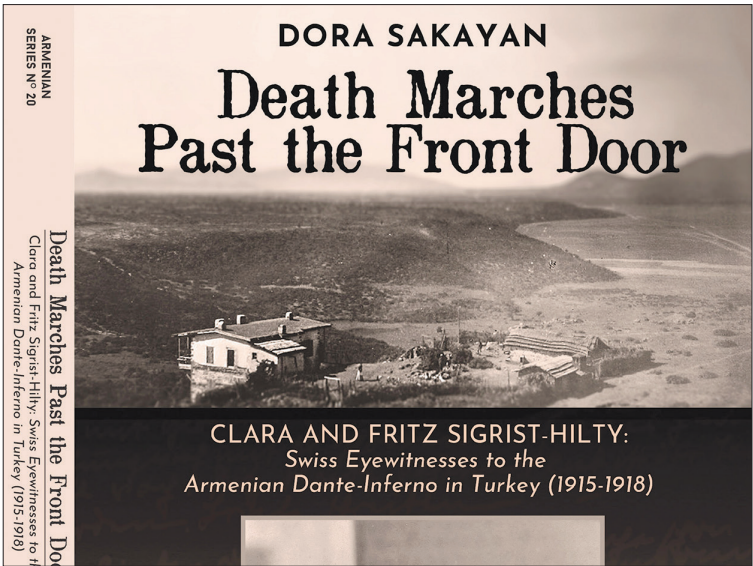
On Friday, February 16, more than fifty 8th grade students and teachers from the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian school in Los Angeles visited Fresno State.

They met with Armenian Studies Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, who explained to students about the Genocide Monument, which sits impressively in the heart of the Fresno

State campus. It is the first and only Armenian Genocide monument of its kind on a university campus in the United States.

The Monument contains many symbols and themes designed to educate, inspire, and commemorate the martyrs of the Armenian Genocide.

The pillars represent the historic Armenian provinces where the Genocide took place.



their everyday life in their little house on the remote hillside. A visit to Aleppo and the Katma concentration camps makes them realize that what they were seeing in Keller on a daily basis was nothing less than premeditated death marches, that is, the Armenian Genocide. Things become worse when the skilled Armenian workers – actively involved in the Baghdad railway construction – are also forced to join those death marches. Clara records the atrocities, first in her journal and later in a memoir or a special eyewitness account. Fritz, in his turn, writes two stories and a letter on the subject.

Dora Sakayan has deciphered the Swiss archive documents written primarily in Gothic handwriting and has meticulously processed them and embedded them in the historical events of the time. Moreover, based on a 1970 memoir by Haig Aramian, Sakayan recounts the adventurous story of how, in June 1916, the Sigrist-Hilty couple helped their Armenian storehouse manager, Aramian, escape certain death.

Sakayan’s book consists of three parts, each dedicated to the life and writings Clara Hilty, Fritz Sigrist and Haig Aramian. An organic interplay of primary and secondary texts relates to the reader a coherent real-life

story – one of extreme human suffering and pain but also of Christian charity, compassion and selflessness.

Born in 1931 in Salonica (Greece) to Armenian refugees from Asia Minor, Sakayan had a long and eventful life. She received her primary education at the local Armenian Gulabi Gulbenkian school and the German school “Deutsche Schule Thessaloniki” and her secondary education at a girls’ “Gymnasium” in Vienna (Austria).

In 1946, the Sakayan family of four was repatriated to what was then the Armenian Soviet Republic. In 1952, Sakayan graduated from the Yerevan Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages with the specialization “Instructor of German.” In 1965, she attained a Doctorate in German philology at the Moscow Lomonosov State University. She then taught German at Yerevan State University (YSU), where she also headed the Department of Foreign Languages.

In 1975, Sakayan moved to Canada and continued her pedagogical career as a Professor of German Studies at McGill University in Montreal, where she gradually ventured from German Studies to Armenology. She has written, edited, and translated more than 30 books.

Armenian Studies Scanning Event Materials Now Online



Dertad Tookoian and band, “Yevrad Armenian Orchestra.”

STAFF REPORT

In December 2019, the Armenian Studies Program was awarded a California Humanities grant of nearly \$5,000 for the “Amplifying Community: Recording the History of the San Joaquin Valley Armenian Music Production,” project, dedicated to recovering the history of Armenian-American music production in the San Joaquin Valley during the first half of the 20th century.

Armenian Studies Program archivist Malina Zakian and Berberian Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian successfully applied for the grant.

The Program has been collecting Armenian records donated by the community for more than thirty years and planned to make the recordings available for researchers and the public. Through the Grammy Museum Grant, the Program was able to inventory and catalog nearly 1,500 recordings on 78-rpm discs from the Armenian-American diaspora.

The Armenian Studies Program held its “Armenian-American Musical Heritage of the San Joaquin Valley,” event on February 29, 2020, in the University Business Center on the Fresno State campus. Members of the Fresno Armenian community came to campus with historic photographs, sheet music, promotional materials, and ephemera relating to Armenian music production for scanning. Between 100 to 125 photographs and musical scores were collected.

Drawing upon the reminiscences and expertise of local musicians, the “Amplifying Community” event provided a forum for the community to contribute their own recollections, photographs and ephemera.

These stories and images contextualized work already underway and supported through a grant from the Grammy Foundation, to preserve local 78 rpm recordings from the Armenian-American diaspora.

After the scanning event, oud master Richard Hagopian and Dr. Yektan Türkyilmaz had a discussion about the Armenian music of the San Joaquin Valley,

which included a performance of traditional Armenian music by Hagopian. Hagopian shared his personal musical journey as well as recounting humorous anecdotes from throughout his life.

His fascination with the *oud*, a Middle Eastern pear-shaped string instrument, motivated him at a young age to learn from *oud* masters such as *Oudi* Hrant Kenkulian and *Oudi* Garbis Bakirgian. Hagopian later formed the well-known “Kef Time Band,” which has performed throughout the United States.

Both Hagopian and Dr. Türkyilmaz discussed how many village songs were “creatively edited” upon their arrival in the United States.

Sometimes, these edits could amount to ten different versions of a song based on each artist’s style. Another interesting point Hagopian highlighted was that sixty percent of Armenian songs were written with Turkish lyrics up until the 1960s.

Armenian musicians would frequently borrow Turkish melodies and rewrite them with Armenian verses. These lyrics often reflected the social conditions immigrants encountered in America.

For instance, the song, “Sheg Mazerov er” (She Had Blonde Hair), centers around the struggles of a musician searching for an Armenian wife in America.

Though Hagopian indicated that many Armenian musicians settled on the East Coast, the Fresno Armenian community has still fostered its own set of bands and musicians with their own distinct styles of playing. Dr. Türkyilmaz emphasized how Fresno was “one of the most densely populated Armenian settlements in America.”

Because of this rich history, many San Joaquin Valley residents like Hagopian developed their own stories about music and dancing events at Armenian coffeehouses and picnics.

The Program is pleased to announce that all of the materials from the scanning event have been digitized and are available to view on the Program website at the following link: <https://archive.org/details/csafarmenianstudies?tab=collection>.

Photo: ASP Archive

“Armenians in Film: Six Short Films by Armenian Filmmakers” Featured in CineCulture Series

STAFF REPORT

Audience members were transported across the globe by “Armenians in Film: Six Short Films by Armenian Filmmakers,” which screened as part of the CineCulture Film Series at Fresno State on Friday, February 16. The two hundred and fifty people in attendance were able to view six films, each of which was distinct and presented a unique point of view.

The evening screening was made possible through the cooperation of AGBU Arts, CineCulture, the Armenian Studies Program, and the Armenian General Benevolent Union Greater Fresno Chapter.

Established in 2015, AGBU Arts’ “Armenians in Film” Film Series is an annual, international event that unites talented Armenian filmmakers from all over the globe. In the past nine years, over fifty short films have been screened by filmmakers from the United States, Canada, France, Brazil, the United Kingdom, China, Bulgaria, Armenia, and more.

Berberian Director of the Armenian Studies Program, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and CineCulture director, Dr. Mary Husain, welcomed the audience and provided opening comments. Following the screening of the film, three artists joined the audience via Zoom to discuss their films. Tatiana Boudakian joined the audience from Brazil, Zela Margossian joined from Australia, and AGBU Arts director Hayk Arsenyan joined from New York.

The short-films and commentary by the guest speakers sparked thought-provoking questions and reflections among the attendees. From discussions on the Armenian Diaspora in Brazil to details on how one can submit a film to the “Armenians in Films” series, the evening was engaging and inspiring for all. The commentary provided valuable perspectives that deepened the audience’s understanding and appreciation of the works showcased.

Director Boudakian discussed volunteering with Birthright Armenia and the inspiration behind the title “Dehatsi,” her family’s journey of arriving in Brazil, and the unique nature of the Armenian community in Sao Paulo.

Musician Margossian shared the inspiration behind the soundtrack of the film “The Road” and



Left to right: Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Marine Vardanyan Peters, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Dr. Mary Husain, and Zar Der Mugrdechian.

Photo: Natalie Agazarian

the diverse ethnic composition of her quintet. Hayk Arsenyan shared the history of how “Armenian Films” came about and how the films that were screened were chosen.

Director Tatiana Boudakian, in her film “Dehatsi: I was Another Place,” introduces the character Anush, a young Armenian woman who booked a one-way ticket to São Paulo, Brazil. The twenty-minute short film traces Anush’s struggle to adapt to a big city while maintaining her ethnic Armenian roots by serving as an Armenian and Russian language teacher in Brazil. The films reflects the director’s own experience growing up as an Armenian in Brazil.

In “Crossing the Blue,” director Victoria Aleksanyan paints the story of a woman, Anush, who in an effort to escape her abusive husband in post-Soviet Armenia, flees to America with her son. Once there, she is deported back to Armenia some years later without her son, who has gone missing.

In twelve minutes, Aleksanyan demonstrates the mental and physical agony of abusive relationships and the contradiction of wanting to return to one’s home but fearing it at the same time.

The timeline of the four-minute animated film, “Sunset,” is dictated by the amount of sunlight in each day. Director Kristine Khanamiryan artistically portrays the typical struggle of students to choose between the experiences with friends or dealing with their schoolwork. As the sun sets, the student is faced with a choice in how to pursue his life.

Documenting the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War, director

Arman Ayvazyan in his film “Stones,” depicts the brutal realities of the forced emigration of the citizens from the region. In this seventeen-minute film, viewers witness the struggle of a group of volunteers, who defy the dangers try to save *khatchkars* [stone-crosses]. Traveling to the Lachin region in search of these *khatchkars*, and the fight to save them, made for an engrossing movie. *Khatchkars*, the historic and sacred remnants of Armenian history, are worth fighting for, to preserve the Armenian identity in the region.

An abstract, eight-minute short film, “The Road,” highlights the music Zela Margossian Quintet, an Armenian-Australian jazz band. Director Charlotte Mungomery utilizes alluring lighting, pantomime acting, and an original score to establish a disambiguating desert environment.

Director Vahan Grigoryan’s “The Mud,” is a comedic, mysterious short film that features Rafael and a lone goose. Their chaotic encounter results in eleven minutes of confusion when Rafael’s wife, Ashkhen, sees vanishing footprints and white feathers on the floor of their home.

Grigoryan playfully creates a digital piece of work that highlights the close-knit character of Armenians and the sometimes humorous results of misunderstandings.

The films delivered a lasting impact on all those in attendance and emphasized the importance of art and storytelling in bringing people together.

More information on AGBU Arts can be found on this website: <https://agbu.org/arts>.

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Left to right: ASO Vice-President Armand Karkazian, ASO President Alec Karayan, and ASO Secretary Careen Derkalousdian at the Fresno State Club Preview Day.

ASO, FROM PAGE 1

the fun games that followed. The semester finished off with a broomball game at Gateway Ice Center. With turnouts of up to 50 people, ASO continues to succeed in bringing together the Armenian youth on campus and fostering a fun environment.

“My first year as an ASO

executive officer has been amazing so far! It is definitely a totally different experience planning our events and socials rather than just attending them, but I am so grateful to be able to execute events that our members will remember forever,” said public relations officer, Karina Messerlian. “I’ve been amazed

at the turn out at all of our events so far and can’t wait to see what the future holds for ASO. I also want to give a huge thank you to all the members who have continuously shown their support and attendance.”

“The Fresno State Armenian Students Organization has greatly benefited me throughout my college career. What started out as attending ASO events to meet new people and to become more involved in the Armenian community, has matured into me becoming one of the leaders of this organization,” said ASO President Alec Karayan. “It has brought joy to my heart to be a part of such a good organization that has been serving the community for the past fifty years. Not only does this organization benefit Armenians, but also anyone who wants to learn about Armenian culture, history, and traditions. I recently met someone who is not Armenian, and when she found out that I am Armenian and attending Fresno State, she told me how she would attend Armenian cooking



The ASO gathered on September 29, 2023 for a outdoor picnic/BBQ at O'Neill park on the Fresno State campus.

and other classes through the Armenian Studies Program. It made me happy knowing that she had a great time in ASO. Throughout the past 50 years, ASO has brought much happiness and recognition for the Fresno Armenian community.”

In addition to social events, the ASO board designed a new T-shirt and a sweatshirt, displaying a

pomegranate tree with its roots in Mt. Ararat, symbolizing that we are rooted in our culture and homeland.

The ASO executives are currently hard at work planning future social events and a 50th anniversary celebration for the community. Stay tuned for more details and follow us on Instagram for updates! @fresnostateaso

MAZMANIANS, FROM PAGE 1

which provided her with many opportunities in the local Fresno community. Growing up in Fresno, Jill’s connection with Fresno State began at a very early age due to her family’s passion for attending Fresno State football and basketball games.

“We are both very proud of our education from Fresno State and continue to support the Bulldogs,” said the Mazmanians.

The Mazmanians were both involved in the Armenian Studies Program while attending Fresno State. “We were fortunate to have the opportunity to be educated in Armenian history through our enrollment in the Armenian Studies courses offered at the time,” said Joel and Jill. “Not only were we educated on the rich history, culture, traditions, and language of our ancestors, but we were able to enjoy the social aspect of taking these courses with our other Armenian friends. During our college years, Jill’s brother Jeff Ahronian was the chief editor for the *Hye Sharzhoom* newspaper which provided Joel the opportunity to

use his creative journalistic skills to contribute to the newspaper that we continue to enjoy today.

“The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State has grown to become one of the most recognized Armenian Studies programs in the country. We were proud to be a part of this program in the past and want to continue to support its future,” stated Joel and Jill.

Jill is very thankful for the Armenian Studies scholarships she received while attending Fresno State. Now her daughter Jordan is currently attending Fresno State and has received an Armenian Studies scholarship herself. Jordan is proud to be a part of the prestigious Smittcamp Family Honors Program.

“It was in our hearts to give back to our Fresno State community and we believe committing to an annual Armenian Studies scholarship will fulfill this goal,” said Joel and Jill. “The scholarships will also provide opportunities to other young students interested in preserving the history of rich Armenian culture.



UHS students learned about the art of the *khatchkar*. The *khatchkar* collection at the Noraduz cemetery, near Lake Sevan.

UHS, FROM PAGE 1

country.

The history of Armenian manuscript production was the next topic, with emphasis on the miniature paintings. Prof. Der Mugrdechian gave an overview of how Armenian manuscript painting developed and the major themes in the art. Students enjoyed learning about the beauty of the paintings and about artists such as Toros Roslin.

Armenian architecture is one of the main forms of Armenian art and students learned about how Armenian Christian architecture developed over the centuries. Armenian church architecture can be organized around the styles of churches, from the simpler single-hall style of church to the more complex, niche-buttressed square and Hripsime style. Examples of each of these styles was studied in the class.

Armenian *khatchkars* (stone-crosses) represent a unique form of Armenian art. Thousands of *khatchkars* have been produced over the centuries, especially in the period from the 9th to the 13th centuries. Students learned about the major motifs in *khatchkar* art before drawing their own *khatchkars*.

“It was a pleasure to teach these high-school students about

Armenian culture,” said Prof. Der Mugrdechian. “I hope to see some of the students enroll at Fresno State and to take Armenian Studies courses.”

Dr. Hagop Ohanessian also had the privilege to participate in Winter Intersession enrichment program. His lessons focused on highlighting the importance of Armenian literature as a form of preserving and expressing identity. He presented and highlighted prominent modern Western and Eastern Armenian writers such as Vahan Tekeyan, Daniel Varoujan, Krikor Zohrab, and Hovhanness Toumanian.

Students learned the impact that Western European literary trends, such as Romanticism and Realism, played in shaping modern Armenian literature.

For example, students were asked to read notable poems and short stories by each author in class. Students read Tekeyan’s famous poems “The Armenian Language” and the “The Armenian Church.” They learned that Tekeyan used romantic language and metaphors to describe the value in language and faith as components in preserving identity.

In his poem “The Armenian Church,” Tekeyan writes that “The Armenian Church is the

birthplace of my soul ... the mighty fortress of my forefather’s faith....”

Students had the opportunity to engage not only with Dr. Ohanessian, but with fellow classmates on the importance of maintaining Armenian identity through the many examples read. Students learned the way in which Krikor Zohrab utilized “Realism” in his short stories to express the social, political, and economic challenges Armenians faced on the eve of the Genocide. For example, students read such notable stories as “The Black Bag” and “Furtuna,” highlighting various societal challenges such as poverty, isolation, addiction, and the attachment to material goods.

Dr. Ohanessian also introduced students to Armenian-American writers such as William Saroyan, Leon Surmelian, and Peter Najarian as a way to discuss and to better understand the experiences of early Armenian immigrants to the United States. Students read and discussed the short stories “The Armenian Mouse,” “Madness in a Family,” and “America in My Blood.”

Dr. Ohanessian also asked students to present on their own family stories of immigration, to better understand their own stories and the importance of passing it on to future generations.

Dr. Ohanessian completed the course by discussing various aspects of the Armenian Genocide and the class held a fruitful discussion of the Armenian community of Fresno and the central San Joaquin Valley.

It was a wonderful experience for Dr. Ohanessian and the students who participated.

Dr. Ohanessian recounted the high level of engagement, enthusiasm, and curiosity of each student and enjoyed each day he spent time with them. He is grateful to UHS’s administration for the opportunity that they provided not only for the students, but also for the faculty.

Bertha and John Garabedian Foundation Makes Generous Donation of \$10,000 to Armenian Studies Program for 2024

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Berberian Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced that the Bertha and John Garabedian Foundation has made a generous donation of \$10,000 to the Armenian Studies Program for 2024.

Together with previous year’s donations, the Garabedian Foundation has awarded more than \$175,000 in grants to the

Armenian Studies Program.

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

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

Among other projects, their grants have supported the development of the Armenian Studies Program website and the online “Arts of Armenia.”

Read all of the back issues of
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Historic Documents and Photos
in Armenian Studies Archives



The ASO participated in the International Food Festival at the Fulton Mall in the 1980s.

Photo: ASP Archive

SOSSE YANEZ
HYE SHARZHOOM

Since winter break, the Armenian Studies Program

Library and Archive has sorted through ASP files and newspapers relating to the Armenian community dating prior to the 21st century.

Kef Time III Attracts Large Number of Young People

KEF TIME, FROM PAGE 1

music and that this music is going to be around for a while,” said Richard Hagopian.

“It is important to know and remember the history of our Armenian ancestors, and to share those same stories and history with the young generation, who will eventually share it with the next generation. Kef Time gives us a sense of how our ancestors used to celebrate,” said Armand Karkazian, Vice President of the Armenian Students Organization.

Besides a joyous night of long-lasting entertainment and a hearty meal provided by the Holy Trinity Men’s Society, the overarching theme of cultural preservation through song and dance dominated all other aspects of the evening.

The reality is that traditional Armenian music is dwindling in modern society. Richard Hagopian recalls that when he “used to play, there were close to 7,000 or 8,000 people at Kef Times. Today, we have been replaced by DJ’s. This music is actually not live anymore.”

The revitalization of Kef Time Fresno thus serves to invigorate traditional music in a world seemingly accustomed to technological methods of entertainment.

“Kef Time is important for the next generation of Armenians because it helps preserve our rich Armenian culture with our collective participation in song and dance. It is the youths’ role to never forget our past, and look forward to a bright future,” said ASO President Alec Karayan.

The Kef Time Legacy Band consists of a mesh of generations, united by their love for performing and desire to play the music of their forefathers: Phillip Hagopian on the *oud* and vocals, Michael Kamalian on clarinet, Andrew Hagopian on percussion, Mal Barsamian on bass, and Jim Karagozian on *kanun*. The proceeds of the evening were donated to the Fresno State Armenian Studies Program.

“It’s our responsibility as musicians and for the dancers to not let this music go extinct. Seeing the revival from the past three Kef Time Fresno’s has been great,” said Michael Kamalian.

With a newer generation of musicians performing, it is



The dance floor was full all evening as a new generation enjoyed the lively music.

Photo: ASP Archive

exciting for the younger crowd to see us out there working together to create this music.”

Not only does the band represent the hope of a continued legacy, but so do the young adults attending the events and learning the music and dances alongside their teachers, families, friends, sponsors, attendees, and volunteers.

Kef Time can “bridge the generations, fostering unity and preservation within our community and provide a platform for young Armenians in our community to connect and build relationships that will contribute to the prosperity of Armenian heritage,” remarked Andrew Hagopian.

“Encouragement and being inclusive is exactly how we can expose the next generation. At Kef Time this year, I loved watching people learn the steps for the first time and seeing the experienced Kefgees encourage them and help them learn. That is what kef is all about,” Kamalian observed. For some Armenians of the current generation, exposure to these traditions may occur once a year, but blossom into an aspect of daily life, and thus, a deeper appreciation for the culture of our ancestors.

“My appreciation for our music grew exponentially as I began learning *oud* and occasionally performing with Andrew Hagopian on the guitar,” recalls student musician Jonathan Chardukian. “I feel that it is incredibly important for events like Kef Time to take place because it allows young and old Armenians in the community

to come together and enjoy the music that was nearly destroyed. The community value that our music adds to the diaspora ensures that we will not forget our history and that we will persevere.”

There are many resources for the newer generation to learn from, such as a local project to preserve the traditional dances that are often seen at Kef Times. “The Arax Dancers of Fresno started a project to preserve these dances through video tutorials. You can find these videos on YouTube by searching ‘Arax Dancers of Fresno.’ There are step-by-step instructions on how to do each dance, as well as a portion where you can dance with us. By learning the dances, not only are we preserving an important piece of our culture, but we enable our community to pass them down to the generations to come,” said Ariana Garabedian, a former member of the Arax Dancers. “Go to that Kef Time, attend that picnic, listen to the music, and join the dancing (even if you don’t know how to do it)!”

“I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the entire Fresno community for their unwavering support of Kef Time. As we move forward, I eagerly anticipate the coming years, committed to further expanding the event and delivering consistent excellence, all while ensuring affordability remains paramount,” said Andrew Hagopian.

Keep an eye out for upcoming events with the Kef Time Legacy Band by following them on Instagram @keftimesfresno, Kef Time Fresno on Facebook, and keftimesfresno.com.

Vahan Papazian (1876-1973), also known as “Koms,” who was an active member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. During the early 20th century he organized and oversaw the arms and ammunition routes to Western Armenia from Iran and Yerevan. Papazian was elected a member of the Ottoman Parliament from Van in 1908.

Papazian survived the Armenian Genocide and joined a group of *fedayis* in the Caucasus. In 1919, he was elected a member of Armenia’s Parliament and appointed a member of the Armenian National Delegation in Paris. After the Sovietization of Armenia, Papazian participated in the Riga talks with the Bolsheviks. These talks concerned the safety

and security of Soviet Armenia and the ARF’S position, but were ultimately unrewarding. After settling in Beirut, Lebanon in 1947, he joined the Hamazkayin cultural association.

As we prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Armenian Students Organization, the ASP has come across ephemera from early years of the ASO. Some of the ASO material includes hand drawn event flyers, sign in sheets from meetings, and the club’s budget plans.

Some of the event flyer titles include, “CSUF ‘Kef Time’ ... Bring your ‘odar’ friends” and “Question: What’s better than a fresh, hot, juicy, spicy, delicious, shish kebob sandwich? Answer: Two sandwiches!”



**2024 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE
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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24 | 6:30PM
FRESNO STATE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE MONUMENT

Keynote Speaker
Stefani Booroojian
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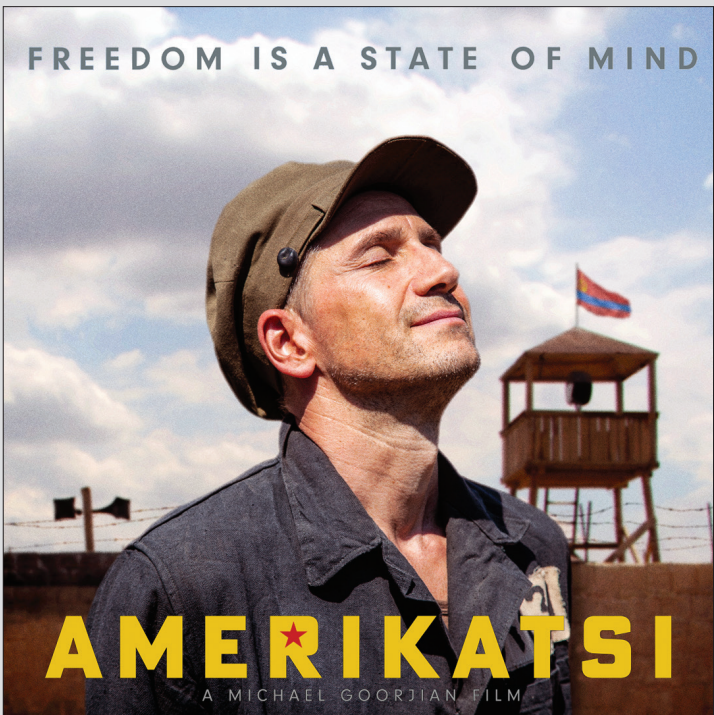
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The Armenian Studies Program
presents

**"Armenian Memory,
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A Reading and Talk"**

by Pulitzer-prize winning poet

Peter Balakian

Monday, April 22, 2024

6:00pm - Reception

7:00pm - Reading and Talk

University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium
5245 N. Backer Ave., Fresno State

Free admission and free parking



The Armenian Studies Program presents
**"Remnants: Embodied Archives
of the Armenian Genocide"**

with **Dr. Elyse Semerdjian**

Thursday, April 25, 2024

**7:00pm - Smittcamp Alumni House
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<https://cah.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies/index.html>

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