

HYE SHARZHOOM Armenian Action ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐՀՈՕՄ



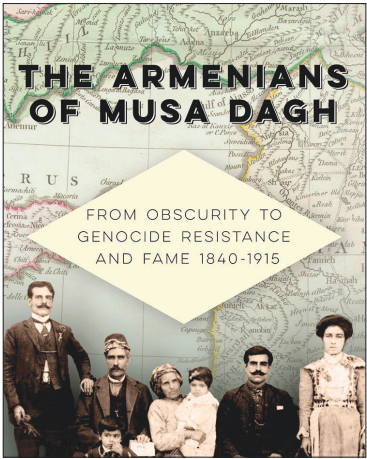
42nd Year

December 2020

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

The Armenians of Musa Dagh Published by Armenian Series



STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Director Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced the publication of Dr. Vahram Shemmassian's *The Armenians of Musa Dagh: From Obscurity to Genocide Resistance and Fame 1840-1915*, Volume 11 in the Armenian Series of The Press

at California State University, Fresno.

The Armenians of Musa Dagh is a comprehensive history of the people of Musa Dagh, who rose to prominence with their resistance to the Genocide in 1915. Dr. Shemmassian, has presented a thorough analysis of the social, economic, religious, educational, and political history of the six villages which constituted Armenian Musa Dagh. His work focuses on the important period of the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth century, offering the reader a previously unavailable insight into the people whose courage and persistence ultimately led to their successful self-defense.

"*The Armenians of Musa Dagh* is an important addition to the Armenian Series," said Prof.

SEE [MUSA DAGH](#), PAGE 6

Leon S. Peters Foundation Grants \$30,000 to Armenian Studies

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced that the Leon S. Peters Foundation has made a generous donation of \$30,000 to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State for 2021. The Peters Foundation has donated over \$240,000 to the Program since 2013.

Leon S. Peters was respected as a businessman, civic leader, and philanthropist who lived and worked according to the highest ethical standards.

The grant will be allocated to variety of purposes including student scholarships and support of the Armenian Studies Program Lecture series.

The ASP thanks the Foundation for their continued support.

Artsakh War Temporarily Ends November 10 with Russian Brokered Ceasefire Agreement



The flag of the Republic of Artsakh. The Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabagh) was established September 2, 1991.

STAFF REPORT

On November 9, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan signed a joint statement on a complete ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh starting

from November 10. The statement most significantly ceded a large area of the Republic of Artsakh to Azerbaijan, including the city of Shushi. President Putin said the Azerbaijani and Armenian sides would maintain the positions that they held and Russian peacekeepers would be deployed to

the region. In addition, Baku and Yerevan must exchange prisoners and the bodies of those killed.

The November 9 agreement, in effect November 10, temporarily ended a war begun on September 27, when Azerbaijan attacked the Republic of Artsakh. Azerbaijan was aided by Turkey, and mercenaries hired by Turkey.

The unprovoked attack utilized the latest in drone technology and modern weapons, and targeted civilian population in cities such as Stepanakert and Shushi.

Also targeted were cultural monuments such as the Ghazanchetsots Monastery in Shushi.

The agreement is only the first step in forthcoming negotiations.

Armenians in Artsakh, Armenia and throughout the Diaspora are anxiously awaiting the results of the negotiations.

President's Armenian Advisory Council Convenes

STAFF REPORT

Fresno State President Dr. Joseph Castro convened a meeting of the President's Armenian Advisory Council in September.

Members heard reports from President Castro, Interim Dean of the College of Arts & Humanities, Dr. Honora Chapman, from Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and from Interim Associate Dean Dr. Sergio La Porta. Members of the Council had an active discussion on all of the reports presented.



The President's Armenian Advisory Council meeting.

State of the Art International Conference Explores Historiography, Sources, and Future Directions

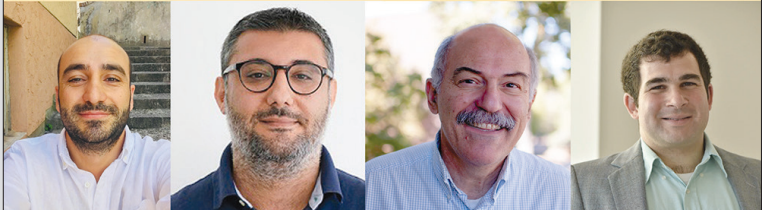


CHRISTINE PAMBUKYAN
STAFF WRITER

On Friday, October 2 and Saturday, October 3, 2020, six scholars participated in an international conference organized by Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Dr. Ümit Kurt, titled "The State of the Art of the Early Turkish Republic Period: Historiography, Sources, and Future Directions." Those who were interested were able to register online in advance for access to the live Zoom lectures or view the conference through the Armenian Studies YouTube channel on Friday at 7:00 PM and on Saturday from 10:00 AM to noon.

University of California, Berkeley history Professor Dr.

SEE [CONFERENCE](#) PAGE 7



Top row, left to right: Dr. Christine Philliou, Dr. Ari Şekeryan, Dr. Talin Suciyan. Bottom row, left to right: Erdem Ilter, Dr. Ümit Kurt, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, and Dr. Christopher Sheklian.

Photos: ASP Archive

ASO Raises Money to Support Armenians in Artsakh and Armenia



The ASO sold T-shirts to benefit Artsakh and Armenia.

DUSTIN VARTANIAN
STAFF WRITER

The roots of the tree stretch far down beneath the earth. An abundance of vividly red pomegranates lay within the branches. The immense peaks of Ararat are visible in the backdrop. This is an image of Armenian

strength and homeland.

These images are displayed on the T-shirts the Armenian Students Organization created and sold to support Armenians in Artsakh during these unsettled times. With a black base with red, blue, and orange lettering, these T-shirts resemble Armenian pride.

SEE [ASO](#) PAGE 7

“Lost Birds” Film Tell Genocide Story Through Children’s Eyes



Top to bottom: Dr. Mary Husain, Directors Ela Alyamac and Aren Perdecı, and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

CHRISTINE PAMBUKYAN
STAFF WRITER

Imagine this. Your father was drafted for a war months ago and you are now living in your family home with your grandparents, your siblings, and your mother. Holidays come and go, yet there is no sign of your father. Soon, your grandfather is arrested, and your mother asks you and your siblings to no longer play outside. One day, you sneak out while your mother is not paying attention, happy to finally run in the sun again. Upon returning home, you and your siblings find your house ransacked and your mother and grandmother are no longer anywhere to be found. Tragic stories like this are far too familiar to the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of victims of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Tragic stories like this are captured in the 2015 film, “Lost Birds.”

On Friday, October 30, 2020 at 5:30 PM, CineCulture and the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State discussed “Lost Birds,” a film that tells the story of Bedo and Maryam, a brother and sister left behind after the Armenian Genocide in 1915, who go on a journey to find their mother along with an injured and lost bird, named Bachik. Those who were interested were able to register in advance to watch the film. After viewing the film, they were able to attend the live Zoom lecture, or view the discussion through the Armenian Studies YouTube channel.

Because the directors, Aren Perdecı and Ela Alyamac were unable to attend the lecture, Dr. Mary Husain, CineCulture advisor and instructor, and Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program were the discussants. First, Dr. Husain began the discussion by urging audience members to go to IMBD’s website and rate the film honestly to combat the anti-Genocide recognition campaign that has falsely given the film poor ratings. Unfortunately, this phenomenon also occurred during the release of the well-anticipated film, “The Promise.”

Next, Prof. Der Mugrdechian gave a background of the directors and explained the purpose of their film. Aren Perdecı, born in Istanbul in 1979, is a director of many short films, commercials, and music videos. In recent years, Perdecı found out that his great grandfather was a victim of the Armenian Genocide, so due to the recent tolerance about the discussion of the topic of genocide in Turkey, he wanted to memorialize his family story through film. His co-director, Ela Alyamac, was also born in Istanbul and studied film direction and film studies at Chapman University in Southern California. Together, along with an entirely Armenian cast, they wanted to make a movie about memories that would inspire survivors of the genocide and their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren to tell their own stories; showing the human side of exile in the process. Dr. Vahe Tachjian, the director of the Hushamadyan Project based in Berlin, Germany, was an advisor for the film, which contributed to making the costuming, setting, and story as authentic as possible. The directors even filmed the movie in the Armenian Highlands.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian brought attention to the fact that a majority of the film was in Turkish, with a few Armenian hymns and phrases sprinkled throughout. In fact, the directors used Turkish in the film to attract a Turkish audience.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian also explained the structure of the film and its significance to Armenian history. For instance, the film begins with a happy family in a nice village and a warm portrayal of the celebration of Easter. The only thing missing is the father, who has been drafted but has not yet returned. This implies that World War I is occurring, and the Armenian Genocide has already begun. Additionally, in the second part of the movie, the film shifts to a darker, more panicked tone, especially when the grandfather was arrested and

California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2021 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32415) Virtual Synchronous	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B. Der Mugrdechian
• Arm 2A-Intermediate Armenian (Class #36670) Virtual Synchronous	3	3:30P-4:45P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #33318) Virtual Synchronous	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D3				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #33595) Virtual Synchronous	3	9:00A-09:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastpcs Arm Cult (Class #33399) Virtual Synchronous	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	H. Ohanessian
• Arm 148-Mastpcs Arm Cult (Class #33732) Virtual Synchronous	3	2:00P-3:15P	TuTh	H. Ohanessian
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32414) Virtual Synchronous	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian

Get a Minor in Armenian Studies.

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

Check on requirements for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the current catalog.
<http://www.fresnostate.edu/catalog/subjects/armenian-studies/armenia-mn.html>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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Hagop Ohanessian, Lecturer, Armenian Studies Program

Dickran Kouymjian, Berberian Professor Emeritus of Armenian Studies

Give Your Way to the Armenian Studies Program

There are many ways to support the Armenian Studies Program.

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

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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“Subjects or Citizens?” is Topic for Visiting Prof. Dr. Kılıçdağı



Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı presented a Zoom webinar on the status of Armenians in the early Turkish Republic.

ARSHAK ABELYAN
STAFF WRITER

Photo: ASP Archive

The foundation of the new Republic of Turkey in 1923 presented a new challenge to the Armenian community in Turkey. The question was how Armenians and other non-Muslims should be defined under the new Republic.

Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı, 17th Kazan Visiting Professor of Armenian Studies during the Fall 2020 semester, presented his second lecture of three on the topic of “Subjects or Citizens?: Armenians from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic.” In his Friday, October 16, 2020, presentation, Dr. Kılıçdağı explored the relationship between the Christian population, specifically the Armenians, and the sociopolitical atmosphere surrounding the issue of minority relations within the newly founded Republic of Turkey.

Following the Armenian Genocide, the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire had decreased by almost 94%. According to Dr. Kılıçdağı, by 1927 there were only 77,433 Armenians left in Turkey in 1927. Other Christian populations in Turkey were also affected. “Approximately 1.2 million Greeks were expelled from Anatolia, whereas approximately 400,000 Muslims were forced out of Greece and this was an agreement between Greek and Turkish states,” added Dr. Kılıçdağı. Were the Armenians going to remain subjects in the Turkish Republic as they were in the old Ottoman Empire or would a new relationship emerge?

Dr. Kılıçdağı explained that the population figures he collected were from the official census records of Turkey. The government used questions pertaining to mother tongue and religion to infer the identities of those who were Armenian. He also pointed out that in 1965, these statistics were no longer publicized and were kept classified. Later in 1985, “state security courts and the prosecutors of these courts opened a lawsuit against the coordinators of the State Institute of Statistics and accused them of separatism,” said Dr. Kılıçdağı. After 1985, questions regarding mother tongue and religion were no longer used in official

censuses. Dr. Kılıçdağı argued that this is one of the reasons why there is uncertainty regarding the official population figures of Armenians and other Christians in Turkey today.

On the discussion of the reliability of these figures, Dr. Kılıçdağı stated that he was skeptical about several questions. One of the most surprising concerned the categorization of Armenian as a religion instead of it as an ethnicity or nationality.

Dr. Kılıçdağı laid out three possibilities on how the Republic of Turkey could move forward with describing, categorizing, and treating its Christian minorities. The first solution was to look back to the Ottoman *millet* system, which was used to categorize non-Muslim communities by religious categories. The second was the law of citizenship adopted by the new Republic, and the final possibility were articles related to the Treaty of Lausanne.

Under the Ottoman millet system “religious groups were given some collective group rights in their civil affairs and in family law such as issues related to marriage, inheritance, divorce, and also in cultural matters,” asserted Dr. Kılıçdağı. He also added that the leaders of the community were mainly religious figures who were expected to organize internal affairs within the communities. Essentially, they were “mediators” between the Turkish government and their own communities.

On the other hand, according to the modern law of citizenship, “State and citizen are supposed to be in a one-to-one relationship without any mediator, without any connector between state and citizen,” said Dr. Kılıçdağı. According to articles 37 to 45 of the Treaty of Lausanne, the equal treatment of Christians and Jews is guaranteed. “The Turkish state agreed that it would provide, or it would facilitate the development and maintenance of cultural and educational foundations of these people, including Armenians,” said Dr. Kılıçdağı. However, this did not happen.

According to Dr. Kılıçdağı “none and all” of these possible methods have been implemented or applied in the treatment of Armenians. For example, Turkish government officials

Dr. Charlie Laderman Presents on “The Armenian Genocide and America’s Global Role” for ASP

SARA BEBERIAN
STAFF WRITER

“Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?” Armenians have been plagued by this haunting 1939 question from Adolf Hitler for many years. The Armenian Genocide is an open wound in the hearts of Armenians all around the world. Over 100 years later, Armenians still suffer from Turkey’s denial of their “crime against humanity,” and their continual threats to the existence of the Armenians. Armenians wonder why they are often left alone in spite of their desperate need for political mediation from other nations.

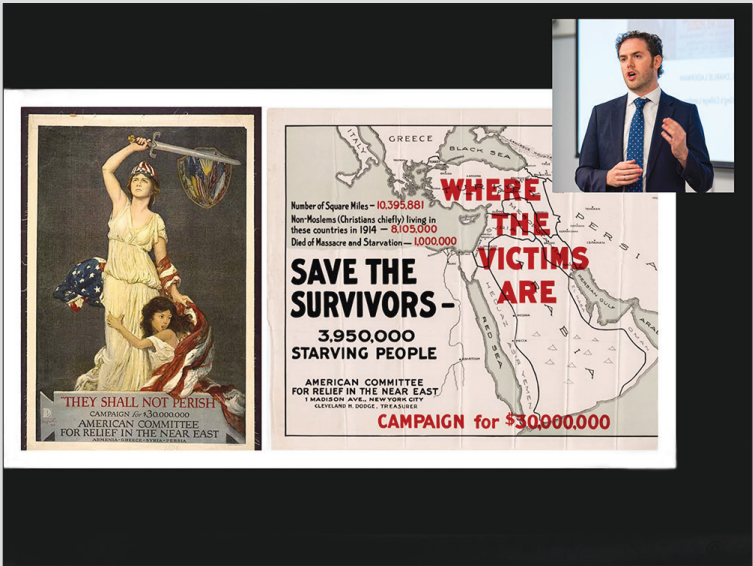
On Sunday, October 25, 2020, the Armenian Studies Program hosted an event titled “The Armenian Genocide and America’s Global Role.” The Zoom webinar featured guest speaker Dr. Charlie Laderman, lecturer in International History at King’s College in London. Ara Sarafian, founder of the Gomidas Institute in London, also joined the presentation to discuss Laderman’s book, *Sharing the Burden: The Armenian Question, Humanitarian Intervention, and Anglo-American Visions of Global Order*. Prof. Barlow Der Mugerdechian moderated the event and introduced the guests.

Dr. Laderman started the presentation by acknowledging the bipartisan resolution passed by both the House of Representatives (H. Res 296) and the Senate (S. Res 150) in 2019, affirming the United States record on the Armenian Genocide. This resolution called the Armenian Genocide a “crime against civilization.” The resolution calls on the United States “to encourage education and public understanding of the facts of the Armenian Genocide, including the role of the United States in humanitarian relief efforts, and the relevance of the Armenian Genocide to modern-day crimes against humanity.”

Dr. Laderman went on to explain the American political climate in 1915, during World War I and the Armenian Genocide. He explained how the United States was well aware of the atrocities facing the Armenian people, and listed the multiple reasons why

meet with the representatives of the Patriarchate to discuss issues regarding or facing the Armenian community, but they still do not legally recognize the Patriarch. Dr. Kılıçdağı also provided more information on the attitude and actions of the Turkish Republic with regards to the Treaty of Lausanne. “As for the Treaty of Lausanne, the Turkish state has largely ignored it, and moreover, has violated its clauses. For example, leaving aside the provisions of facilitating the development of institutions of these communities, they have confiscated the properties of Armenian institutions,” asserted Dr. Kılıçdağı.

Photo: ASP Archive



Dr. Charlie Laderman discussed his new book, *Sharing the Burden: The Armenian Question, Humanitarian Intervention, and Anglo-American Visions of Global Order*.

the United States government did not intervene on behalf of the Armenians.

President Woodrow Wilson’s reasoning for abandoning the Armenians was based on Wilson’s desire to have America stay neutral. He wanted to limit America’s international responsibility as well as to not militarily intervene in the Ottoman Empire. There was no political or economic advantage for American intervention on behalf of the Armenians.

President Theodore Roosevelt was often outspoken in his beliefs that intervention on behalf of the Armenians was completely justifiable, but was unwilling to do more than just speak about it. In his analysis of both Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson, Dr. Laderman came to two important conclusions regarding American policymaking. First, he warned against political rhetoric that is detached from the reality of the situation. For example, speaking out against injustice but doing nothing to stop it. The second important conclusion was on the question of how far should a leader go to protect their own personal interests and America’s interests. In the case of the Armenians, was it worth it for Americans to send their troops and taxpayer’s money to Armenia when it did not directly benefit America?

Sarafian discussed several important aspects of Laderman’s work, noting how it tackles so many issues that plague the world of politics. There is a tragic, darker side of global politics

that often goes undiscussed. One important note is something that lives fresh in the minds of Armenians around the world today. The little guys, in this case, the Armenians, often get lost in the world of politics. Armenian history is written in tragedy and this can be seen with the lack of American support for Armenians in 1915 as well as in 2020 with the recent war over Artsakh. Often times, politicians are so tied up in their own strategic interests, they forget their own humanity. Armenia provided no benefit for America, and Armenians suffered and continue to suffer all the more for it. It seems it is globally acceptable to turn a blind eye and to ignore international humanitarian standards when there is no economic benefit for intervention.

“*Sharing the Burden* successfully addresses challenges and debates that occurred in the past using the language of our time,” stated Sarafian.

The Armenian Genocide was the attempted destruction of a people, and there was bi-partisan agreement from the American government to not get involved. The book hauntingly echoes challenges that Armenians face today and is recommended by Sarafian to “all Armenians and all diplomats.”

Sharing the Burden can be purchased online through the website global.oup.com/academic, and the presentation can be viewed on the Armenian Studies Program YouTube channel, bit.ly/armenianstudiesyoutube.

Hye Oozh - Saturdays 9:00AM - Noon

90.7 FM-KFSR

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

With the failure of the Republic of Turkey to take action to decisively address how non-Muslims would co-exist as equal citizens, the Armenian community in Turkey, more specifically Istanbul, was left endangered.

“The Turkish state has created

a deliberate legal vacuum and administrative ambiguity in defining and treating Armenians, and in this way, it has facilitated the demise of Armenians as one of the non-Muslim communities in the republic,” concluded Dr. Kılıçdağı.

Photo: ASP Archive

SEE **AYANIAN** PAGE 6

Students Discuss Impact of ASP Scholarships



Left to right: Ariana Garabedian, Christine Pambukyan, Dustin Vartanian, and Carina Tokatian.

BENJAMIN KIRK
COLLEGE OF ARTS & HUMANITIES

Every year, about 50 to 60 students receive a scholarship from Fresno State through the Armenian Studies Program. Awards range from \$1,000 to \$2,000. A total of more than \$70,000 in scholarship and grants from endowments are given to Fresno State to aid students interested in the language and history of Armenian.

To find out the impact the scholarships have had on the students, we asked them five questions. Here’s what they had to say.

1) What is your major? What scholarship did you receive from the Armenian Studies program?

Carina Tokatian: I am an English Education major with an emphasis in Composition and Rhetoric. I received the Charlie Keyan Scholarship last Spring 2020.

Ariana Garabedian: My major is Speech Language Pathology. I have been awarded several different scholarships through the Armenian Studies Program, including the Pete P. Peters scholarship, the Walter Sepetjian Scholarship, and the Knights of Vartan Scholarship.

Christine Pambukyan: I am a Pre-Nursing Major and pursuing a Minor in Armenian Studies. I have received the Pete Peters Armenian Studies Scholarship, the Armenian Studies Scholarship, and the Triple X – Selma Chapter Armenian Scholarship.

Dustin Vartanian: I am currently majoring in Business Management and Minor in Armenian Studies. This past year I received the Pete P. Peters Scholarship for Armenian Studies.

2) What draws you to Armenian Studies?

Carina: Armenian was a language always spoken in my family, but one I had never formally learned myself. I was also drawn to the Introduction to Armenian Studies (ARMS 10) course because I had heard from friends how it covered a broad overview of Armenian history from what is perceived to be our beginnings to the current day and age. I had always known, for instance, that there was a Genocide, but I never knew the extent to which it was caused and executed until taking this class. And so, this class inspired me to delve into my own family’s stories as well as Fresno’s story and the Armenian community here in the San Joaquin Valley.

Ariana: I am minoring in

Armenian Studies because, as an American-Armenian, I believe that it is important to do my part in preserving the Armenian culture and history. Pursuing this Minor has given me several opportunities to learn about my culture, heritage, local history, family history, and Armenian history in general. I am drawn to the subject simply because I’m Armenian. The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State has given me a place where I feel as if I belong!

Christine: As a proud Armenian and Fresno native, I am minoring in Armenian studies to learn more about my heritage and deepen my understanding of the history I grew up learning through family and church. I am drawn to the subject of Armenians because prior to attending Fresno State, my exposure to Armenian culture was through family and church events. Our history books failed to mention anything about Armenian history, leading me to want to learn more.

Dustin: I am minoring in Armenian Studies because I love learning about my own culture. I have always had a desire to learn the Armenian Language. However, it was not until after taking my first course in Armenian Studies when I decided to pursue the minor. The more classes I take, the greater desire I have to learn.

3) Do you have a favorite memory from your time in the Armenian Studies Program?

Carina: I can’t recall a specific memory, but there were quite a few fun moments I experienced in the language classes. It felt as if I was always smiling or laughing about one thing or another, whether we were learning about fruits, exchanging play money, or watching a classmate try to recall all the colors in Armenian after bringing in a multi-colored disco ball (the kind you plug in the wall). So, you could say that one of the benefits of taking Armenian Studies courses was the community factor. Whether we were Armenian or non-Armenian, we all seemed to be having a fun time learning the language together.

Ariana: I don’t think I have one favorite memory that stands out to me. Rather, the people I’ve met and the classes I’ve taken through this program have all been very fun and memorable. I haven’t gotten to experience the trip to Armenia with the program yet, but I’m sure when I do, my favorite memories will come from that trip!

Christine: My favorite memory from my time in the Armenian Studies Program was visiting St.

Paul Armenian Apostolic Church with Professor Der Mugrdechian and learning about all the hidden symbolism of the church I grew up attending. This field trip was a part of our two-day course about the Armenian Church in Fall Semester 2019.

Dustin: There are too many great memories to pick one, but in general all of the lectures apart from the Armenian Studies Lecture series every semester have always been memorable. Every lecture is always interesting, and afterward, many of us from Armenian studies go eat somewhere. It’s a great combination of learning about Armenia’s history and having a great night with all of my friends.

4) What impact has the scholarship you received through Armenian Studies had on you and your education?

Carina: The scholarship I have received through the Armenian Studies Program has greatly benefited me. A college education certainly comes at a cost in terms of tuition and the materials needed to be successful in those courses. Therefore, the scholarship I have received has helped to cover the cost of some of those expenses as I further my education. It has also made my enrollment in Armenian Studies classes all the more rewarding.

Ariana: The impact of the Armenian Studies Scholarships I’ve received is one of motivation. In receiving these scholarships, I know that there are people donating in order to push students to continue learning about the Armenian culture and history. These scholarships motivate me to continue to work hard in school and the Armenian Community.

Christine: As a result of the scholarships I have received through the Armenian Studies Program, I am able to comfortably focus on my education without worrying too much about paying off my tuition. The scholarships have opened up my horizons to learning opportunities I previously would not have been able to afford. For that, I am truly grateful.

Dustin: Receiving scholarships from the Armenian Studies Program motivates me to do more in Armenian Studies. I feel honored to be a recipient, and I feel determined to learn more after receiving a scholarship.

5) If you could meet the people who fund the scholarship(s) you received, what would you say?

Carina: I would give them a huge thank you for their generosity. It was quite an honor for me to receive the Charlie Keyan scholarship. It is my understanding that the late Charlie Keyan was a strong advocate for education as the donor of the Charlie Keyan Armenian school. As I plan to enter the educational field myself one day, he inspires me to also give back to the community in my future endeavors as a teacher. Therefore, I could not be more grateful and honored to have received this scholarship.

Ariana: I would first express my gratitude for their support of the Armenian Studies

Society for Armenian Studies Elects Executive Officers for 2021



Top row, left to right, Bedross Der Matossian, President; Dzovinar Derderian, Vice-President; Nora Lessersohn, Secretary; Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Treasurer. Bottom row, left to right, advisors Varak Ketsemanian, Vartan Matiossian, Christopher Sheklian, and JSAS editor Tamar Boyadjian.

STAFF REPORT

The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) Executive Council held a meeting on November 11, 2020 to choose its new Executive officers for 2021. Bedross Der Matossian (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) was re-elected as SAS President. Also elected were Vice-President Dzovinar Derderian (American University of Armenia); Secretary Nora Lessersohn (University College London); Treasurer Barlow Der Mugrdechian (California State University, Fresno); and advisors Vartan Matiossian (Executive Director of the Eastern Prelacy), Christopher Sheklian (Zohrab Information Center) and Varak Ketsemanian (Princeton University). Tamar Boyadjian (Michigan State University), the editor of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* (JSAS), serves as an ex-officio officer.

On behalf of the SAS, Der Matossian thanked outgoing Vice-President Alison Vacca (University of Tennessee-Knoxville) for her work in advancing the mission of SAS.

“It is a great honor to have been re-elected as the President of the SAS,” stated Der Matossian. “In the past two years we have realized all of the major goals we have set forward beginning in 2018. Our membership has

increased by 40%; we have produced 45 interviews in our Podcast Series; we have given more than 15 research grants to Graduate students in the field; we have published two volumes in the SAS Publication Series; innovative articles have been published in our electronic journal E-SAS under the editorship of Dzovinar Derderian; and the first volume of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* (JSAS) has been published by the prestigious Brill publishing house under the energetic editorship of Tamar Boyadjian.”

“The SAS is continuing its academic mission by organizing and co-sponsoring conferences, the largest of which was the SAS 45th anniversary conference dedicated to the Armenian Diaspora which took place at the University of California, Los Angeles in October of 2019. Due to the COVID pandemic, SAS adapted itself to alternative ways of disseminating knowledge through Zoom webinars. As a result of the Artsakh war, SAS is raising awareness about the situation through conferences and symposia. As an academic organization our top priority is to preserve the Armenian cultural heritage of Artsakh. We are currently partnering with different organizations to fulfill

SEE SAS PAGE 6

Program, of my own (and other students’) studies, as well as in the Armenian community. Then, I would ask why they donated or why a donation was made under a person’s name. I love getting to know the people in my community and the history behind them. There are so many Armenians in the Central Valley that care deeply about preserving their heritage, and I think it’s such a beautiful thing!

Christine: Thank you for your generosity towards the education of students interested in the Armenian culture. With your donations, I am able to focus on my studies, achieve high grades, and enjoy what Fresno State and the Armenian Studies Program has to offer. I am truly honored to have received your aid throughout my educational career thus far.

Dustin: I would tell them how thankful I am to have received their scholarship. I would explain all of the great things I have been able to learn and experience because of their

support. I appreciate all donors to the Armenian Studies Program. I cannot thank them enough for all of their support.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Christine: With the help of Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, Dr. Sergio La Porta, the Armenian Studies Program offers many enjoyable courses, including Armenian art history, Armenian literature, Armenian language, and Armenian history. Our Armenian Studies professors make our classes enjoyable and interesting, causing me to look forward to signing up for Armenian Studies courses when time allows.

Carina: I would highly recommend that other students explore and enroll in some of the Armenian Studies courses offered at Fresno State. They provide such great insight and cultural awareness of the Armenian community in both the Central Valley and worldwide.

Crisis in Recent Election of the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Explored by Dr. Kılıçdağı



Kazan Visiting Professor Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı gave his third talk of the semester on November 16.

Photo: ASP Archive

DUSTIN VARTANIAN
STAFF WRITER

“There remained no legal document that defines the Patriarch and specifies the rights and responsibilities of the Patriarch and also specifying the rules of Patriarchal elections. This would become problematic in future elections for the Patriarch of Istanbul. When elections get complicated, there are no set processes and the Turkish government exerts great influence,” stated guest speaker Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı.

This was the main topic of discussion for Dr. Kılıçdağı’s presentation “The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul Under the Light of the Last Crisis of the Patriarchal Election,” which took place on Friday, November 16, and was the third and final lecture Dr. Kılıçdağı gave during the Fall semester.

The presentation was part of the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series.

Dr. Kılıçdağı began with the interesting history of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul. When the 1863 Armenian Constitution was adopted, the Patriarchate’s authority was reduced as the National Assembly played a larger role in the Armenian community.

However, Sultan Abdul Hamid II abrogated the Ottoman Constitution, and also the Armenian Constitution, which placed the Patriarch back at the head of the Armenian community.

It was not until the Ottoman Revolution of 1908 that the Armenian Constitution again took affect and the authority of the Patriarch was once again diminished. However, Dr. Kılıçdağı stated that this diminished authority did not make the role of the Patriarch unimportant.

“The Patriarch in the capital and the Prelacies in the provinces were still important interrogators of Turkish politicians and bureaucrats,” asserted Dr. Kılıçdağı.

Furthermore, today the title “Patriarch” does not legally exist in Turkey but the Patriarch is still perceived to be the representative of the Armenian community.

Dr. Kılıçdağı then turned to the topic of the recent crisis in the Patriarch of Istanbul in 2006, which arose from Patriarch Mesrop Mutafyan’s illness that

unfortunately left him in a coma for a number of years. Patriarch Mutafyan was elected Patriarch in 1998, but withdrew from all duties in 2008.

Archbishop Aram Ateşyan sought to establish a “co-patriarch” and the initiator committee wanted to elect a new Patriarch so they could handle the responsibilities of Patriarch Mutafyan, who was no longer able to carry out his duties. However, the Turkish government decided to create the position of “general deputy” to which Archbishop Ateşyan was elected by the religious council.

However, others involved in Patriarchal affairs wished to elect a locum tenens which would take place of the general deputy. Tensions arose in the Armenian community as elections were organized to replace Archbishop Ateşyan but the Turkish Government refused to recognize it. As a result, Archbishop Ateşyan remained in his position until the election of the new Patriarch.

Dr. Kılıçdağı concluded his presentation by explaining how the absence of election processes and the control of the Turkish government created strong internal tensions within the Armenian community.

“We saw once in this election that the absence of a permanent legal document defining the Patriarchate and organizing the election create arbitrariness and how this arbitrariness erodes the Armenian community,” stated Dr. Kılıçdağı.

He referred to the role the Turkish government played during the Patriarchal elections saying that “members of the Armenian community are actors of a stage but set by the Turkish state.”

Throughout all of the conflict and tension aroused in the past few years, the role of the Patriarch no longer enjoys as much authority as before. Dr. Kılıçdağı stated that the role of the Patriarch “... is a matter of prestige because of the same reasons since there was no prominent legal rules and regulations defining the limits of authority, the authority and influence of patriarch and patriarchate depends on the influence and the prestige he has amongst the members of the community.”

This is an intriguing thought to walk away with at the conclusion of this lecture.

MUSA DAGH, FROM PAGE 1

Der Mugardechian, general editor of the Armenian Series. “Dr. Shemmassian’s meticulous study is significant in that it brings to light much of the history of Musa Dagh in the late 19th to early 20th century.”

Dr. Shemmassian, whose roots go back to Musa Dagh, for the first time in any language, provides a clear view of the complex multi-faceted history of the region in seven chapters and an epilogue. The last chapter, in particular, is an 80-page treatment of the Genocide resistance, including its widespread coverage in the contemporary international press.

The book demonstrates that this was a period of great change, during which the Musa Dagh Armenians transitioned from an isolated and largely unknown people to a collectivity that prepared to defend its national



A group of Musa Dagh volunteers in the *Légion d'Orient*. From *The Armenians of Musa Dagh*. Courtesy of Bedros Hergelian.

identity and rights against an increasingly discriminatory and oppressive Ottoman Empire. Shemmassian’s work reveals much information which has been uncovered for the first time, based on primary sources.

The volume includes 5 maps, 14 tables, and 162 rare photos,

providing a glimpse into the life of the people of Musa Dagh.

Vahram L. Shemmassian is Professor and Director of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Northridge. He holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). His book, *The Musa Dagh Armenians: A Socioeconomic and Cultural History, 1919-1939*, was published in 2015 by the Haigazian University Press in Beirut. He has given many lectures and organized and participated in international academic conferences.

He has also published scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals, as well as book chapters on the fate of Armenian Genocide survivors in the Middle East between the two World Wars.

He has received a number of awards for his academic endeavors, dissemination of Armenian culture, and community involvement.

Copies of *The Armenians of Musa Dagh* are available for purchase from:

Abril Bookstore, <http://abrilbooks.com> or the National Association for Armenian Studies & Research (NAASR) Bookstore, <https://naasr.org/collections/naasr-bookstore>.

For bulk orders please contact the Armenian Studies Program, at 559.278.2669 or by email at barlowd@csufresno.edu.



Franz Werfel, author of *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. Photo from the new book, *The Armenians of Musa Dagh*.

**“All Things Armenian”
Radio Hour**

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AYANIAN, FROM PAGE 4

school, to go to Armenian church, cook Armenian food, learn Armenian dances, and return and visit Armenia.

Karine Shamlian expressed it the best, when she said “the least we can do is not let it be in vain.” Over 100 years ago, our ancestors were murdered for being Armenian Christians. Today, Armenians are still fighting to hold onto their land, culture, traditions, and religion. The least we can do in the diaspora is practice our Armenian traditions and support our Armenian homeland. The question, of what will become of us, is a burden given to every Armenian. It is up to each individual Armenian to make sure that the culture survives.

LOST BIRDS, FROM PAGE 2

taken away along with the rest of the men in the village. Also, the use of music plays a large role in the film. In fact, the directors use an Armenian hymn, “Der Voghormia,” at intense and sad moments of the film, especially when Maryam is separated from her brother.

Overall, the film was authentic, utilizing beautiful metaphors and music, and was a great way

SAS, FROM PAGE 5

this task,” added Der Matossian.

The Executive Council would like to engage more members in activities and encourages anyone who is interested in Armenian Studies to contact the Executive Council with suggestions, concerns, and feedback.

The SAS, founded in 1974, is the international professional association representing scholars and teachers in the field of

to introduce the topic of the Armenian Genocide through a more humane point of view.

As part of the discussion, viewers were able to ask Prof. Husain and Prof. Der Mugardechian questions about the film through the question-and-answer function on Zoom. A recording of the discussion can be found on the Armenian Studies YouTube Channel.

Armenian Studies. The aim of the SAS is to promote the study of Armenian culture and society, including history, language, literature, and social, political, and economic questions.

Information about the SAS can be found on its website at societyforarmenianstudies.com or by following the SAS on its Facebook page, @societyforarmenianstudies.

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CONFERENCE, FROM PAGE 1

Christine M. Philliou began the international conference with a keynote address. Dr. Philliou walked the audience through how a “naive historian” would research the establishment of the early Turkish Republic. She began by presenting questions that one would have if they had no knowledge of the Armenian Genocide, World War I, the Turkish revolution, and whatever else came before and after the formation of the early Turkish Republic. She also mentioned how general the documentation of the events available for the period of 1923 and 1928 is and the boundaries researchers of the topic face; including interpreting Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s foundational speech *Nutuk*, the revisions of *Nutuk* by Atatürk’s followers in the 1940’s and by historians in the 1980’s, the movement for genocide recognition by Armenians and a few Turkish scholars, and the efforts of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) Coalition in the early 2000’s. In all, Dr. Philliou’s keynote served as a great introduction to the topics presented throughout the panel.

Next, Dr. Christopher Sheklian, director of the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center, presented, “Armenian and the Problem Space of Secularism in the Early Turkish Republic.” Dr. Sheklian described how the transition to secularism in the early Turkish Republic established the relations between the Armenians and Turkey up until today. He emphasizes that secularism is central to understanding the social, political, and economic development of the Early Turkish Republic, especially after the development of the AKP (Justice and Development Party) coalition, which used secularism as a dominant force in Turkish politics. As a result, secularism evolved away from the *millet* system and produced the category of religion as a form of ideology. Dr. Sheklian added that the Armenian Church, due to the role of Armenian clergymen in the Ottoman

Empire as political spokesmen, now had both a political and social status; different from how we view religion today. He ends his lecture with an introduction to *vakıfs* (foundations), asserting that they were a friction point for the Turkish republic due to their blurred boundaries between religion and politics.

Erdem İter (UCLA) concluded the first evening session with his lecture titled, “The Ottoman Imperial Legacy on Turkish Nation Building: An Analysis of the General Inspectorates (1895-1945).” İter presented an outline of his soon-to-be complete dissertation covering the period of the formation of the early Turkish Republic beginning in 1895 and ending in 1952. He focused primarily on the construction of the state, based on the relations between the Ottoman Turks, the Armenians, and the Kurds during the Hamidian and Young Turk Periods.

On Saturday morning, Dr. Talin Suciyan, from Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, Germany, began the second session with her lecture, “The Amorphous/Abstracted Peasant of Ottoman and Turkish Historiography.” In her lecture, Dr. Suciyan discussed how the secondary Turkish publications eliminated the use of the term “reaya,” or “peasant,” as a method of erasing Armenian history from their literature and to conceal how central Armenian peasants were to the Ottoman Empire and the formation of the early Turkish Republic. She explained that the term, “reaya,” a distinguishing category in the early Turkish Republic, refers to the non-Muslim, taxpaying subjects, who were permanent hereditary tenants attached to the soil within the Ottoman Empire.

Dr. Suciyan argued that deleting the term eliminates Armenians and peasants from the Turkish historiography and the only way to compare this erasure of the Armenian population in Turkey today is to look at the Armenian Administrative Records, particularly those from real estate from the 1930’s. She

then concluded by describing how the Turkish Republic collected personal information from its citizens, implying that records were used to spy on them. This reinforces the idea that the removal of the term for categorizing the Armenians is solely to eliminate any record or knowledge of the Armenian people and other non-Muslim inhabitants from their lands and history.

Following Dr. Suciyan, Dr. Ümit Kurt from the Polonsky Academy in Van Leer Institute of Jerusalem, spoke on “History of a Local Republican Entrepreneur in New Turkey: Cemil Alevli.” In his lecture, Dr. Kurt walked through the biography of Cemil Alevli, an entrepreneur, capitalist, and urban member of the bourgeoisie of Aintab, to illustrate the active and direct involvement of local elites, also known as the Aintab gentry, in the destruction of Armenian homes and mass migration of the Armenians. He then added that the confiscation and liquidation of Armenian wealth from the massacres of 1895 up to the 1940’s was a source of wealth for Muslims in the Republic of Turkey. In fact, Dr. Kurt explained that Cemil Alevli’s source of wealth came from Armenians, including land, buildings, and the knowledge of carpet and textile making. He then asserted that after the war, keys to Armenian homes and medallions were given away as prizes to Turkish elites. Dr. Kurt concluded with a quote from one of the recipients: “We save Aintab and all we get is two keys and a medallion?”

Finally, Dr. Ari Şekeryan, a Manoogian Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, concluded the international conference with his lecture titled, “The ‘loyal citizens’ of the Republic: The Armenian Community During the First Years of the Republic of Turkey (1923-1928).” During his lecture, Dr. Şekeryan describes how the remaining Armenian and non-Muslim population were treated in the early Turkish Republic, despite their loyalty

ASO Holds Fundraiser for Artsakh and Armenia

ASO, FROM PAGE 1

ASO Treasurer Tatiana Samouie further explained the design and symbolism of the T-shirt. “Pomegranates symbolize life and the trees symbolize growth; thus, the pomegranate tree represents the eternal life of the Armenian people. For centuries the Armenian people have fought for our land, faith, and pure existence, but we have always found strength in our unity and roots,” said Samouie.

All proceeds from the T-shirt purchases were donated to Artsakh through the Armenian Assembly \$2M Matching Humanitarian Program, and ultimately to the Armenia Fund. All 250 T-shirts ordered by ASO were sold within a few days. “The speed that we sold out our T-shirts brought me such pride in our community. I was also proud how they came together to support



Photo: ASP Archive

The ASO held a Halloween pumpkin carving event.

Armenia and Artsakh during their time of need. It demonstrated our unity and power—all for a good cause to help our country,” said ASO Public Relations Officer Suzanna Ekmekchyan.

In total the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State raised \$4,000. The Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State expresses its gratitude to the Fresno community for its support of this cause.

During the Fall semester the ASO finally had their first in-person social of the year. On a sunny Halloween afternoon, October 31, a group of pumpkins and two watermelons sat in a nearby park awaiting their time to finally be carved or decorated by ASO members. It did not take long for the pumpkin carvers to get to work. Everyone was determined to start carving their pumpkins and it turned out to be quite a messy afternoon. Everyone got their hands dirty with carving utensils, paintbrushes, and other accessories. Large amounts of pumpkin-insides were thrown onto the table as many raced to complete their masterpieces. It

turns out that the pleasant day in the park turned into a competition to see who would carve the best looking pumpkin.

While this was happening, some ASO members scrambled around the tables to salvage every pumpkin seed so they could be baked and enjoyed as a snack later on. After all the hard work, the pumpkin carvers and decorators placed their works of art on display. Some of the pumpkins turned out to be scary looking while others appeared to be funny. The watermelons had their own costumes and some pumpkins showed great Armenian pride. In the end, there was no one to act as an official judge for this “competition,” so unfortunately no single pumpkin was chosen for the grand prize. Despite this, everyone had a blast.

Those who gathered that day were overjoyed because for many it was the first time being with their fellow ASO friends since this past March. It was pleasant to finally talk, eat, and laugh with friends in person; this always is superior to seeing friends through a computer screen.

Have you moved recently?

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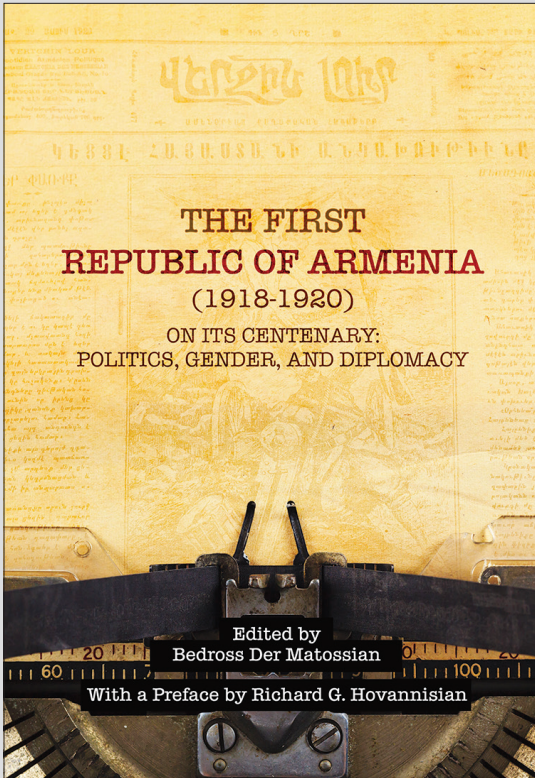
to the nation. He explained that after the signing of the Treaty of Lausanne and the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, Armenian leadership based in Istanbul moved to create closer relations with the Turkish government in Erzurum. They were tired of the constant wars lasting from 1912 to 1922; many intellectuals lost their lives to wars and genocide; thousands of refugees were displaced to Syria, Greece, and Lebanon; and many Armenians that were left in Istanbul emigrated to the United States of America and Europe in 1922, eventually resulting in a feeling of betrayal and need to establish good connection with Turkish leadership and integrate into Turkish society.

Dr. Şekeryan then explained how the Armenians went about proving their loyalty to the Turkish Republic. One example he presented was when Armenian businessmen forced Patriarch Zaven to unofficially resign to appease the Turkish National Movement leadership who viewed him as a traitor, replacing him with Bishop Kevork Aslanian as *locum-tenens*. He then presented

the hardships and struggles Armenians and non-Muslims faced when they remained in Turkey. Dr. Şekeryan explained that non-Muslim schools were forced to hire unqualified Turkish language, geography, and history teaching staff, often having to pay them four times the salary of the qualified Armenian or non-Muslim teachers. He then added that there was a travel ban in Istanbul, preventing Armenians from claiming their lands in Anatolia, continuing business travels, or returning home. Dr. Şekeryan concluded his lecture by describing the anti-Armenian publications of nationalistic Turkish newspapers and how this led to killings and hate crimes against Armenians who remained loyal out of necessity and fear.

At the end of each session of the conference, viewers were able to ask the panelists questions through the question-and-answer function on Zoom. Recordings of this international conference, along with other lectures of this semester can be found on the Armenian Studies YouTube channel at bit.ly/armenianstudiesyoutube.

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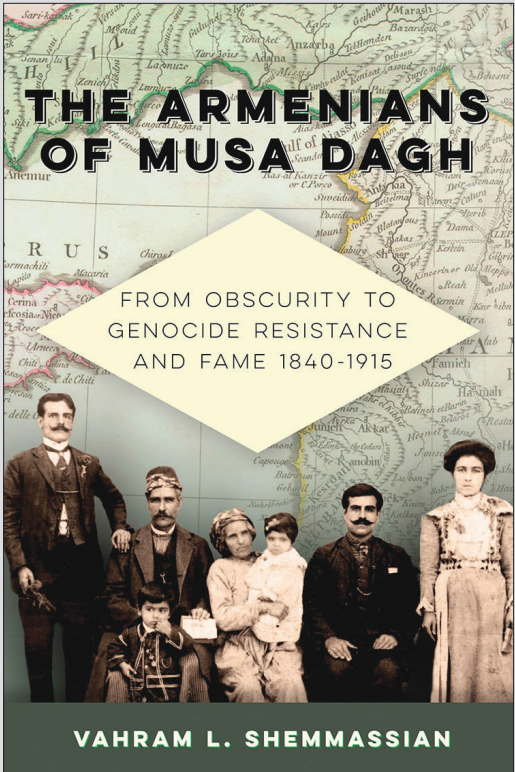
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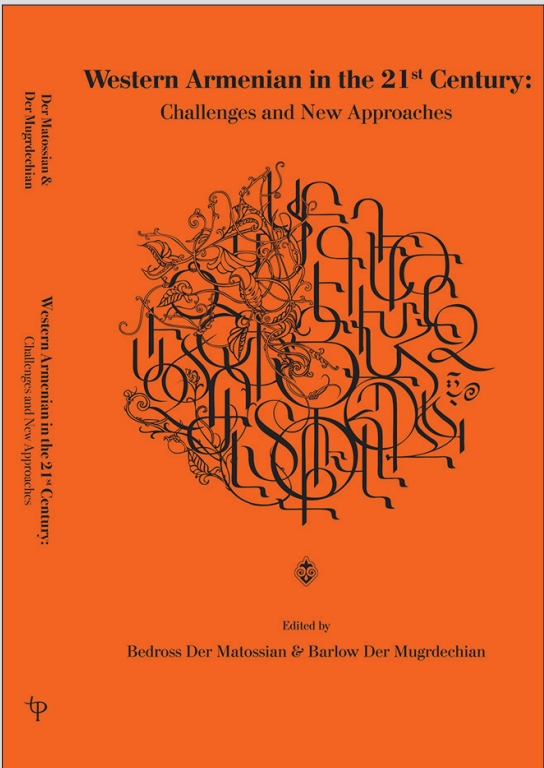
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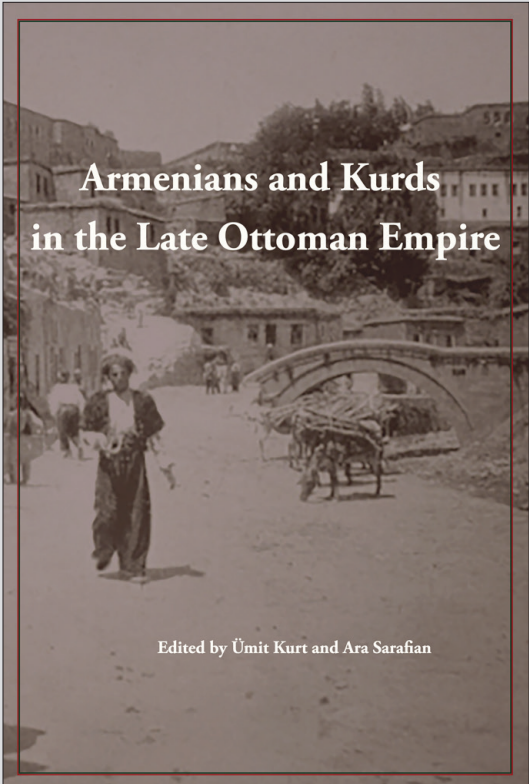
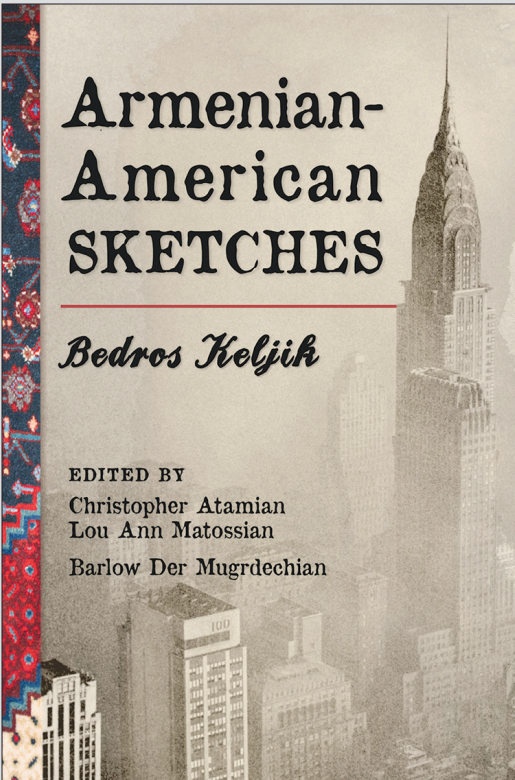


#11-*The Armenians of Musa Dagh*
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