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# LU3 CUPONTU Hye Sharzhoom

December 1992

Supplement to the Daily Collegian

# Kouymjian lecture discusses Armenian social change and survival during the time of Columbus

By Barlow DerMugrdechian Advisor and Armen Aghishian Staff Writer

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at CSU Fresno, discussed the oppression and unstable political environment that Armenia experienced during the time of Columbus and throughout history, as part of the Columbus Quincentanary lecture series. His lecture, titled, "Armenia in the Age of Columbus" was presented Thursday evening, December 3, 1992 and was sponsored in cooperation with the Departments of Geography and History, and the School of Social Sciences.

The lecture also acted as the



Dr. Dickran Kouymjian speaks on "Armenia in the Age of Coumbus."

Endowed Chair given by the chair

Kouymjian's main thesis centered on the momentous social change which took place in Armenian society in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Kouymjian Annual Lecture of the Berberian began by stating that "Armenia in

the Age of Columbus is full of paradoxes...The period was one of great distress but also of continuance. The radical transformation of Armenian society from a medieval to a modern one resulted. "

Kouymjian characterized Columbus as a "shadowy man with

origins which are not clear." He said that some historians said he was Armenian, some Italian, and yet others claimed he was Jewish. "All of us, young and old, have at

least thought of the recent 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America."

Kouymjian also one of great distress but also said that Columbus' life spanned two centuries, the

15th and 16th (1451-1506) and simultaneously, during this "offshoot of European colonialism," there was a radical transformation of Armenian society beginning when the last Armenian kingdom of Cilicia under King Levon, was seized by the Mamelukes in 1375.

For Armenians the Age of Columbus was the middle of the Ar-

struggled to survive. The period is either ignored in standard histories or relegated to a page or two. Armenians lived in quite a depressed

"Armenia in the Age

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of continuance."

state. There was widespread suffering including starvation, heavy taxation, and deportation.

"Life was difficult for Armenians during the Age of Columbus,"emphasized Kouymjian. "Armenians endured foreign conquests during these centuries but ultimately survived."

The depredations of the rival Aq Koyunlu and Kara Koyunlu tribes

See COLUMBUS, page 8

# **ASP Annual Fund the most** successful of all time at CSUF

By Barlow DerMugrdechian Advisor

Last July, the Armenian Studies Program joined a small group of academic departments at California State University, Fresno which conduct an annual support program. Such an effort, part of the Academic Annual Funds, is usually conducted to benefit a school. "We felt there was an identifiable constituency that would be interested in and able to support the program," said Richard K. Francois, Director of University Development, in explaining the strategic decision. "And the Advisory Board for the Kalfayan Center for Armenian Studies was willing to back the effort—another important factor."

The results were gratifying-more than 170 gifts were received totalling \$22,742 and some requests to foundations are still being discussed. The results made the Armenian Studies Academic Annual

See ANNUAL FUND, page 8

# Cramer gives first-hand account of Karabakh

Fresno (California) Bee reporter John D. Cramer recently spent one month on a free-lance reporting trip in Nagorno-Karabagh, talking to soldiers and civilians on both sides of the front. This is the first installment of his stories.

A general assignment reporter for the Bee since 1991, Cramer perviously worked for the Los Angeles Times and the Savannah (Georgia) News-Press.

The morning was clear and bright as the trucks moved out of the valley and into the dusty foothills in the east. Beyond were mountains, snowy and shining in the sun. The convoy was loaded with relief supplies-flour, medicine, gasoline, cement-from Yerevan, Armenia. It was bound for Stepanakert, the capital of

the republic of Nagorno-Karabakh. The convoy rumbled through the Armenia countryside. Villagers sat in the shade of trees along the road. They watched silently and held up their fists, palms forward, as the trucks passed. The drivers did the

"It means fight for Karabakh, unite Karabakh and Armenia," a driver said, holding up his fist. "God willing, we will do it."

Barefoot children laughed and chased the long line of trucks vanishing in the dust and diesel fumes. The road was steep, switch-backing up, and the trucks went slowly through the brown rocky hills and then green sloping fields of wildflowers and finally the snowy peaks.

"We want no more fighting with Azerbaijan, but they do not give up so easily," said a soldier. His face was blank, his eyes hard and dull, his hands holding

See KARABAKH, page 2

# Karabakh, Continued

his automatic assault rifle as if he had held it 1,000 years. "I am tired. I want to go home. I have lost many friends. When will the war end?" The convoy stopped often in the mountains. There were many delays. No one knew why. "Maybe to keep the stragglers from falling too far behind," said an old man driving a gas truck. "An attack could happen anytime."

Nearly all the men were civilians-truck drivers, construction workers, factory laborers, students, farmers-who volunteered to deliver supplies. They did not like stopping and sitting in clearings; they felt like targets.

"The last last time I came was a year ago," a big man said, steering his truck loaded with flour up the narrow road. "I have a family in Yerevan. My wife is worried. She did not want me to come again. But the people in the Karabakh are our brothers and they need our help." He downshifted around a bend and the engine groaned.

The last time I was in the Karabakh, I gave my last piece of bread to a little girl and said, 'Don't worry. We will be back.' So, you see, I have no choice. I must go

After midnight the convoy stopped at the Armenian border with Azerbaijan. Over the ridge was a narrow strip of Azerbaijan, then Karabakh. Armenia controlled an east-west corridor, several miles wide along the highway, through which the trucks would travel.

The night was cold. There were many stars. The moon shone on the blackened fields and pine trees along the road. The sounds of frogs and crickets filled the grass. Some drivers lay under blankets in the truck cabs. Many did not sleep. The convoy was stopped in a clearing; they felt exposed again. They stood nervously smoking cigarettes in the shadows of the trucks and talked in low voices and looked for movement in the dark meadows and waited for sunrise.

A driver came up. He had a pistol in his belt. He held a hand grenade that he borrowed from a soldier. He had never held a hand grenade before. If felt good in his hand. "just in case," he said.

Before dawn the trucks moved out. The helicopter escort never showed up; the convoy would finish the trip alone. The dirt road narrowed and climbed sharply and fell away as it wound through the mountains. There were bomb cra-

ters and rock slides and dead trees in the way. It was always the same: the road vanished and appeared in a continual corkscrew dance before the headlights, the yellow beams swinging wildly through dust clouds in the blackness. Edges of the road had crumbled down the cliffs. The drivers held on as the trucks bucked and twisted and pounded on.

A fire burned far away in the hills. The convoy twisted down into a gorge and emerged. Ahead were the flames; it was a campfire at an Armenian road post. Three soldiers stood by the crumbled their faces and necks. In the grass nearby was a painting Lenin with bullet holes in the canvas between his eyes.

"He was as bad as the Azarbaijanis," a soldier said, and laughed.

In mid-morning the convoy stopped at a small bridge across a stream. The bridge was half collapsed with an Azerbaijani truck hanging in the middle over the deep ravine. The truck carried cookies and bazooka-type shells packed with arrow-shaped nails. Its drivers were gone. Two tanks were abandoned in the ravine. A

the convoy. He put down his AK-47 rifle and picked up a machine gun. He checked the big clip of bullets in the gun and put another clip in a pocket. He started climbing the slope alone.

It was steep with loose dirt, brush, boulders, and scrub trees. In the ridges running across the mountain face. He climbed quickly, eyes up, searching, knees pumping, halfrunning, half-climbing, leaning into the mountain for balance. He cradled the heavy gun in one arm. A crucifix dangled at his throat.

Pop, pop, pop.

He stopped, saw no one, no muzzle flashes, kept going, sometimes zig-zagging, sometimes going straight up, sure-footed like a mountain goat. He glanced back at the road. The convoy looked small. It was moving on. Something moved in the brush above. He turned and pulled the trigger-clang. clang, clang, clang-empty cartridges jumping from the big gun bucking in his hands, bullets chipping the rocks, dirt spurting up like bubbling grease. He went over and looked. No one. He kept going up.

Pop, pop, pop.

He came over a rise into a clearing and squinted in the sunlight. His face was flat and dirty. Sweat dripped from his wild black beard. There were cookie crumbs in his beard. He wiped the long hair from his eyes. The air was cold. He breathed deeply.

"You sons of bitches, where are you?" he said.

He stood in the open now, impatient, eyes darting over the countryside, firing bursts at anywhere a man man could hide. He replaced the clip. He came to an opening: maybe a small cave. He stepped close and listened for a moment and slid a gun barrel around the edge and braced his legs downhill and pulled the trigger. Bullets ricocheted around inside the little cave, and echoes spilled out. He listened, then darted his head around the edge a few times, then faced the cave fully, gun barrel leveled. No one.

He climbed on, then stopped. Ahead were steep green fields with rock ledges and trees going to the woods. The sky was pale blue and cloudless.

"Where are you?" he said.

He returned to the cave. Inside were mattresses, used candles and newly opened tins of meat. The walls had been chiseled away to make more room.

Caspian Sea Baku



stone houses, their faces flickering in the light. They were very young and their faces haggard.

Dawn came onto the mountains. It was blue-gray and misty and cold in the forest. The convoy rolled on. A man sat on a horse, tending his herd of cattle grazing along the road.

'We only want independence, self-determination for the Karabakh," he said, and waved his fist in salute at the convoy. "Go forward," he cried."

The trucks passed a hydroelectric station along a brown river below Lachin, a town clinging to the rocks at the edge of Karabakh. The Azerbaijani civilians had fled before the battle. It was quiet now. There was only the groaning of truck engines. Fires burned in the rubble of stone houses and farmyards scattered tightly across the hills. The trucks passed some Armenian soldiers squatting gypsystyle by a fire, warming their hands. They fired their rifles in the air in greeting.

Beyond the town the convoy stopped at a spring. The men filled their canteens and cupped their hands to drink and splash water on burned-out school bus was downstream.

No one seemed to know how to get around the bridge. The men stood in the road and ate the cookies and admired the nail bombs. An hour passed. An order finally came to try to drive the trucks through the ravine. The first trucks made it. grinding through the mud, and the rest followed. It was slow going.

Then the first dull popping sounds came down the mountain. Pop, pop, pop. It was faint, like firecrackers exploding behind the ridge, but then the wind shifted and the men knew what it was. They were calm. They got behind the trucks. No one wanted to give the snipers a clear shot. The sound came clearer-pop, pop, pop.

"There could be many of them," a driver said. "I don't like

Martin Ajamian, a platoon commander, had been talking about war and Azerbaijanis as conquerors and Armenians as defenders of their homeland. Now he was staring up the mountain and scowling with a mouthful of cookies.

> Pop, pop, pop. He told his men to stay with

sounding disappointed. "They were just here. This is where they lived." He came out of the cave. There was eagerness on his face. He fingered the big gun hopefully. He stared at the tree line above and listened to the wind. Nothing. Only the dry weeds moving and birds singing and the smell of the moun-"The Karabagh is our land.

"They ran away," he said,

We will never surrender it. It is linked with Armenia forever," he said. " I did not want to come up here; O am not crazy. But I am not frightened because I am ready to die if I have to for freedom."

He started quickly down the slope. The convoy had been rolling for half an hour. His men were waiting. They were supposed to be ahead of the convoy scouting for trouble, and he was eager to get out front again.

## Hye Sharzhoom **STAFF**

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# Many scholarships available for students interested in Armenian Studies

With the recent 40% fee increased that was approved by the state earlier this year many students have felt the crunch in paying for their college tuition. While some students joke that winning the California Lottery is their only way to afford school, many students do not realize that there are a variety of scholarships available from both CSU, Fresno and outside sources to help them fund their education.

Specifically for students of Armenian descent or with interest in Armenian Studies, there are two main sources for scholarships for the 1993-1994 semesters. According to Barlow Der Mugredechian,

lecturer for the CSUF Armenian Studies Program, there are over seven categories of scholarships available through the CSUF general scholarship program for students who have shown a demonstrated interest in Armenian Studies. Students of all ethnicities are eligible to apply. These scholarships are made possible through the Charles K. Pategian and Pansy Pategian Zlokovich scholarship, the Yerevan, Rose and Hovannes Levonian Educational Grant and the Ruth Azadian scholarship

The following is a list of scholarships available through CSUF: Armenian Art- \$200.00 grants (up to 10 annually). Students who enroll in Armenian art courses, Armenian 121 or Armenian 123, are eligible.

Armenian Language- \$300 grants (up to 15 annually). Students who enroll for a year of Armenian language are eligible. This scholarship is renewable upon enrollment in a second year of lan-

Armenian Literature-\$200 grants (up to 10 annually). Students who enroll in Armenian 148 or Armenian 45 are eligible.

Armenian Studies-\$200 grants (up to 25 annually). Students who demonstrate an interest in Armenian Studies by taking

Armenian History-\$200 grants (up to 10 annually). Students who enroll in Armenian history courses (History 108A or 108B) are eligible.

Armenian Studies Minor-\$200-\$800 grants. The minor in Armenian studies consists of 24 units of study. Students who have completed 6 units of the minor are eligible for \$200 grants. Students who have completed 12 units of the minor are eligible for a \$400 grant while students who have completed 17 units of the minor are eligible for \$800 grants.

Research Fellowship-A research fellowship will be awarded

to a student for working on projects associated with Armenian Studies 190, Independent Study. The applicant will receive one-year full tuition plus a \$1000 grant.]

There are also many scholarships and financial aid available to students of Armenian descent from a variety of outside sources. A 17page directory of these financial aid sources is available in the Armenian Studies Program Office in PB384. These awards range from \$50 to \$3000.

Scholarship applications are currently available in the CSUF Financial Aid Office. February 1, 1993 is the deadline for the coming school year.

# TERS TO THE EDITO

Dear Editor:

I have enclosed a donation for your newspaper. I think Hye Sharzhoom is a very fine newspaper as it gives young students an opportunity to express themselves on important Armenian issues.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Richard Demirjian Moraga, California

Dear Editor:

I was completely shocked and utterly disappointed after reading the October 1992 issue of Hye Sharzhoom.

As editor from Fall 1990 to Spring 1992, I tried to establish a newspaper that would be accessible and enjoyed by all people-not just Armenians. All of the progress that I had made has unfortunately been set aside by reverting back to 1920's Armenian type of politics (read the article "Overview" on page 1 if you don't believe that politics is why the ASO is currently faltering).

First off, Hye Sharzhoom was established for the students of CSUFresno. It is a student newspaper. It was not meant for Armenians in San Francisco or Armenians in Lebanon and, above all, it is not part of the ASO. The ASO and "Hye Sharzhoom" are separate entities and are funded separately. Aside from the editor and advisor, only three other names appeared in the staff boxand it is the opinions of just these people that are now evident throughout the paper and not the opinions of the majority of Armenians on campus.

As editor, I received (and can look through the "Letters to the Editor" section of past issues-incidentally missing from this issue) compliments regarding the paper and the different segments that I had established to appeal to what the majority of the people wanted to read. The "Hye Profile," which profiled a successful Armenian of the community and the "Campus Hye Profiles," which asked questions to different Armenian students and Armenian Trivia, light-hearted editorials and commentaries, were all missing from this latest issue.

Understand that I took over as editor because it was something I felt I could contribute positively towards. I am proud of the fact that I was always able to get willing and competent students to work on my staff-this recent issue has just two staff writers. My articles were in no way immatureand anyone who believes they were immature is definitely lacking in intelligence and a sense of humor.

A reason why so many Armenian students go through CSU Fresno without participating in the ASO is maybe because they don't want to be associated with the "politics" of this organization. Most of the Armenian students of CSU Fresno (except for the few "cultural elite") are more American than un-American. If you want to get more students involved, stop trying to constantly create problems and focusing on just Armenian activities. This is not a knock on Armenians-read any of my past articles and you will clearly see that I strongly advocate being Armenian. Yet, if you want more participation, have events and activities that nian student newspaper in the world. people will actually want to participate

Again, the "Overview" article on page 1 is truly discouraging to see. If the truly one-sided, biased, and untrue arhe set out to do.

And another thing, if you want to compare the current Hye Sharzhoom with the Hye Sharzhoom of last year, that is perfectly fine with me because I am proud of the professional look and Hye Sharzhoom, "An Overview of substance the paper had when I was editor. Here's a suggestion-why not ask students of Armenian 1A and Armenian Studies classes which one they prefer?

Sincerely,

Jeff Ahronian, former editor of Hye Sharzhoom

Editor's note: This edition of "Hye Sharzhoom" is under new editorship. Mr. Ahronian's letter refers to the previous issue which had a different editor.

Advisor's Note: In response to the letter of former editor Jeff Ahronian the following points must be made:

1) Hye Sharzhoom was started by members of the ASO in 1979 and ASO members have been actively involved in the newspaper since. Hye Sharzhoom was started so that the students on this campus would have a voice not only on this campus but in the community at large, whether in San Francisco, Lebanon, or anywhere else in the world. That is why it is the largest circulation Arme-

,2) The articles in Hye Sharzhoom reflect the opinions of individual students and the diversity that they represent. If Mr. Ahronian would attend individual writing it wanted to achieve a ASO meetings he would see that there are no 1920's (?) politics as usual, but ticle, he definitely accomplished what rather a group of students addressing the concerns of their generation. The ASO has always been an open and neutral forum for students to exchange

> 3) The article in the last issue of ASO," was an article written by a non-Armenian and first published in the Insight campus newspaper and then reprinted in the Hye Sharzhoom. It reflected the opinions of those interviewed although it did not present a complete picture of the situation, but rather discussed issues which were dealt with last year.

4) As to Mr. Ahronian's suggestion to solicit responses from students regarding their views of the current versus past issues of Hye Sharzhoom, readers should know students from Armenian Studies classes who wrote letters containing unfavorable comments about Hye Sharzhoom were not published by Mr. Ahronian.

Hye Sharzhoom will continue to reflect the diversity of student opinion on the Fresno State campus.

Letters to Hye Sharzhoom can be sent to The Armenian Studies Office, CSU, Fresno, Fresno, CA 93740-0004.

## Columbus, Continued

and the later Ottoman Empire are reflected in the disastrous decline of society and culture under Turkic oppression.

Koumjian said that, "In the sixteenth century, the Armenians suffered terribly from the wars between the new Iranian dynasty and an Ottoman empire advancing east. The superpowers confronted each other directly. However bad the fifteenth century appeared in social, economic, and cultural terms, the sixteenth century was to be worse."

"Constant warfare, destruction, and the loss of royal patrons had their predictable effects on the arts. The result was palpable in all intellectual and cultural activities of the time. Of the two centuries, the sixteenth and especially its first three-quarters, was far worse off than the fifteenth."

Shah Abbas of the Safavid dynasty of Persia forcibly deported over 80,000 Armenians in the early seventeenth century to his capital of Isfahan. Many died on the journey and the areas from which they were deported have remained de-

populated until today.

Armenians had learned well how to continue life under non-Armenian and non-Christian rule. They took advantage of any benevolence offered by charitable governors, put aside something for worse days which they knew were sure to come, and always prayed for a better future.

Kouymjian also discussed how a new class of Armenians that emerged from the age of Columbus. This class was known as the *khodjas*. By the mid-fifteenth century, sources spoke regularly of provincial merchants called *khodjas* who had become sufficiently wealthy, mostly through trade, to endow—at times modestly—churches and monasteries. They became the dominant class in Armenian society.

"The term khodja is a title of importance like esquire or lord," said Kouymjian. "Through their affluence, from the 15th to the 18th centuries, the khodjas patronized the church and Armenian culturethey emerged as great philanthropists."

"Two parallel historical forces were at work in Armenia at the Age of Columbus. The Ottoman wars and subsequent colonial oppression shattered Armenia, destroyed its ancient culture, and decimated its population just like Europe's conquest of America had enslaved and annihilated the Indian nations, and ravaged their ancient and rich culture.

The Armenians endured foreign conquest for centuries; they learned the ways of survival. Armenians profited from the age of discovery, venturing even farther away from home with their wares. A vast Armenian trading network was forged. Individual commerce now provided wealth traditionally associated with land-owning and state control of trade routes. A new class of merchants, the khodjas, replaced the feudal nobility and clergy as the major source of cultural patronage; they gradually evolved into a dynamic and wealthy middle-class. The khodias, active wherever trade could turn a profit, became the motivating force behind increased relations with the

west; they also inspired a curiousity toward science and new technology."

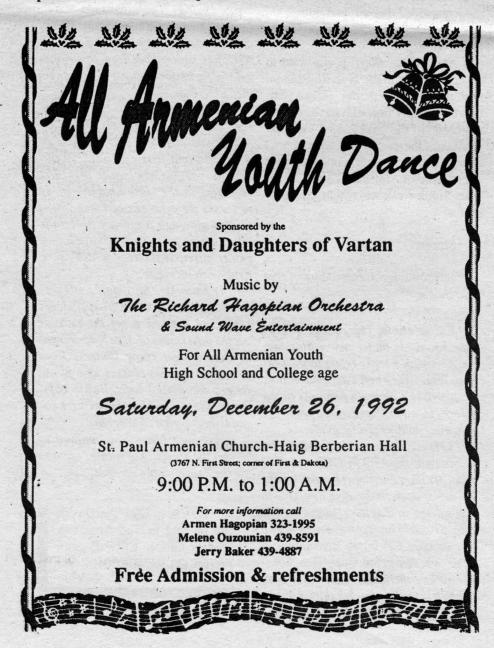
The existence of a middle-class of merchants engaged in international trade was an important factor in the process of modernization. Itreinforced communications between Armenians and the advanced commercial centers of the West. As a group the khodjas were responsible for the accumulation of wealth, the importation of luxury items, the adoption and banalization of new inventions such as printing, the creation of a reserve of individuals competent in commercial relations and versed in foreign languages, and the conduit for enterprising persons seeking their fortunes in an Armenian world where the traditional base of power-land ownership-was no longer a productive possibility."

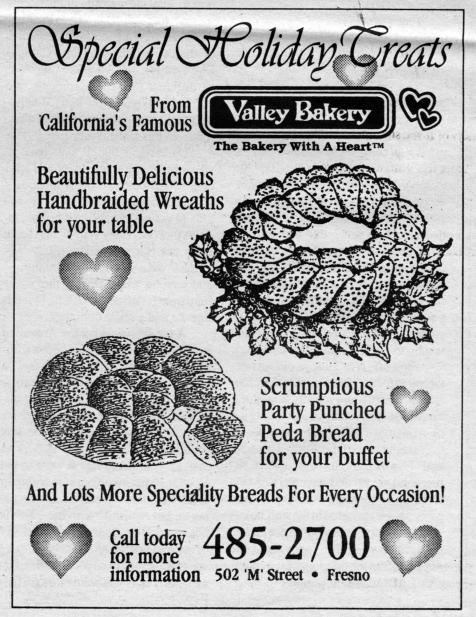
"The gradual destruction of the old ruling classes in Armenia during the bitter years of the fifteenth and sixteenth century and the evolution of the *khodjas* as a class was the single most important factor in the nation's survival before the

Turkic onslaught."

Kouymjian concluded his lecture by stating that, "The formation of a merchant class is the symbol of transformation of Armenia society, and a reflection of its inner social mobility. The rapid rise of Armenian *khodjas* in the urban centers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries strengthens the case for choosing the epoch of Columbus as the moment of transition in Armenian life from the late medieval world to the modern one."

Dr. Peter Klassen, Dean of the School of Social Sciences and Director of the International Study Program at CSUF introduced Kouymjian as the evening's keynote speaker. Klassen noted Kouymjian's academic accomplishments including teaching internationally at the American University of Beirut, the American University of Cairo, and Haigazian College. He also is on the editorial board of many publications and has published over a dozen books and an Armenian album of paleography.





# Volpp named President of new Yerevan University

By, Dr. Dickran Kouymjian Professor of Armenian Studies

The newly founded Haigazian University College Graduate School of Management in Yerevan, Armenia has appointed as its first President, Dr. Louis Volpp, recently retired professor of Management at CSUF. Haigazian University College is an American institution of higher learning established nearly four decades ago in Beirut, Lebanon. The University, closely related to the Armenian Missionary Association of America, was invited to open an American styled graduate business program in the newly independent Armenian Republic.

Volpp served fifteen years at CSUF, at first as the Vice President for Academic Affairs and then as professor in the School of Business. Previously he had been Dean of the Graduate School of Business at Columbia University in New York and occupied the same post earlier at Duke University. The new President took up his duties in Armenia in early October. The Haigazian Graduate School of Management is in its second year, though last year was a preliminary one, preparing accepted students with proper language skills to begin classes to be taught in English.

President Volpp will set up the curriculum of the school but also teach courses in his specialization. Haigazian is the second American University to be established in Armenia. The American University of Armenia is now in its second full year of operation.

With the new President is his wife Holly Volpp, a graduate of the Nursing School at the University of Iowa; she will be working closely with the health care situation in Armenia. Later this year, the Volpps' son, Bryan, a doctor specializing in infectious diseases, will go to Armenia on a special assignment for the Ministry of Health.

Before Louis Volpp left Fresno for Armenia, Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies, a long time friend and colleague, conducted an interviewed with the new president for Hye Sharzhoom. Below are excerpts from their exchange.

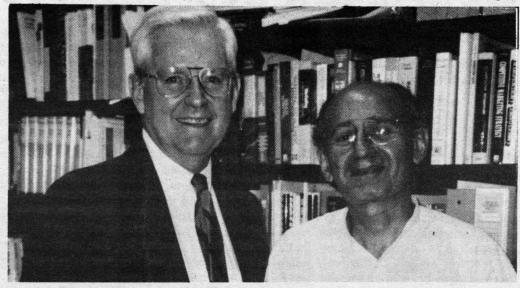
**D.K.** Dr. Volpp what made you accept a post in a former Soviet Republic that you had never visited so soon after retiring from a long career as professor and administrator?

L.V. I have always wanted to serve society, especially by serving students, the future of any nation. I had been fascinated by the events that swept the Soviet Union, its disintegration, and the attempt being made by the newly independent republics to establish market economies in place of the former state run ones. Haigazian University's newly formed graduate business program in Armenia seemed an extraordinarily fortuitous chance to make a direct impact on the future managers of a new country.

**D.K.** But why Armenia and why so quickly?

L.V. We have known Armenians most of our lives, and of course especially since Holly and I came to Fresno. The former pastor of our Presbyterian church was Bill Antablin, himself an Armenian. He and his wife Florence were instrumental in putting me in direct contact with the administration of Haigazian University College. Though I had never been to Armenia, I knew a lot about it from Armenian friends, colleagues, and students at CSUF. Armenia seemed like a perfect choice.

D.K. Yet you certainly knew that Armenia was in a virtually undeclared war with Azerbaijan over the former Armenian territory of the Mountainous Karabagh, now part of Azerbaijan. And you were informed about the shortages in electricity, the Azeri blockade of Armenia which prevents any fuel and even food supplies from reaching the country, the mounting inflation nearly



Dr. Louis Volpp and Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, before Volpp's departure to Armenia.

400% since the breakup of the Soviet union, the devastation of the earthquake of 1988, and the hundreds of thousands of Armenia refugees from Azerbaijan vying to simply keep life and limb together. In the face of these catastrophic conditions how were you able to make a positive decision so quickly?

L.V. For twenty years my wife and I have talked about what we wanted to do after retirement to help others. We had considered missionary aid work with our church. We had thought of the Peace Corps, or a similar activity, that would allow us to put our accumulated talents to the best use. When I heard about Haigazian University's venture in Armenia and saw the chance to make a different in the future direction and management of a new country it seemed to fit in well with our desires and what the two of us had prepared for all our lives: teaching and leading.

**D.K.** What specific plans do you have as the President of a new Graduate School in a new country?

L.V. I would like to build the Haigazian Graduate School of Management into an institution that can educate young Armenian professionals in the modern practice of

management. Additionally, and as a complement to that program I will work to develop at the school a program in political economy so that the environment of business practices in a Republic moving toward a market economy be as congenial as possible. Management cannot be taught in a vacuum; those learning business practices must also appreciate the workings of international politics and how they relate to a global economy.

**D.K.** Have you had previous experience in working and teaching your specialty abroad?

L.V. I've taught an executive program in Hong Kong, been a consultant for a European university consortium on the design of graduate business programs, an American program advisor for a French school, and a consultant for the United Nations in Egypt. My wife and I have lived and traveled abroad quite a bit and we are looking forward to the challenging assignment in Armenia.

**D.K.** We hope you and Holly will be back soon and tell us at Fresno State, perhaps at our annual Armenian Studies Banquet in February, about your experiences. Good luck.in Armenia!

# Bousian designs new logo for ASP

By Cynthia Baxter Hye Sharzhoom Editor

The Armenian Studies Program has experienced a new look with the unveiling of the program's new logo which was created as a favor to the department by Jack Bousian, a retired graphic artist and advertising art director.

Bousian, who has worked as the art director for such advertising agencies as BBDO in San Francisco and his own business

Graphics One Associates in Stanford, Connecticut, said the new logo is a very simple design of a stylized letter "a." He said he played

with different combinations of the abbreviation A.S.P., which stands for the Armenian Studies Program, but he felt that the simple "a" form would be more recognizable.

The new logo will be used for ter and press releases.



publications of both the CSU, Fresno Armenian Studies Program and of the Sarkis and Meliné Center for Armenian Studies, including the program's newsletter and press releases.

# DID YOU KNOW THAT ....?

By Lara Vahe Demirjian, Staff Writer

- 1) Did you know that Mount Ararat is 17,500 feet high?
- 2) Did you know that Karabagh is a modern Armenian name that Turkey gave to Artsakh, which is the historic Armenian name of the region?
- 3) Did you know that "Khatchars" (cross-stones) are only found in Armenia?
- 4) Did you know that Armenians were the first people to accept Christianity as a state religion in 314 A.D.?
- 5) Did you know that Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, was founded in 782 B.C.?
- 6) Did you know that we get the "Armenian Weekly," "California Courier," and "Armenian Reporter" in our own school library?
- 7) Did you know that the former Governor of California was Armenian? (George Deukmejian)

# Bedrosian describes recent trip to Armenia

By Bryan Bedrosian Special to Hye Sharzhoom

Bryan Bedrosian is a former President of the Armenian Students Organization at CSU Fresno. He and his wife Rosie currently reside in Fowler, California where Bryan is involved in the raisin industry. His impressions from his second trip to Armenia are the basis for the following essay.

On Thursday, October 29, 1992, my wife Rosie and I landed at Zvartnots airport in Yerevan, the capital city of the Republic of Armenia. On that cold clear morning the first sight that greeted us was Mt. Ararat. At that moment I wept. It would be the first of many times that I would weep on our trip; both from joy at being in Armenia again and from sorrow at seeing the condition of the Armenian people, our people.

My wife and I on November 3 took a day trip to the cities of Spitak, Kirovagan(Vanadzor), and Stepanavan in northern Armenia. If there is a hell on earth, it is northern Armenia during the blockade in the winter.

Right now in those cities there is no natural gas being supplied to the homes. Parts of these cities have electricity only three hours a day and parts have no electricity. In order to keep warm the people must gather wood. So people are sawing trees down in northern Armenia at a furious rate, although some weren't able to collect any wood. One woman confided to us with tears in her eyes that she has no wood to burn and she wanders how she'll keep warm this winter. She wasn't worried but scared, for herself and for her children.

The first city we passed through that day was Spitak, epicenter of the December 1988 earthquake. There were two sights that made an impression on me: the first was the great size of the cemetery and the second were those awful metal boxes that people are living in. I went into one of these boxes which measured approximately twenty-five feet by ten feet with small windows cut out for light and no insulation. I don't know how they could stand it in the dead of winter, as it was already freezing in them, in early No-

vember

Our last stop before returning to Yerevan was Kirovakan and Stepanavan. Snow had been predicted there for the evening so our stay was short. We didn't want to get caught in the snow. The general condition of the people in these two cities was better than in Spitak. But with no heating fuel and little electricity it was still intolerable by western standards. I asked people how they survive the winter. They said that they had spent all summer gathering up food and preparing for the winter. Many people had little cellars where the food was kept. To survive the cold they said that they gather wood and if there is no wood they put on all their clothes, freeze, and hope to survive.

On my return to Yerevan from northern Armenia I spent time exploring the city. I found since my last visit in 1983 that the city had grown more dilapidated with roads and buildings needing maintenance and repair.

I also noticed that with each rise in the price of gasoline the public transportation systems became more and more crowded. My wife took the electric tram two times. This is the main source of public transportation in Yerevan. She said the experience was just awful. People pushing and shoving and yelling at each other and fighting to get a space on the tram. The problem she said was too few trams and too many people. After riding the tram twice and experiencing all its unpleasantness she refused to ride it again.

General economic conditions in Yerevan were a lot worse than I had imagined or heard from the press. There was electricity only twelve hours per day and natural gas was shut off to homes the day I left for America. Most factories were closed or running part time. The average wage was 2000-2500 rubles a month which works out to five to six dollars per month. The average retiree's pension was only 650 rubles per month-equal to one dollar and fifty cents per month. The exchange rate of rubles to the dollar was 390 rubles to the dollar. And the ruble was devaluating all the time. The value of the ruble to the dollar is tied to what Moscow sets its value at. Moscow ties the value of the ruble to the value of oil, gasoline, and other factors. Generally Moscow's ruble to dollar exchange is higher than Armenia's dollar to ruble exchange. At the time the rate of exchange in Armenia was 390 rubles to one dollar and in Moscow the rate was 400 rubles to one dollar.

The cost for staple products on the open market in Armenia while I was there was 35 cents a pound for butter and cheese, and 30 per cents a pound for meat. Meat, butter, and cheese were hard to find in Yerevan, even on the open market. Vegetables and fruits, depending on the type, were fourteen to twenty cents a pound. The price of bread in the government stores while I was there went from 1 cent a pound to 7 cents a pound. On the open market bread could cost up to ten or twelve times more. In order to get bread, people had to stand in line anywhere from twelve to twenty-four hours, often after leaving their homes at three or four o'clock in the morning to secure a place in line. It was not unusual to see 300 to 400 people in a bread line. Each person was limited to the quantity of bread he or she could buy; only a three day supply for the

The government stores were virtually empty of staple foods. You could find either cognac or items so expensive nobody could afford them.

The prices for staple goods may sound cheap to the average American, but when one considers that the average Armenian earns a dollar fifty to six dollars a month and the cost of staples are from 10-50% more expensive than they are in the U.S., one can see it is an effort to keep food on the table let alone provide any variety in the diet.

During my ten day stay in Armenia the price of gasoline increased from 70 cents a gallon to approximately two dollars a gallon. Fuel was brought and distributed by 2000 gallon tanker trucks going to the border of Armenia and Georgia to bring fuel and then selling it from these tankers right on the street. You never knew the quality of the gasoline you were buying or if the gasoline was mixed with diesel or

On Saturday November 7 the price of gasoline was \$1.50 per gallon;

on Sunday the eighth there was no gasoline to be found in the city of Yerevan but by Monday, gasoline tankers magically appeared with the gasoline at a new price of \$2.00 per gallon. With each increase in price one saw fewer and fewer cars in Yerevan thus overloading even more the public transportation systems and causing more and more public discontent.

To illustrate how tough conditions are in Armenia I observed how people wouldn't buy a head of cabbage for two cents, but would spend one hour looking for cabbage for one and a half cents a head; and if they didn't find it at the cheaper price they didn't buy it at all. It is hard to imagine people in America not being able to afford half a cent. But again one must remember that their costs for staple products are relatively more expensive than in the U.S. and for fuels up to 200%. Yet the average monthly wage is 1/250th or 1/300th of what our average wage is here.

As bad as conditions are I was personally encouraged to see how industrious and hard working the people are. Everywhere I saw people trying to make a living either by selling goods and food products out of their cars or in the little open air markets found here and there; or by selling their arts and crafts in the parks on Saturdays and Sundays; or by cultivating their newly owned one and two acre plots of land.

After talking with some of these new farmers it impressed me how knowledgeable they were about agriculture and how in general Armenians in Armenia are hard-working, intelligent, and have a great desire to prosper and succeed even after 70 years of communism's corrupting influence. These people are literally making a living out of rocks and stones.

My wife and I attended worship services at the Armenian Protestant Church in Yerevan. We arrived a few minutes late for the service and to our surprise and astonishment there was not even standing room. The people eagerly listened to the pastor's sermon, practically hanging on each word. I was moved to tears by the sight and by the thought that 70 years of communist suppression couldn't destroy the Christian faith of the Armenian people.

I was an Armenian from the Diaspora who was worshipping in my homeland with people who were complete strangers, yet who shared a faith, moral values, culture, and common history with me. It was an awesome thought.

For all of the public discontent and economic suffering Armenia is politically very stable. The many people I talked with admit times may have been better under communism, but they accept the fact that with the breakup of the Soviet Empire, and four years of blockade and war in Karabagh, hard times were inevitable. They support the government and the President, Levon Ter Petrossian; they say that nobody could solve their problems and they see no better alternative to Ter Petrossian and his government. While I was there I observed two political rallies or protests and these only attracted 200-3000 people and broke up quickly.

People in Armenia do not want to return to communism, no matter how tough the times become. They also understand that they must find a way to end the war in Karabagh and to learn to live with the Turks and work with them in order to get their economy moving and provide stability in the region.

They are looking to Armenians in the Diaspora and especially Armenians in America for help now, to get through these tough times and provide investment in the country when peace finally comes. The Diaspora must keep trying to improve the lot of Armenia because if the Diaspora gives up, Armenia will lose all hope.

I strongly urge readers to send money to Armenia, to friends or relatives, through friends travelling there. Fifty or one-hundred dollars is not much for us here in America but it will make the difference of a family surviving the winter in Armenia.

Free and independent Armenia has been the dream of Armenians in the Diaspora for seventy years. Now that we have it each Armenian who believes in this dream must do what he or she can to help our brothers and sisters in Armenia survive until times get better.

ASP Banquet coming in February!

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# Armenian Apostolic Church celebrates Christmas on January 6 with water blessing

By Armen Aghishian Staff Writer

On January 6, as has been done traditionally in years past, the Armenian church and people will celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ as well as his Baptism in the River Jordan by the hand of John the Baptist. The Baptism is celebrated in the church through the ceremony of the blessing of the water. This celebration in the Armenian Church is termed a feast day. Other feast days include Easter.

Until the 4th century when the Roman Catholic Church decided to change the celebration of the nativity to December 25th, all Christians recognized Christmas on January 6. Church council records have affirmed the original

date of celebration.

In the Armenian Apostolic Church, one can participate in two prominent church celebrations. On Christmas Eve, January 5, an evening of services called the Divine Liturgy or Badarak is held. This day is also called in Armenian "Soorp Dzunountyan Khootoom" or Christmas Eve.

On Christmas morning, Christ's Baptism and birth is celebrated simultaneously. On this morning the blessing of the water or "Choorornek" is performed to celebrate the baptism of Christ in the River Jordan. The Badarak or Divine Liturgy is also celebrated denoting the birth of Christ. These services are almost exclusively conducted utilizing the Armenian language.

# **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

The following are some of the upcoming holiday, social and church events taking place in the Fresno area in December and January. Compiled by Armen Aghishian

#### **DECEMBER 19**

St. Paul Armenian Church-Sunday School magic show performed by Ashley Magic from 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. in the Haig Berberian Hall. Admission is free. 3767 N. First Street.

#### **DECEMBER 20**

First Armenian Presbyterian Church- Chancel Choir Christmas Program and Sunday School Luncheon beginning at 11 a.m. 430 N. First Street.

#### **DECEMBER 24**

Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church. Christmas Eve Services beginning at 6:30 p.m. 3673 N. First Street.

#### **DECEMBER 26**

The Knights of Vartan Yeprad Lodge-Second Annual All Armenian Youth Dance from 9p.m.-1a.m. Music provided by the Richard Hagopian Or-chestra and Soundware Entertainment. In the Haig Berberian Hall. 3767 N. First Street.

#### **DECEMBER 31**

New Year's Eve Dinner Dance sponsored by the Parent-Teacher club of the Armenian Community School of Fresno. Music by the Soghomonian Band. 7:30 p.m. at the Haig Berberian Hall. \$40 admission. RSVP at 431-8384.

#### **JANUARY 1**

New Year's Day services at the First Armenian Presbyterian Church, 430 N. First Street.

#### **JANUARY 5**

Holy Trinity Armenian Church-Armenian Christmas Eve service. Evening service 4 p.m., Divine Liturgy 5 p.m. 2226 E. Ventura Avenue.

St. Paul Armenian Church- Christmas Eve Service. 6:30 p.m. in the church sanctuary. 3767 N. First Street

#### JANUARY 6

Holy Trinity Armenian Church- Divine Liturgy and Blessing of the Water. 9:30

#### **JANUARY 10**

St. Paul Armenian Church-Christmas Service-Divine Liturgy and Blessing of the Water Service. 9:30 a.m.

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# Kalpakian's Armenian radio show going strong on KFSR

By Nicole Kasabian Staff Writer

Page 8

What started as a one-timeonly special for Armenians on April 24, 1992, on CSUF's radio station, KFSR-FM 90.7, evolved into a weekly radio show.

The show's creator, student Rosemary Kalpakian, known as Rose K on the air, said she wanted to do an April 24 special in 1991 but she was told there were no available time slots on the air that

One year later, with the support of then station manager Manos Tzanakakis and current station manager Suzanne Kayian, Kalpakian turned in the same proposal and before the show aired she had her weekly Armenian radio show airing Saturday mornings from 10 a.m to noon.

"I wanted to start the program because Armenians are not extremely active in the school," said Kalpakian.

The show features Armenian musical artists performing in a variety of languages.

"There was much controversy over deciding to play music sung only in Armenian or playing Armenian artists singing in any language, even Spanish.

"I decided to play any Armenian artist. If an Armenian is singing in Turkish I'll play it.

"I don't want the show done 100 percent in Armenian because maybe not all Armenians can speak the language but still care about the culture," said Kalpakian.

The music isn't readily available at local music stores so Kalpakian goes to Los Angeles to search for music for the program at buys it at her own personal ex-

"I play traditional, pop, folk, dance and even Armenian opera because you have to try to please everyone," said Kalpakian.

Kalpakian, who has the dream of being a stand-up comedian, said she started by landing the Monday night blues show at 2 a.m. on KFSR nearly 3 years ago after her roommate coaxed her to apply for the

According to Station Manager Suzanne Kayian the Armenian radio show gets a positive response.

"I got an interesting call a couple of weeks ago from the Armenian old folks home telling me they listen to the show weekly," said Kayian.

Kalpakian said the show does not get a lot of financial support from the community because of weak transmittal.

"I can understand. Why would someone want to pay money for a show they are not going to be able to hear?" said Kalpakian.

She also said plans for a stronger transmitter for KFSR have been approved so there is hope for reaching high numbers of Armenians in the community through the show.

"A lot of Armenians in this town wouldn't mind sponsoring the show and would want their name heard on an Armenian radio show," said Kalpakian.

Right now the program is purely a musical format but Kalpakian said when the show reaches more people she will consider having special topics, but for now she does not want to get politi-

Aside from doing the show Kalpakian, who is an art and telecommunications major with an Armenian minor, holds three jobs and attends classes.

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December is always a busy time for non-profit organizations. Whether it is the holiday spirit of caring or sharing or the wish to beat the year-end tax deduction deadline, gifts come in large numbers and amounts during the last month of the year.

The Armenian Studies Annual Fund is no exception. Gifts are welcome at any time. The Sarkis and Meliné Kalfayan Center for Armenian Studies serves as an umbrella over the non-State funded activities of the Program. The university's role of instruction, research, and public service takes on special meaning in these challenging financial circumstances. So for "end-of-year" donors, the welcome mat is out!

The Leon. S. Peters Business Building was dedicated in October of 1988. It honors the memory of a leading valley resident, Leon S. Peters. A successful businessman who took a floundering Depressionera company to great success, he is well remembered as a generous and caring citizen.

On November 12, 1992 California State University, Fresno President Dr. John Welty announced the naming of the business school as The Sid Craig School of Business and Administrations Sciences, This honors alum Sid Craig for the \$10 million commitment of the Sid and Jenny Craig Foundation. The Craig School joins the Kalfayan Center for Armenian Studies as the two named programs housed in the Peters Business Building.

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