

HYE SHARZHOOM

Armenian Action

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Supplement to The Collegian

Ag Project Connects Valley Farmers to Armenia

Special to Hye Sharzhoom
by Bill Erysian

Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Armenia launched one of the most ambitious land privatization programs of any of the former Soviet states. By 1992, nearly all of the 800 state and collective farms were broken up and more than 300,000 private farms were created.

Building on the potential that now lies in Armenia's farm belt, California State University, Fresno has been awarded a grant of more than \$400,000 from the United States Department of Agriculture to provide an extensive program of academic, marketing and technical support to the Armenian agricultural industry.

The CSUF grant is part of a larger project implemented earlier this year in Armenia through the USDA called the Armenian Agriculture Marketing Assistance Program.

The USDA Project was funded to improve the marketing of Armenian agricultural production, both domestically and internationally, with a special emphasis on high value horticultural commodities. The goals are to mitigate marketing constraints in Armenia, improve farm income and promote agricultural exports.

The Project is also designed to strengthen the existing

Armenian Extension Service (Agrogit-aspiur) and the Armenian Agricultural Academy, especially its agricultural economics and food processing faculties.

As for marketing, the Project will try to develop strategies to assist Armenian entrepreneurs interested in expanding their horticultural processing and export markets. Further support is also being given to the work of the Agrogitaspiur, established in 1992, to develop staff, resource allocation and ongoing farmer education and advice.

The USDA has already created a marketing advisory office in Yerevan, which serves as a clearinghouse for all aspects of the Project.

In short, the Project seeks to assist an economy that is in the midst of reform.

"By starting to develop a pipeline of agricultural marketing specialists and educational programs, we can help move Armenian agriculture from the old-style Soviet planned model to a more market-oriented economy," explained Juan Batista, professor of agricultural economics at CSUF, who serves as director of CSUF's role in the Project.

As the lead academic institution chosen to participate on the Project, CSUF is poised to offer a variety of resources and expertise. The decision in favor of CSUF,



Left to Right: Front row-Heghine Mkrtchian, Haig Sahatdjian, Sarkis Sahatdjian, Hamlet Arshakian, Sisak Haroutunian, Melkon Avetissian, Rafik Simonian, Michael Kalashian. Back row- Nubert Baker, Ashot Gasparian, Avetik Nersissian, Samvel Hovhanissian, Ashot Galstian, Dr. Bill Rice, Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Victor Sahatdjian. Eleven farmers from Armenia visited Fresno for a three week training program, October 5-25, called the Horticulture/Agriculture Diversification Project with Armenia, sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development. Dr. Bill Mallios and Dr. Bill Rice from the Fresno State Craig School of Business directed the Program. Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program coordinated the translation services and cultural programs for the farmers.

according to USDA Official Tim Grosser, was an easy one.

"Fresno was the natural place to go for the USDA because the university was a good fit with its worldwide reputation in agricultural research and education," he explained. "Additionally, there is a large local Armenian community, many of whom are involved in agriculture. CSUF has a long his-

tory of cooperation with the local Armenian community and an ongoing relationship with the Armenian Agricultural Academy, as well as a notable Armenian Studies Program that can provide the sociopolitical support for issues surrounding this type of project."

CSUF is already working closely with the Academy to set up programs that provide technical

assistance to Armenians in the areas of agricultural marketing, grades and standards, transportation, packaging, processing, merchandising, advertising and promotions.

"Our primary goal here at the university is to assist the Armenian Agricultural Academy develop a strategic plan with the idea that from that plan, a comprehensive program in agricultural marketing and business be developed," Batista said.

He added that CSUF also has the ability to go into the local community and solicit help from individuals and organizations interested in contributing to the project.

"We plan to have a great deal of input from the local agribusiness community in helping to establish some practical guidelines for the Academy," he said.

Batista is already planning a trip to Armenia this November accompanied by a local expert in countertrade to advise on technology that can be imported into Armenia and an expert to advise on dehydrating grapes.

In related project developments, Jeff Ennen, ATI-NET general manager at CSUF, recently returned from a trip to Armenia where he began the development

See AG Project, Page 8

Kouymjian To Be Honored at Twentieth Anniversary Banquet

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at California State University, Fresno will be honored at a special 20th anniversary Banquet of the Armenian Studies Program to be held on Sunday, November 10, 1996. The Banquet is being hosted by the Advisory Board of the Kalfayan Center for Armenian Studies.

During his twenty-year tenure as director of the Armenian Studies Program, the Program has added two faculty members and has become the most active Program in the nation.

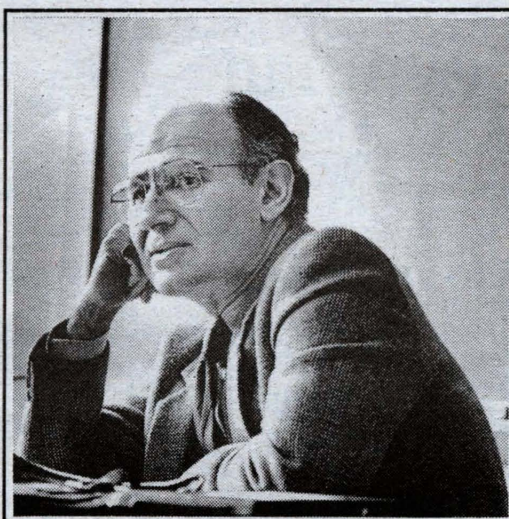
Dr. Kouymjian was selected as the William Saroyan Professor of Armenian Studies at the University of California at Berkeley for the Fall 1996 semester. He is teaching two courses there, *Armenian Film*

and *William Saroyan*.

Dickran Kouymjian received the first PhD. in Armenian Studies from Columbia University in 1967. Since then he has had a distinguished career in academics, having taught at the American University of Beirut, Columbia University, American University of Cairo, the American University in Paris, the Armenian Section of the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales (INALCO), University of Paris III, and for the last twenty years at California State University, Fresno.

In 1987 he was chosen as a Fulbright Senior Lecturer in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at Yerevan State University in Yerevan, Armenia.

In 1988, after successfully completing a fund drive for an En-



Dr. Dickran Kouymjian

dowed Chair in Armenian Studies, Professor Kouymjian was selected as the first incumbent to the Haig and Isabel Berberian Chair of Armenian Studies.

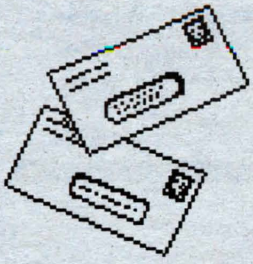
Dr. Kouymjian was a founding member of the *Association internationale des études arméniennes* (1982) and a founding member of the *Society for Ar-*

In 1996 Kouymjian was instrumental in arranging for the establishment of the Henry S. Khanzadian Kāzan Professorship of Modern Armenian and Immigration History in the Department of History and Armenian Studies Program. The Professorship will be filled after an international search is completed at the end of this year.

menian Studies (1974). He served for two terms as the President of the *Society for Armenian Studies*. He serves on the editorial board of the *Revue des Etudes Arméniennes*, the *Journal of Armenian Studies*, *Ararat Literary Quarterly*, and the *Armenian Review*.

Dr. Kouymjian has received numerous honors in his career including being named as Outstanding Professor of the Year at CSU Fresno (1986).

He is the author of more than a dozen books and monographs including *The Arts of Armenia* (1992), *Warsaw Visitor and Tales from the Vienna Streets*, *The Last Two Plays of William Saroyan* (1990), *William Saroyan: An Armenian Trilogy* (1986), and the *Index of Armenian Art, Fascicule I and II* (1977, 1979).



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor of Hye Sharzhoom:

I apply to you in order to ask you a great favor for my students and graduates who have a great desire to correspond with your university students and professors, willing enough to create a friendly "bridge" between the Diaspora and Armenia.

The correspondence should be in English preferably, but could be carried out in any other languages of the following: French, Spanish, German, Russian, and Armenian according to the correspondent's desire and ability. Please be kind enough to insert the following addresses in your following newspaper issue, so that our aim may be realized thanks to your kind help. Here are the names and addresses of the young and old people, all living in our New Armenia, eager to serve their country and be useful.

Professor Shahe Hamamdjian
Yerevan Armenia

Christine Hagopian: 25 years old. She is a graduate of the Foreign Languages Institute in Yerevan. She is single and desires to have a pen-friend to exchange ideas and thoughts and improve her knowledge of the English language, which is her specialty. She likes Armenian and foreign modern music, traveling, and reading. Address: Sevastopolian St. 49, Yerevan, Armenia 375028. Telephone is 27-52-02.

Tamara Shakarian: 32 years old. She has a polytechnical education. She would like to correspond with a young man of her age or older, interested in Armenia and Armenian problems. She knows English, Russian, and Armenian. She has been looking for work in vain. She would like to exchange ideas with a friend. Address: A. Hagopian Street, No. 1, Flat 104, Yerevan 375033. Telephone 26-09-83.

Varcik Karakhanian: 38 years old. She is a teacher of retarded children. She would like to write to a serious person in English in order to exchange ideas and thoughts. She likes to travel, she likes Armenian music, and can sing and dance. Address: A. Tigranian St. No. 30, Yerevan, 375037. Telephone 254237.

Zara Moussalian: 20 years old. She will graduate from the Arts and Architecture Institute. Her hobbies are painting and drawing. She knows Russian, Armenian, and English. She would prefer to correspond with a young man, older and with the same interests, preferably in English. Address: 30, Leningradian Street, Flat 46, Yerevan 37538. Telephone 396220.

Nazik Grigorian: 18 years old. She is student at the university for Managing and Computerizing Studies. She knows English well and would like to correspond with either men or women of her age or older. She is ready to answer in

Armenian as well. She can play the piano, has studies music, and likes to travel.

Karineh Sirunian: 32 years old. She is not married. She is a graduate of the Bryusov Foreign Language Institute. She knows Russian well, Armenian and English. She works at an English firm as a clerk in managing and computers. She has a great desire to have an Armenian friend to exchange ideas and create a friendly link. Her hobbies are music and traveling. Address: Khachadrian Street, No. 25, Flat 12. Telephone 25-01-91.

Vahe Arakelian: 27 years old. He is single. He is a graduate of Yerevan State University in the Economics Department. HE knows Armenian and Russian well. He would like to exchange ideas and correspondence. He is very interested in American customs and way of life. He likes American football and likes to fish and hunt. Address: Aikestan, 10th Street. No. 2, Flat 17 Yerevan 375035. Telephone 55-62050.

Hye Sharzhoom encourages students, as well as community members, to engage in correspondence with Armenia. Any assistance needed in translation or mailing is always available.

Armenian Studies 10: One Student's Experience

by Jacklin Gharibian

Armenians—they have such strange names and facial features, an aberrant language (with peculiar-looking alphabets), and a distinctly odd culture. I always felt this strangeness within myself, and I reckoned that we were, somehow, different from others. However, I later learned that Armenians are, instead, *distinctly* unique. I also presumed that I knew enough about these "strangers"—about the Genocide, Tigran the Great, William Saroyan, and the Armenians of California. How can one not know anything about their culture and history? But, I discovered that my knowledge was very limited and inadequate—there is always something more, among the masses, that comes across your face as a non-coincidental surprise. Then you hear yourself say: "Wow, is it really true that Armenians did that? I had no idea!"

I registered for Armenian Studies 10 (Introduction to Armenian Studies) for the 1995 fall semester with Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, carrying all of my pre-conceived opinions and convictions about Armenians. Within the first hour of the class session, I knew that the class would offer "something" more than just the lecture hours, exams, and reports. Instead, I sensed that I would encounter challenges that would ultimately reshape my thinking habits.

For the first seven weeks of the semester, we studied a book written by Michael J. Arlen called *Passage to Ararat*. This book was primarily about Arlen's journey to Armenia which led him to discover his roots and allowed him to come in terms with his father, his

Armenianess, and himself. Arlen, who at times claimed he, "Hated being an Armenian," covered nearly all subject matters that Armenians have experienced from the birth of their nationhood. For instance, the author wrote about the Kings of Nairi, the Kingdom of Urartu, Tigran the Great, the Armenian community of Fresno, Armenian rug merchants, Armenian architecture, the Dashnaks, and most important of all, the 1915 Genocide. These matters concern Armenians, yet Arlen crafted his novel in a manner that grasped the attention of non-Armenians as well. He brought out universal questions in life, showing that Armenians have the same needs as other human beings.

Why did the 1915 Genocide take place, and why is it that Armenians, after 80 years, have not yet healed their souls? Coming into the class, I knew the answer for the first question, but I had difficulties with the second. Several films were shown in class to help clarify the misunderstandings or our misconceptions about the massacres, such as *An Armenian Journey*, *The Hidden Holocaust*, *Everyone's Not Here: Families of the Armenian Genocide*, and *The Armenian Case*. In the Armenian Studies 10, Syllabus Reader, we further examined the details of the Genocide. All of this, along with Dr. Kouymjian's lectures, served the key to my understanding of, "The crime of the century." I knew that the Turkish government completely denied the Genocide ever taking place in history, but I further learned that they

See Armenian 10, Page 6

The California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program

Cordially invites you to a banquet marking its

Twentieth Anniversary

and honoring

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian

Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies
Director, Armenian Studies Program

Sunday, November 10, 1996

Reception - 5 P.M. Banquet - 6 P.M. Residence Dining Facility
California State University, Fresno

\$40 per person Students \$10

Please respond by November 4, 1996

HYE SHARZHOOM ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՒՄ

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California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program
Spring 1997 Schedule of Courses

General Education

• Arm S 10 Intro to Arm Studies	3	0810-0900	MWF	I. Kaprielian
• Arm S 10 Intro to Arm Studies	3	1010-1100	MWF	B. Der Mugrdechian
• Arm S 10 Intro to Arm Studies	3	0945-1100	TTh	D. Kouymjian
• Arm S 10 Intro to Arm Studies	3	1110-1225	TTh	D. Kouymjian
• Arm S 20 Arts of Armenia	3	1810-2100	Wed	D. Kouymjian

General Education

• Arm 148 Masterpieces Arm Lit	3	1210-1300	MWF	B. Der Mugrdechian
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Division 7- Languages

• Arm 1B Elementary Armenian	4	1110-1200	MTWF	B. Der Mugrdechian
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Upper Division Courses

• Arm S 108B Arm History II	3	0910-1000	MWF	
• Arm S 120T Arm. Genocide	3	1245-1400	TTh	I. Kaprielian
• Arm S 120T Arm S & Comp. Tech	3	1545-1700	TTh	D. Kouymjian
• Arm S 120T Armenia Today	1	1610-2100	F	
		0910-1700	S	

Class meets the weekend of March 14, 15

All courses can be used for credit toward a minor in Armenian Studies.

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669
 or visit our offices in the Peters Business Building, Room 384.

ASO Calendar 1996

November 1
Halloween Party

November 26
Movie Night
(discuss cabin trip)

December 6 & 7
Annual Cabin Trip

Armenian Students Organization: Getting Ready for '97

By Crissi Jelladian

A.S.O. is an organization on campus that allows Armenian students and others that are interested in the Armenian heritage to join together for a variety of activities. The Armenian Students' Organization consists of Armenians from all over the world, anywhere from Fresno to Armenia. The variation in the students' background makes the club in one sense diverse, but on the other hand unified. This semester A.S.O. looks forward to new people, new ideas, and new activities to become involved in throughout the semester.

So far in the Fall 1996 semester we have had two meetings and one fund-raiser. The second meeting was a pizza social that allowed the new and old members to become acquainted with one another. The fund-raiser was our traditional Shish-Kebab sale. We'd like to send a



ASO serves the campus and the community at the annual shish kabob sale

great big THANK YOU for those that came out to support us.

Our upcoming events are the following: On the 17th of October, we will have a night filled with billiards, movies, food, and FUN! To close out the month on an interesting note, we've decided to throw a Halloween

party. Costumes, music, decorations, and many other things will get us in the spooky mood of Halloween.

A new effort for the A.S.O. will be performing community service and volunteer work. We have gathered a group of students that are volunteering any time they have during the week in as-

sisting the faculty & students at the Fresno Community Armenian School. The hours being volunteered are on no set schedule, just whenever you have time to help. The children ages 6-12 need assistance in all academic areas, sports, peach blossom, academic decathlon, odyssey of the mind, etc. Not only

does this provide college students with an opportunity to become closer with the Armenian youth, but it also is beneficial to the student for resume information.

The new executive board of the A.S.O. is looking forward to an exciting semester. I know that students' maintain schedules that barely allow time for sleep, but A.S.O. is a beneficial and fun organization to become involved with to free yourself temporarily from the pressures of school. If you have any questions on the events mentioned or other upcoming events, please call the Armenian Studies Office at 278-2669 and ask Professor Der Mugrdechian to contact one of the new officers. Once again, we hope that all of you out there that are of Armenian descent or share an interest in the background or have friends, please feel free to join us. We look forward to seeing you!!!!

Topics in Modern Armenian History

What: Fall 1996 Armenian Studies Lecture Series

Who: **Houri Berberian**

The Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911)

September 26

Dr. Isabel Kaprielian

Armenians in America

October 3

Stephen H. Astourian

Ethnic Conflict in the Late Ottoman

Empire: The Armeno-Turkish Case

October 10

Staff Article

Speaking to an audience of community members and students, Houri Berberian presented her topic in the Alice Peters Auditorium. Berberian received her Bachelor degree in History at University of California, Berkeley and completed her Master degree at UCLA. She is currently working towards her doctorate at UCLA. Her lecture came out of her doctorate thesis. She has been published several times including an article in the *Armenian Review*.

The emphasis of her interest is to highlight the involvement of the Armenians in the constitutional movement of the early 1900's in Iran. An Armenian political party, the Tashnaks, took a leading and vital part in Iran's revolution to become a constitutional nation from 1905-1911. The revolution eventually failed under the oppression of the Shaw, but the involvement and prominence of the Armenians historically remains.

Berberian presented a brief history of the Tashnaks and their rise up until its involvement in the revolution. Established in Tiflis in 1890, the Tashnak party saw it's greatest achievement, in this period, after the turn of the century. Through policies of organizing national self defense, the Tashnaks at one point enjoyed a fifty-five out of sixty member majority in the Armenian congress. At their peak Berberian observed the membership was 30% women. Though not

involved in the fighting forces, women participated in support and community awareness.

Iran was of importance to the Armenians for several reasons. Berberian asserted the relationship between the Tashnaks and the Iranian Constitutionalists was especially important. In addition to Iran as a base for Tashnak Turkish-Armenian operations, Berberian proposed five reasons for involvement. Among those five was the political hope that success in Iran would further assist neighboring regions both Ottoman and Russian to also acquire constitutional reform. Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid also oppressed the Iranians. The Iranians did not have the money, force, or diplomatic influence to prevent against the onslaught of the Ottoman-Turks and it therefore befell the Tashnaks to assist as a blow against the Turks and to protect their own interests.

The culmination of Berberian's focus leads up until 1911. The disappointment and frustration of the Tashnaks concerning the dissolution of the Iranian constitutional movement came at a period of change of the party's agenda. Attention had already begun to turn to developments in Turkish Armenia and Russian Armenia, the end of the constitutional movement emphasized the closure of Armenian involvement in the Iranian political structure.

Presented by one of Dr. Kouymjian's trademark generous introductions, listing her many accomplishments, Isabel Kaprielian spoke about Armenians in America in the early part of this century. Dr. Kaprielian is a native of Canada who received both her MA and Ph.D. at the University of Toronto. She has a double interest in history and philosophy. Kaprielian recent focus has been in immigration his-

tory studies with a special interest in the Armenian Diaspora both in America and Canada. She has co-authored two books with her husband; most recently *Pulse of the World: Refugees in Our Schools* was published in 1994 and *Facing Pluralism*, published earlier. Currently Kaprielian is lecturing in the History Department at Fresno State teaching a course in immigration history. She also teaches an Armenian Studies 10 course.

Her lecture for the evening focused on the Armenians coming from Europe settling and moving through Canada to America. The topic is comparably so recent that many of the families and connections still hold reference to people living in Fresno today. Her lecture covered all facets of community life including religion, language, culture, and politics. She spoke of the accomplishments of these early immigrants and the freedom they enjoyed. According to Kaprielian the strength of the communities was within the organizations and



Dr. Isabel Kaprielian

benevolent societies the Armenians formed to preserve traditions and reach back to Armenia.

The feature of her lecture was a video presentation of her own family history. Highlighting her grandmother Rose, the remembrance was an accomplishment of emotion and storytelling skill. Funded by grant money the presentation transcended its slim budget and allowed the viewer to empathize with Rose and her struggles and sacrifices. The video was a montage of antique photos joined together to tell a story. Kaprielian's daughter provided the narrative that told Rose's story. It was a heartfelt tribute to both one woman and entire people.

The third lecturer in the series was a native of France. Educated through France's strict education system, Stephan Astourian is now in America earning his doctorate at UCLA. Currently he is lecturer at California State University, Long Beach. He has published several articles most recently an article about the Nagorno Karabagh in the Mediterranean Quarterly. Astourian also took the opportunity to speak to classes individually the following day.

Using the example of the city of Zeitoun in Ottoman Armenia as a correlation to the subject, Astourian gave a chronological account of the growing conflicts that led up to the 1915 Genocide.

Zeitoun was the last of the medieval vestiges of Armenian autonomy. As the Ottoman empire pressed for destruction of Cilicia in the late 1850's, Zeitoun soon found itself also part of the Ottoman aggression.

Refugees of the Cilician defeat found themselves in and around Zeitoun. At one point Napoleon of France intervened on behalf of the city to prevent the Ottomans from attacking and massacring the people of Zeitoun as well. The Turkish oppression came in the form of subjugating the governor and heavy taxation. By 1884 the Zeitoun autonomy was terminated.

The Armenians attempted to lobby for relief in Istanbul, they were compensated with further atrocities. The 1870's found the Armenian Congress in Istanbul providing reports of incidents of aggression from the Turks. The Ottoman government did nothing and allowing the racial tension to rise. The Armenian peasants suffered the greatest discriminations and hardship. Taxes were severely levied as well as crops taken in the

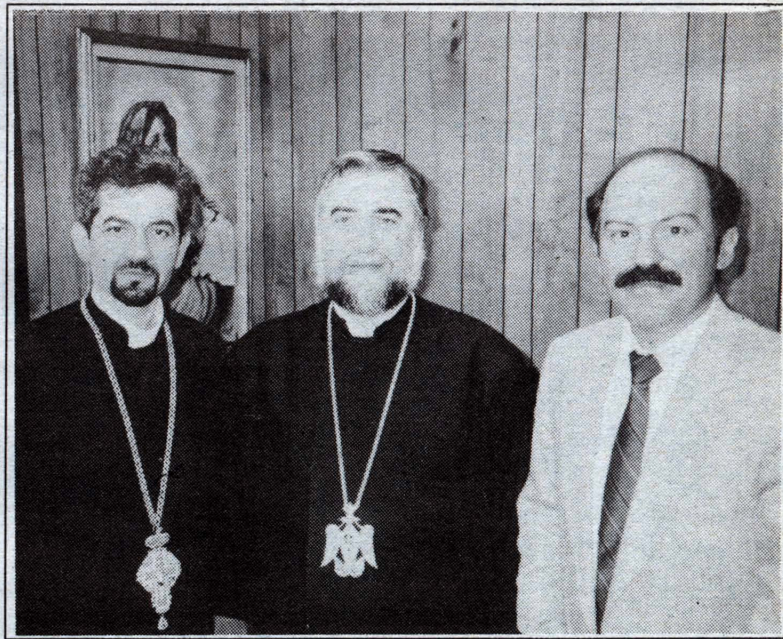


Stephan H. Astourian

name of revenue. Men were forced into yearly compulsory military service. And during the winter months Kurdish troops forcibly quartered in peasant homes.

The Fall Semester Lecture Series was an excellent opportunity for exposure to scholars currently in the field. The most remarkable observation about the series is that it is able to exist at all. Without charging cover or enrollment students and community members can enjoy these fascinating speakers. What an educational experience it would be if every department and program on campus followed the example of the Armenian Studies Program and provided these kinds of occasions for Fresno State and the community.

His Holiness Aram I Visits Fresno State



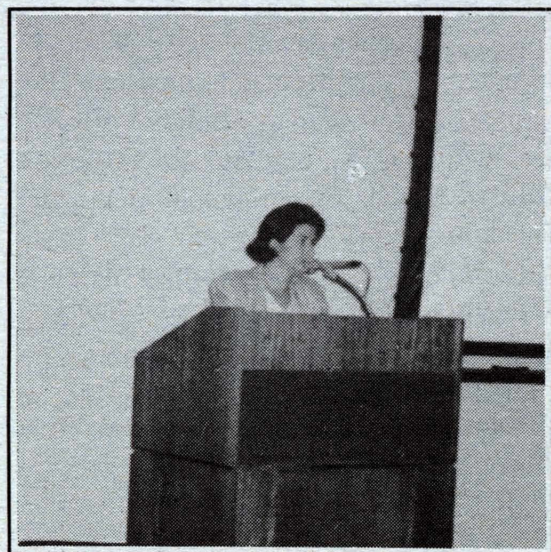
Left to Right: The Very Rev. Fr. Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church; His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia; Barlow Der Mugrdchian of the Armenian Studies Program, who interviewed His Holiness on the Armenian Studies Program TV show "Hye Talk."

His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia was a guest of the Western Prelacy of the Armenian Church June 30 through July 3, 1996. As part of his visit to California he paid a pastoral visit to Fresno, where he celebrated the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, June 30 at Holy Trinity Armenian Church. He was accompanied by the Very Rev. Fr. Moushegh Mardirossian, Prelate of the Western Prelacy and by Very Rev. Fr. Muron Aznikian, Dean of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church. Later that evening His Holiness was a guest of honor at a banquet held in the Holiday Inn Centre Plaza.

On Monday, July 1 His Holi-

ness was a guest on the Armenian Studies Program television show, "Hye Talk" hosted by Barlow Der Mugrdchian. During the half-hour interview, His Holiness expressed his views on issues concerning the mission of the Armenian Church and his views on the most important issues facing the Armenian Church today.

On Monday, His Holiness also visited St. Paul Armenian Church in Fresno where he was welcomed by His Eminence Archbishop Vatche Hovsepian, Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church and by the pastor, the Very Rev. Fr. Sasoon Zumrookhdian.



Houri Berberian

New Art School Opens in Fresno

Staff Report

Art and painting have always played a big part in Armenian life. One can still see in Armenia examples of ancient and medieval architecture and art. As in the past, so now also a new generation of architects, painters, and artists are leaving their heritage of art.

There is a saying in Armenia, "All children are ready-made artists," yet it is through the teacher that that art is developed.

Sona Atoian was fortunate enough to be born in a family which worships art. Her father, the famous painter

Rafael Atoian, was her first teacher. Having graduated from the Art Academy of Yerevan, she entered her new creative field of work, participating in art exhibits and working with children in an art school.

Moving to Fresno, Sona Atoian had a dream to open a similar art school and a children's art museum. And today that dream is becoming a reality. Under the leadership and direction of Sona Atoian, the first art classes have begun, taking place at the First Armenian Presbyterian Church, with thanks to the assistance of Rev. Bernard Guekguegian. Classes

began small but with a high quality of students. Today there are more than forty children and adults, Armenian and non-Armenian, who are taking classes. The students have already participated in art exhibits, have won prizes, and have a desire to perfect their art.

On Friday, November 8, at 7:00 p.m. the official opening of the art School will take place in the Social Hall of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church, 430 S. First Street in Fresno.

The community will have the opportunity to meet with the teachers and students. The program will include remarks

by Rev. Geukguegian, Pastor of the First Armenian Presbyterian Church and by Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program.

The program will also include a musical program with John Chookasian on

clarinet, Barbara Chookasian on *dumbeg*, and Garo Bedrosian on the *oud*.

Admission to the open-



ing is free and open to the public.

All artists and art lovers are invited to attend.

Armenian Community School Looks Ahead

by Jacqueline Arikian

The Armenian Community School of Fresno recently celebrated its 20th Anniversary. Starting its roots at Holy Trinity Church and growing in popular demand by the Armenian community, the Armenian school has provided an excellent educational institution for young Armenian children. The school has 110 students enrolled, ranging from the ages of 3-12.

The students are taught the same subjects as students in American public institutions, subjects such as mathematics and English. However, the students are also taught how to read and write Armenian, thus being a school of bilingual students.

The Armenian Community School of Fresno ranks as one of the finest educational institutions in Fresno and Clovis, demonstrating ITAS test scores of students who were all above average in the tested subjects of mathematics, reading, and written language.

The unique aspect of the school is the fact that a certain bond exists within the people. Mr. Seth Atamian, the newly appointed principal of the school, states "There's a magnetism that draws us closer to each other. The magnetism, of course, is that

we are Armenian." Atamian, who is a native of Fresno and an educator of 38 years, feels that the bond is something that brings the Armenians together. "When I look into their eyes and they look into my eyes, there's a common bond," comments

By Karen Karabian

The message has to get out pleaded Seth Atamian, principal of the Armenian Community School.

Seth Atamian is on a mission. He has become a leader among parents. He has become the voice of 110 Armenian chil-

time studying test scores.

They are taught to speak the Armenian language, and they are exposed to their Armenian culture and heritage. At the same time they have risen above the average expectations in academic testing, despite certain language barriers.

Unfortunately, the bar graph is kept inside a dark closet unknown to the scholastic world, as is the level of sophistication and tenacity that these students possess.

"I don't believe in doing something for banquets or pats on the back," Atamian said. He has proven himself and needs only to prove his point. These students can be as successful academically as they are in their Armenianess.

Atamian has spent 38 years in education, and in those years Atamian broke one of many barriers in this community by becoming the first Armenian principal in the Fresno Unified School District.

"Growing up I would work and go to church on Sundays. I had no choice with regards to education, there was no school we could afford," he said. Atamian is no stranger to adversity. He has since fought to give his students the choices that he had been denied.

Atamian resides in a quaint office inside the Armenian Community School, which was once a church. The small facility proudly wears its tat-

tered fences and walls that have visibly aged. The campus does not share in all the glamour of its fellow institutions. However, "the plant does not guarantee educational success," Atamian said.

In comparison the quality of teachers and curriculum is certainly commendable.

It is here that Atamian trains these teachers and their students never want for a mentor, direction, or motivation.

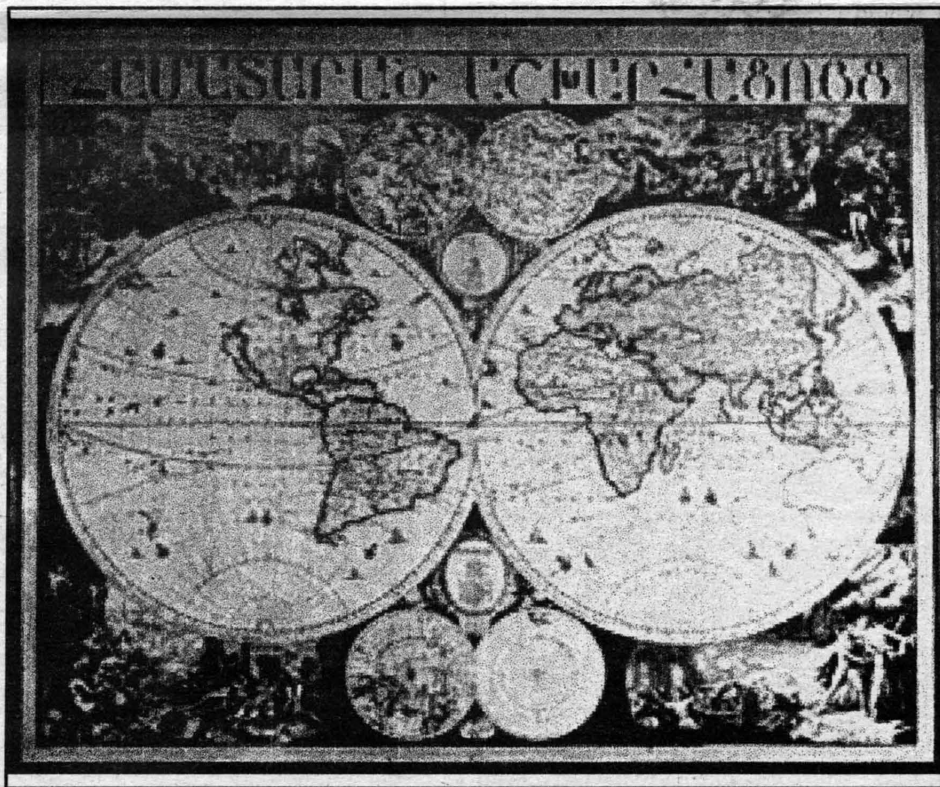
Like every other elementary student these children race through their playground, drag their coats, and rally around their parents at the end of the day. But unlike every other elementary school, this Armenian community is a tight-knit family.

"There is a magnetism that draws us closer, me to them, them to me. We are Armenian, we are bound by commonality," said Atamian.

Attending the Armenian Community School is not a point of weakness for over 100 children, it is an unquestionable strength. These students fail to lose their Armenianess, as they learn to depend on a solid educational foundation to carry them through this competitive world.

The Armenian Community School, the last of its kind in all the United States, has seen graduates rise to the top of their classes, become people in high positions, and become role models to be esteemed.

The talent and accomplishments of such students can not be overshadowed any longer. There exists unlimited academic potential within these walls. And Atamian has begun to spread the word.



Atamian.

Though the school may not be as technologically advanced as the other public schools in the Valley, it continues to serve the Armenian community with excellent education for their children. It is an environment where Armenian children can grow up in America and learn about their Armenian history in addition to studying the other subjects taught in public schools.

dren. Armenian children whose academic ability compares with the finest students of Fresno and Clovis. But no one knows. No one has spread the word.

So now one man has taken it upon himself to thrust his students into the academic spotlight. In this small Armenian community a high value is placed on academics. And as of yet, remarkably high test results have been ignored.

Atamian retrieves a bar graph which depicts the significant standing of his students in such areas as math, science, reading, and writing. "These kids are intelligent," said Atamian who has spent a life-

Multiculturalism and the History of Poverty in the Valley

By Jacqueline Arikian

A group of different people. A series of different stories. A common ground: multicultural poverty in Fresno. On Friday, October fourth, a diverse group of knowledgeable individuals came together in the Upstairs Cafeteria of CSU Fresno and spoke about the poverty of different cultures in Fresno.

The panel was chaired by Kathryn Forbes of the Women's Studies Program. Other panel participants were: Lily Small, Ethnic Studies; Franklin Ng, Anthropology; Walter Perry, The Metro Ministry; Barlow Der

Mugrdechian, Armenian Studies; James Aldredge, Department of Social Work; Pao Fang, Lao Family Community; and Ronelia Castillo, Castillo Adult School.

The evening commenced with a brief, yet powerful, introduction which consisted of two main points: 1) poor people are not poor by choice and 2) there will always be poverty because it is a big business. Sadly enough, there was a truth that lurked behind those two statements, a truth that slowly unraveled as each speaker told his story.

The panel consisted of speakers, mainly campus professors, who represented

the stories of different Asian groups, African Americans, and Armenians. All these stories represented a part of what life once was, and in a sense still is.

The story of the Armenians, in particular, was rather interesting. The history commenced in describing the treatment Armenians received when they first arrived in Fresno, facing much discrimination and prejudice in the Valley. When the Armenians first came to America, they faced many obstacles such as language difficulties, lack of skill to find employment, and the hardships of poverty. How-

ever, coming to America was not a choice which was made willingly, for the Armenians did not see the United States as the promised land.

The Armenians immigrated to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century in order to flee from the massacres and persecutions of the Turks. They first moved to the eastern part of the United States, concentrating their residence in areas such as Boston, Rhode Island, and New York. However, in search of land, they decided to move to California, concentrating their residence in cities such as Glendale, Hollywood, and Fresno.

Over time, they bought land and settled in California for the mere reason that it was the closest thing to Armenia they were going to have. As the Armenians entered the work force, they received little money for their work, thus leading them into hardships such as poverty.

Life in America for the Armenians was quite a hardship, as it was, and still is, for other cultures that came to this country. As a result of this panel discussion, one was able to obtain a better idea about the different cultures that exist in the Valley as well as the obstacles which they once faced and still do.

Armenian 10, from p.2

alleged that the Armenians were revolting against the Ottoman Empire and that they were the ones who massacred the Turks. Their proof for this misguided assertion were the guns that were collected from the Armenians and the Turks who were killed during W.W.I. Perhaps, those who survived the Genocide can not "forget and forgive" because of the guilt they sense for being fortunate enough to have escaped death, or because of the anger they feel for not being recognized as the victims of a calculated crime and instead being portrayed as the aggressors.

We, then, went on to study about the Armenian Apostolic church. We began with the administrative structure or the hierarchy of the Apostolic church. From here on, it seemed as if the church was indirectly regulated through politics. For instance, from 1441-1956, Armenians were served by a Catholicos in Etchmiadzin and a second one in Sis/Antelias; this created a division in the church. Also, Armenia was overtaken by Russia in 1921, and this caused another problem, because Communists were against religion; thus, all of the monasteries were closed and the Catholics in Armenia turned to Antelias for help. Armenians were then caught in the trap of Communism and the Cold War. The effects of this reached the heart of Fresno and a clear division was apparent between Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church and St. Paul Armenian Apostolic Church. (Of course, the details are too lengthy to explain.)

Beyond this, we had to visit two Armenian churches, one Apostolic and one Protestant; then, we were to write a report on the differences that exist between them. Therefore, I visited Holy Trinity and Pilgrim Congregational. I am a member of an Apostolic Armenian Church, and I never had the opportunity to visit any of the Protestant Churches. This was a phenomenal experience, for I was startled to recognize the uniqueness of each church. Although I belong to the Apostolic Church. I

must confess that I do not completely comprehend all the traditions of my religion. Many young Armenians face this conflict; I blame this situation on myself and not on my parents, the Church, or its structure. Intellectually, to understand the traditions of worshipping God in the Apostolic Church, one has to recognize the symbolism of the *Batarak*. On the other hand, one can just step into the Protestant Church and know exactly what is occurring. The Armenian Protestant Church is "Americanized." It's user-friendly—the services are to the point, direct, and understandable, and it's modernized to fulfill the needs of the people and to help them confront the issues and predicaments of modern society. The Apostolic Church, however, aims to preserve cultural traditions, in particular, the Armenian language and history. In a sense, we are cautioned to always look back (to examine where we came from) before taking any steps forward. Personally, I enjoyed the services of the Protestant church, because it was intellectually direct. However, I attend church to be spiritually shaken, not intellectually. Therefore, the Apostolic church resolves the situation, even if I do not totally comprehend all of what it has to offer.

Next, we studied one of the most magnificent (American) writers of the 20th century—William Saroyan. I never studied William Saroyan's writings, while attending school in the Fresno Unified School District (other than just reading one of his short plays in my Ethnic Studies class). However, I managed to read some of his works on a "part-time" basis. Most of the students in the class had not read the works of Saroyan. How could a person grow up in the Valley and not know Saroyan? I do not understand why administrators or individual instructors make certain that their students learn something about a local citizen who later became a world renowned writer? In class, we studied a short story called *The Armenian Mouse*, another one called *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze*, and finally we read two of the three Saroyan plays

that were edited (in *An Armenian Trilogy*) by Dr. Kouymjian, *Armenians* and *Bitlis*. Saroyan proudly admitted he was an Armenian, and believing in the human spirit, he acknowledged Armenians are part of the human race. In other words, Armenians should be classified as a minority group that is an alliance of the majority, and not exclusive of it.

Finally, we ended the class with two subjects, the Armenian militant movement and the Armenian community of Fresno. From 1975 to 1983, young Armenians developed terrorist ideas towards Turkish government officials to gain the attention of the world about the Genocide. For 60 years, the peaceful marches and demonstrations never grabbed the mindfulness of the media; the aim of the two terrorist organizations, the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia and the Justice Commandos for the Armenian Genocide, was to resolve this situation. The media breathes to cover accounts that involve drama and action, and no one realistically cared to hear about 1.5 million people who were massacred in the Ottoman Empire infinite decades ago. The young radicals, having realized this point, began to kill Turkish ambassadors, set bombs, high-jack planes and carry out other revolutionary actions. By the end of the movement, the world heard about the Genocide and Turkey was compelled to give an explanation of history. However, Turkey not only continued to deny the Genocide, but it proclaimed that there was a civil war and the Armenians were the ones who massacred the Turks. It is ironic to realize how violence called upon violence and that it was thought to be the only way to solve the "Armenian Question" for the Turks and the question of the Genocide for the Armenians. One side attempted, viciously, to end human life in its masses, while the fragmented side struggled out of desperation to reveal the savagery and inhumanity of it all.

At last, we ended the course with the Armenian community of Fresno and the history of its settlement in the Valley. To help us

understand the background of the community, we viewed a documentary called, *Strangers in a Promised Land*. This film, which was narrated by former Governor George Deukmajian, illustrated how the community grew from the late 1890's to the early 1980's. In the beginning, Armenians were treated as second-class citizens and were considered to be inferior, but with their hard work and hard-earned fortunes many became leading citizens of the Valley. Today, there exists diversity within the Armenian community of Fresno with Armenians continuing to immigrate to the region from countries of the Middle East, Russia, the Republic of Armenia, and Mediterranean countries. Personally, I consider Fresno to be a model com-

munity for the Armenians in the Diaspora.

Yes, this is what I learned, but it's only about one fifth of what was covered in the lectures. I now realize that I need to learn more about my culture and the human culture to become a better citizen of both cultures. Armenian Studies 10, introduction to Armenian Studies was more of an introduction to understanding the human self in its deepest uncensored and universal form.

There is nothing strange, aberrant, peculiar, or odd about Armenians. We are not strangers. We are just six or seven million people roaming about the globe, trying to preserve our "i-a-n's" and "y-a-n's".

Saroyan Plus Fifteen

An international conference on the occasion of the
fifteenth anniversary of the death of
William Saroyan (1908-1981)

November 15, 1996
10AM to 6PM

**Maude Fife Room, 315 Wheeler Hall,
U.C. Berkeley campus**

Dickran Kouymjian, William Saroyan-Krouzian
Visiting Professor of Armenian Studies will be coordinating
the panel of writers, scholars, and students
organized around three themes:

- 1) *William Saroyan Fifteen Years Later*
- 2) *Saroyan and the Beat Generation*
- 3) *Saroyan and the Critics*

Among the scholars and Bay Area writers who will participate are:
David Stephen Calonne, Ann Arbor...Aram Kevorkian, Paris
Edward Halsey Foster, Stevens Institute...Barry Gifford...Herb Gold
Harry Keyishian, Fairleigh Dickinson University...Jack Leggett
Aram Saroyan...Harold Aram Veesser, Wichita State
Jon Whitmore, University of Iowa

Other activities planned for the day include the inauguration of the
Krouzian Study Center in the U.C. Berkeley Bancroft Library
and a mini-festival of Saroyan works on film.

The conference is jointly sponsored by the
Center for Slavic and East European Studies,
International and Area Studies,
the English Department, the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Alumni,
and the U.C. Berkeley Armenian Students Association.

For more information contact: Michael Kloster (510) 451-2408,
Evelyn Boyd (510) 946-9320, Madeline Adrian (415) 566-4546,
or email: dickrank@violet.berkeley.edu

Armenian Studies Donations and Books

The Armenian Studies Program, its Sahatdjian Library and Avedian Archives, would like to thank the following individuals for their generous donations.

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program, would like to thank the authors and publishers for the following.

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The third and fourth volumes of the excellent series *The Music of Armenia* have recently been released by Celestial Harmonies. Composer David Parsons has continued his exploration into the sacred and folk traditions of Eastern Armenians, begun with volumes one and two, which revealed the world of Armenian sacred songs and *sharakans*, respectively.

In the new productions, listeners are introduced to the sound of two instruments traditionally employed by the Armenians: the *duduk* and the *kanon*, which are a vital part of Armenian music.

Volume Three centers around

the music of the *duduk*, a double-reed instrument developed more than a thousand years ago. The *duduk*, a relative of the Western oboe, is made of apricot wood. Gevorg Dabaghian is the featured soloist on this recording. His soulful sound draws the listener into a musical world which most will be unfamiliar with. But after a few minutes a listening, one will not be able to pull away from the powerful draw of this music. The *duduk* is part of the Armenian musical ensemble.

Accompanying the soloist are Grigor Takushian, Eduard Harutunian, and Kamo

CD review

By Barlow Der Mugrdchian

The Music of Armenia: Volume Three: *Duduk* (71'35'') and Volume Four: *Kanon/Traditional Zither Music* (70'15'')

Celestial Harmonies, P.O. Box 30122, Tuscon, Arizona 85751

Khachaturian playing other traditional Armenian musical instruments such as the *dhol* (drum) and the drone *duduk*. The settings are purely instrumental although traditionally the *duduk* was associated at least in part, with the Armenian *ashoughs* (troubadors). The works of the *ashoughs* form a distinctive repertoire within Armenian music. In the twentieth century there has been a good deal of interest in the works of the *ashoughs*, whose music displays the sophistication, depth, and versatility of a classical musical tradition.

Instrumental renderings of the famous troubadour Sayat Nova



highlight the eighteen recordings on this CD.

The *kanon* is the featured instrument in Volume Four of the series. Soloist Karineh Hovhannessian enchants with her rendition of traditional and folk music on the *kanon*. Many of her recordings are of instrumental works which were originally vocal works. More than likely the *kanon* was used to accompany the early folk songs or the recitation of epic poems. The *kanon*, a type of zither, is an instrument well known in Middle Eastern traditions.

Similar to the tradition from which arose the *duduk*, the *kanon*

was also used to render the *ashough* tradition in works by the famous twentieth century musician Gomidas Vardapet and the tenth century Armenian composer Khachatour Avetissian, who is credited with developing the Armenian version of the *kanon* and creating the first body of works for it. The music of the poet and *ashough* Sayat Nova is also recorded in these songs. Nineteen traditional songs are recorded on this CD which captures the essence of Armenian traditional music.

Both Compact Discs reviewed are of excellent quality and would make an excellent gift for anyone.

AG Project, from p.1

of a Web page for the Academy. ATI-NET is a technology information network based at CSUF that provides extensive data on agricultural marketing.

Ennen's visit represents the first step in developing electronic information exchange between CSUF, the Armenian agricultural sector and the Central Valley's agricultural industry.

"Getting Armenia online is going to greatly facilitate international trade negotiations and stimulate research from other institutions," Ennen said prior to his departure. "And it's a great way to link Armenia with the rest of the world using the World Wide Web to disseminate information."

An important aspect of the program also calls for CSUF to offer strategic planning and curriculum development assistance to the

Academy, which falls under the responsibility of John Shields, professor of agricultural economics at CSUF.

Shields, who has served as chairman of the academic policy and planning committee for CSUF, also recently returned from a trip to Armenia where he spent time reviewing the Academy's curriculum and began introducing them to the process of strategic planning.

"Strategic planning is really about how to make choices and how Armenia can begin to take stock of their new economic environment," he explained. "It is a great opportunity for Armenia to redefine its purpose in agricultural economics as well as identify current and future needs."

According to Shields, the focus of the Project is to help the Academy become more marketing oriented and bring it into the practical role of a service-oriented institu-



Left to Right: Victor Sahatdjian, Duke Golden, Dr. Juan Batista, Bill Erysian, Dr. John Shields, Barlow Der Mugrdechian. Victor Sahatdjian, Dr. Juan Batista, and Duke Golden are departing for Yerevan, Armenia on November 1. Bill Erysian is currently in Armenia. Dr. John Shields returned from Armenia in August 1996.

tion that can help farmers, producers and researchers with information.

Shields explained that the Academy is entering a transitional stage because of the economic forces of change currently underway in Armenia. Clearly, he sees challenges ahead for the Academy.

"The Academy is slightly adrift right now be-

cause prior to land reform, it was wholly dependent on directives and planning from the Armenian Ministry of Agriculture," he said.

"Our role is to assist the Academy in redefining its purpose as an academic institution, especially its relationship with new land owners."

In addition to assisting the Academy with implementing a new strategic plan,

Shields is also working to develop an educational exchange program between Armenia and the United States. He is identifying potential research areas at the Academy and is setting up a program to train Academy professors in Western economics.

"The real key is for the Academy to take a larger role as coordinator of agricultural issues in Armenia and that is where CSUF comes in," he explained. "We plan to assist the Academy to incorporate more marketing classes into its program and help it establish a long-term vision that includes product evaluation, target customers, manufacturing and training."

For more information on the Agriculture Marketing Assistance Program in Armenia, please call:

**Professor Juan Batista
278-2464.**



From left to right, backrow: Ara Sarafian, Dr. Lorne Shirinian, Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Sara Durgerian, Vicken Yegparian, Shant Kataroyan, Sebouh Serabian.

Front row: Dr. Vartiter Hovannisian, Victoria Rowe, Lara Nazarian, Christina Lehmejian-Karaszewski, Nathalie Saradjian.

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ARS 24th Armenian Summer Studies Program

The 24th annual Armenian Summer Studies Program of the Armenian Relief Society of North America was held July 21-August 10 on the campus of Bradford College, Bradford, Massachusetts.

Barlow Der Mugrdechian of the Armenian Studies Program of Fresno States was the Director of the three week intensive program in Armenian language, history, literature, film, art, and music.

The teaching staff included Ara Sarafian (Armenian history), Dr. Lorne Shirinian (modern Armenian literature), Garabet Mouldjian (Armenian language).

Mary Mooradian of the ARS was the liaison for the Program.

Dr. Anahid Kassabian and David Kazanjian taught Armenian film, presenting a number of Armenian documentaries and

discussing them with the students.

Filmmaker Nigol Bezjian presented his film "Chickpeas" to the delight of students and staff.

Dr. Lucy Der Manuelian Professor of Armenian Art at Tufts University, in three afternoons, presented a view of Armenian architecture through the ages.

Dr. Ohannes Salibian taught a week long seminar on the history of Armenian music, playing for the students examples of Armenian music, from its earliest origins to modern times.

Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Professor of Armenian History at UCLA and Dr. Vartiter Hovannisian, were special guest of the Program for one day. Dr. Richard Hovannisian spoke on the "Armenian Republic" and Dr. Vartiter Hovannisian showed slides

of her recent trip to Historic Western Armenia.

Poetess Diana Der Hovannessian was also a special guest of the ARS Summer Studies Program. She read excerpts from the works of 20th century Armenian poets such as Siamanto and charents, and also read from her own works.

Tom Vartabedian presented a talk on the history of the local Armenian immigration to the Merrimack Valley. His talk focused on the accomplishments of Armenians over the past one hundred years.

There were weekend trips to Boston, including a visit to the Armenian Library and Museum of America, and also visits to New Hampshire and Maine.

Make plans for this summer's outstanding 25th Annual Summer Studies Program!

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