

HYE SHARZHOOM Armenian Action ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՒՄ

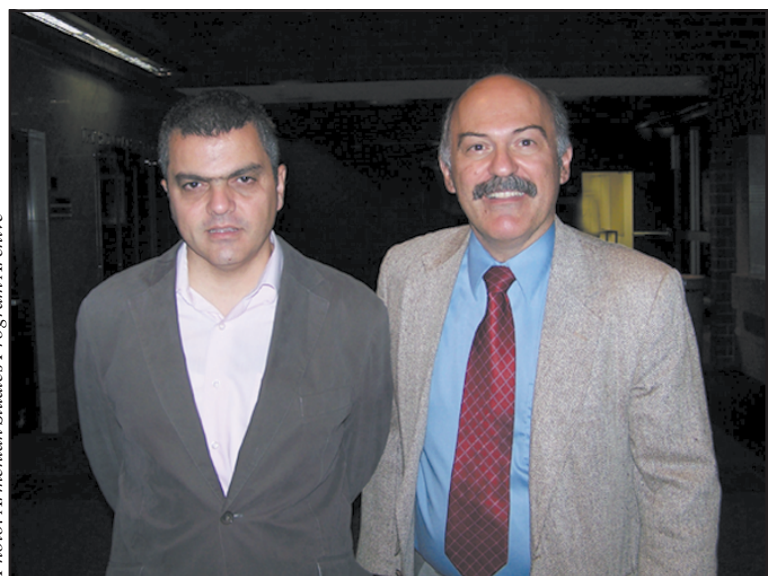
29th Year

October 2007

Vol. 29, No. 1 (99)

Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

Ara Sarafian Offers New Ideas in Talk on Monasteries Near Lake Van



Ara Sarafian, left, with Barlow Der Mugrdchian.

PATEEL MEKHITARIAN
Staff Writer

The Armenian Studies Program and the Armenian Students Organization sponsored a fascinating lecture by Ara Sarafian, a historian and the director of the Gomidas Institute (London), on September 20, 2007. Sarafian has been working on on-going projects in Turkey for over twenty years.

Sarafian's lecture was on "Disappearing Armenian Monasteries in Turkey: The Lake Van Basin." The topic was very interesting, as Sarafian detailed his systematic research in the Lake Van area,

Kharpert, and Trabizond. Conventional wisdom is that everything was destroyed in the Armenian Genocide of 1915. However, Sarafian presented evidence that some churches and monasteries are still standing, albeit in poor condition. In fact, some of that deterioration probably took place only in the last ten years. For this reason, Sarafian continually encouraged people to get involved and see what can be done to help preserve the remaining monasteries.

Sarafian believes that the problem of disappearing Armenian

SEE [SARAFIAN PAGE 7](#)

Affirmation on the United States Record on the Armenian Genocide

STAFF REPORT

On Wednesday, October 10 the House Foreign Affairs Committee voted 27-21 in favor of a resolution on the Armenian Genocide. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi must now bring the resolution to the floor of the House for a full vote on the issue. Majority Leader Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) has said that he'd like to have a vote by the full House before Thanksgiving.

There are some 226 members of Congress who have already signed on to the resolution as co-sponsors.

A similar resolution supported by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) already has 32 co-sponsors.

The resolution (1) calls upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects

SEE [GENOCIDE PAGE 7](#)

ASO Holds Elections for New Executive Officers for 2007-2008



L. to R: Treasurer, Pateel Mekhitarian; Vice-President, Jennifer Torosian; President, Knar Mekhitarian; Secretary, Gayane Frnzyan; and Public Relations, Arman Kalamkarian.

The Armenian Students Organization (ASO) held its first meeting of the fall semester on Thursday, September 13. The first order of business was the election of officers for the new year.

The new officers were interviewed regarding their ideas and plans about the upcoming year.

The interview with the new executive officers follows.

SEE [ASO PAGE 6](#)

Students Travel to Armenia on Fifth Armenia Summer Study Trip Sponsored by Armenian Studies

STAFF REPORT

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian of the Armenian Studies Program led a group of seven students on the Armenia Summer Study Trip 2007, May 24-June 9, 2007. Students enrolled in a three-unit course, Armenian Studies 120T-Armenia Today, designed to acquaint students with the modern Republic of Armenia. Similar study trips were led by Der Mugrdchian in 1988, 1990, 2001, and 2005.

Students visited the important cultural and religious sites in Armenia, including a visit to Holy Etchmiadzin and an audience with His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians.

Among the museums visited were the Matenadaran (Library of Armenian Manuscripts), the State Ethnographic Museum at Sardarabad, and the National Gallery of Art with its rich collection of Armenian and European painting and sculpture.

The group stayed at the Yerevan State University Guest House, in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. They visited and attended classes at Fresno State's sister university in Armenia, Yerevan State University. The students had several opportunities to interact with the YSU students, in classes, and in social activities.



Front row: His Holiness Karekin II and Barlow Der Mugrdchian. Back row, left to right: Brad Kalebjian, Darren Janigian, Ani Menendian, Avo Arikian, Pateel Mekhitarian, Knar Mekhitarian, and Hagop Ohanessian.

Armenia is a country rich in its history and churches. Special emphasis was places on visiting the most important historical sites in the country, including the Monastery of Geghart, the Temple of Garni, the monastery of St. Hripsime, the church at Ambert, and many more churches and monasteries.

Highlighting the trip was a three-day visit to Karabagh, and a stay in the capital city of Stepanakert. On the way to Karabagh the group visited Khor Virap (the monastery where St.

Gregory the Illuminator had been imprisoned), had lunch at the monastery of Noravank, and had a tour of the fascinating pre-historic site of Karahunge (similar to Stonehenge). While in Karabagh, the group visited the monastery of Gandzasar, toured the major museums and sites in the capital city, and ate lunch in the village of Tsaghakagh, home of Nikol Duman.

Students explored virtually every area of Armenia, from Gyumri

SEE [ARMENIA PAGE 4](#)

First Call for Entries for Ninth Annual Armenian Film Festival

Spring 2008
(Date to be Announced)

Sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization
Armenian Studies Program
California State University, Fresno
Partially funded by the Diversity Awareness Program of the University Student Union, CSU Fresno

First Call for Entries

Entries are being sought for the 9th Annual Armenian Film Festival to be held on the California State University, Fresno campus. Films made by Armenian directors/writers, or films with an Armenian theme are being sought.

Films up to 1 hour in length. Films may be in any language, English preferred. Films may be on any topic, Ar-

menian theme preferred. Film must be in video (NTSC)/DVD format.

Deadline for entries to be received is January 15, 2008.

Please send the video/DVD to:

Armenian Film Festival
c/o Armenian Studies Program
5245 N Backer Ave. PB4
Fresno, CA 93740-8001

Entries should be accompanied by a CV of the director/writer and a synopsis of the film.

Telephone 559-278-2669
Email: barlowd@csufresno.edu

The Festival Committee will meet to view and judge which entries will be accepted for the Film Festival. Entrants will be contacted by email with the decisions.

Armenian Studies Program
Book/Video/CD/Archival Gifts

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

Books

- Taner Akçam**, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).
- His Holiness Aram I**, Catholicos of the Holy See of Cilicia, *For a Church Beyond Its Wall* (Antelias, Lebanon, 2007), gift of His Holiness Aram Catholicos.
- Antonia Arslan**, *Skylark Farm: A Novel*, translation from Italian by Geoffrey Brock (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Publishers, 2007). The famous book on the Armenian Genocide made into a major feature film by the Taviani brothers; a gift of the author.
- Arsen Avagyan** and **Gaidz F. Minassian**, *The Armenians and the Committee of Union and Progress* (in Turkish, translated from the French) (Istanbul: Aras, 2005).
- Charles Aznavour**, *The Good Old Days*, translated into Turkish from the French by Emre Aral Altuntash (Istanbul: Aras, 2007).
- Vahan Baiburtian**, *International Trade and the Armenian Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (New Delhi, 2004), courtesy of Armen Liloyan, Consul General of Armenia in Los Angeles.
- Boris Baratov**, *The Armeniad: Visible Pages of History* (Moscow: Linguist Publishers, 2005), gift of the editor Anna Petrosova. Lavish album with a serious text, with some of the finest photographs of Armenian monuments. Available through the editor, anna.petrosova@yahoo.com.
- Alexandre Beredjikian**, *Arshile Gorky: Sept thèmes majeurs* (Paris: Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, 2007), gift of the author.
- Ruth Büttner** and **Judith Peltz**, editors, *Mythical Landscapes Then and Now: The Mystification of Landscapes in Search of National Identity* (Erevan: Antares, 2006), proceedings of a conference held in Erevan in September 2005. Gift of the editors.
- Vahram Dadrian**, *Forsaken Love*, translated from the Armenian by Ara Melkonian and Ara Sarafian (London: Taderon Press, 2006), gift of Chuck Nickson, Houston.
- Arpiar Der Markarian**, *The Echo and the Passenger* (in Turkish, translated from the Armenian) (Istanbul: Aras, 2006).
- Editorial Committee**, *Famous Graduates of the [Gevorgyan] Jemaran* (in Armenian) (Etchmiadzin: The Holy See, 2005), gift of His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II.
- Lerna Ekmekçioğlu** and **Melissa Bilal**, editors, *A Cry for Justice: Five Armenian Feminist Writers from Ottomans to Turkey (1862-1933)*, in Turkish (Istanbul: Aras, 2006).
- Forgotten Bread: First-Generation Armenian American Writers**, (Berkeley: Heyday Books, October 2007), edited with an introduction by David Kherdian.
- René Grousset**, *History of Armenia to 1071*, translated into Turkish from the French, Sosi Dolanoglu (Istanbul: Aras, 2005).
- Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford**, *The Passion in Art* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), gift of Hilary Richardson, Dublin.
- Arto Jumbushian** (Zareh Khrakhouni), *Andradartzumner (Reflections)*, poems in Armenian (Istanbul, 2004), gift of the author.
- Aïda Kazarian**, *Peintures Paintings* (Brussels, 2004), gift of the artist.
- Zareh Khrakhouni**, *Des Viulles et des Hommes, Poèmes*, translated from the Armenian by Nazareth Topalian (Istanbul, 2002), gift of the poet.
- Zareh Khrakhouni**, *Mesropaton*, poems in Armenian and English on the occasion of the 1600th anniversary of the founding of the Armenian alphabet by Mesrob Mashtots (Istanbul, 2005), gift of the author.
- Frédéric Luisetto** (1977-2000), *Arméniens & autre Chrétiens d'Orient sous la domination mongole: L'Ilkhanat de Ghazan 1295-1304*, (Paris: Geithner, 2007), thesis of a brilliant student edited by his former professor, Gérard Dédéyan.
- Gurgen Mahari**, *Burning Orchards*, trans. by Dickran and Haig Tahta and Hasmik Ghazarian (London: Black Apollo Press, 2007).
- Krikor Maksoudian**, *The Origins of the Armenian Alphabet and Literature* (New York: St. Vartan Press, 2006), gift of Fr. Krikor.
- David Marcus**, *Oughtobiography—Leaves from the Diary of a Hyphenated Jew* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2001), gift of Hilary H. Richardson, Dublin. One of Ireland's most famous short story writers who explains how reading Saroyan's *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze* changed his literary career.
- Megerdich Margossian**, *Beads of the Prayer Beads*, a novel-memoir, in Turkish (Istanbul: Aras, 2006).
- Michael Plekon**, *Living Icons: Persons of Faith in the Eastern Church* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), gift of the author.
- Kegham Poochikian**, *The Caravan of Hope, The Journey of an Orphan of the Armenian Genocide*, based on the author's 1927 diary (Toronto, 2007), gift of Vicken Poochikian.

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2008 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education				
Arts & Humanities, Area C2				
• ArmS 20 Arts of Armenia (Class #37073)	3	DGT CAMPUS		D Kouymjian
• ArmS 20 Arts of Armenia (Class #37567)	3	DGT CAMPUS		D Kouymjian
• ArmS 20 Arts of Armenia (Class #37685)	3	DGT CAMPUS		D Kouymjian
Arts & Humanities, Area C1				
• Arm 1B Elementary Armenian (Class #35411)	4	10:30A-11:35A	MWF	B Der Mugerdechian
Arts & Humanities, Area IC				
• Arm 148 Masterpieces Arm Cult (Class #35413)	3	9:00A-9:50A	MWF	B Der Mugerdechian
• ArmS 108B Arm History II (Class #32375)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TTh	B Der Mugerdechian
• ArmS 121 Armenian Painting (Class #37689)	3	DGT CAMPUS		D Kouymjian
• ArmS 120T Armenian Church (Class #43292)	1	5:00P-9:50P 9:00A-5:00P Saturday	Friday	B Der Mugerdechian
Class meets Friday and Saturday, February 8 and 9, 2008.				
• ArmS 120T Armenian Genocide (Class #43291)	1	5:00P-9:50P 9:00A-5:00P Saturday	Friday	B Der Mugerdechian
Class meets Friday and Saturday, April 11 and 12, 2008.				

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669 or visit our offices in the Peters Business Building, Room 384. Get a Minor in Armenian Studies. Check on requirements for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the 2007-2008 catalog: <http://www.csufresno.edu/catoffice/current/armstudhd.html>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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Guest Instructors Teach Armenian Language and Studies Courses



Arakel Arisian teaching in the Armenian Studies 10 course.

STAFF REPORT

This semester, Arakel Arisian is teaching Armenian Studies 10-Introduction to Armenian Studies. The interview below was with him.

This is your first time teaching an Armenian Studies course. What is the experience like?

I truly enjoy being able to share my knowledge of Armenian Studies, as it is one of the most rewarding academic experiences I have had. Most of the students are able to relate to the course materials through family experiences or stories they have heard. It is very interesting to hear their perspective on Armenian issues and to discuss them as a group.

What have you enjoyed most about teaching?

I really like being able to ex-

plore with the class what it means to be an Armenian and to discuss how Armenians all around the world can be engaged in Armenian issues and causes. There is definitely an interest on behalf of the students to become involved and learn more about Armenian Studies.

What has been the most challenging aspect of teaching the course?

The most challenging aspect of this course is relating Armenian topics to the everyday lives of the students. It is very easy to talk about an issue or topic and then go back to our regular routines. The goal, however, is to generate enough interest in Armenian Studies to increase involvement and participation in Armenian activities.

Have you had any unexpected challenges?

The most unexpected challenge was adjusting the course topics and curriculum to match the varied interests, backgrounds, and existing level of knowledge of Armenian Studies of the students. Ultimately, the diverse mix of students has led to more well-rounded and interesting discussions.

How was your interaction with students in your class?

Since I am a graduate of the Armenian Studies Program, I can easily relate to the students and try to understand their perspectives. I try to create an open and free environment so the students feel comfortable in sharing their thoughts, ideas, and questions.

What in your own life prepared you for teaching?

Earning my minor in Armenian Studies gave me the broad knowledge needed to teach Armenian Studies 10. In addition, my two trips to Armenia (in 2001 and 2005) have given me real life experiences and stories to share with the students.

What have been the most interesting questions that you have had to answer regarding your class?

The most interesting question so far was about life in present day Armenia. We had an interesting discussion comparing life in Armenia to life in the United States. It was great to have several students in my class who have traveled to Armenia recently and were able to add some perspective and varying opinions.

Director Patrick Cazals Presents New Films on Mamoulian and Paradjanov



Patrick Cazals

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

ARA NALBANDIAN
Staff Writer

On Sunday, May 20th, 2007, French film producer and director Patrick Cazals treated audience members at California State University, Fresno to a screening of two of his recent films. The Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State organized the presentation.

Cazals screened *Rouben Mamoulian: The Golden Age of Broadway and Hollywood* and *Serguei Paradjanov: The Rebel*. While each documentary presented the life and work of two stylistically different directors, the two

combined to illustrate the talents of perhaps the two greatest Armenian directors of all time.

The afternoon started off with *Rouben Mamoulian: The Golden Age of Broadway and Hollywood*. Rouben Mamoulian (1897 – 1987) was a noted Armenian-American director who was born in Tbilisi, Georgia. After moving to

America, by way of London, Mamoulian rose to fame directing such notable Broadway productions as *Porgy and Bess* and *Oklahoma!*, as well as directing the films *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931), *Love Me Tonight* (1932), *Becky Sharp* (1935), and *The Mark of Zorro* (1940). For his many contributions to cinematography and the theatrical arts, Mamoulian was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award from the directors Guild of America and was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In addition to interviews with Mamoulian's friends and family, the documentary also contained footage of Mamoulian himself.

One of the highlights of the

Mamoulian documentary was the cameo appearance by Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, director of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State. The short clip of Dr. Kouymjian, which brought instant delight to the audience members, showed Dr. Kouymjian telling an entertaining anecdote of a chance encounter he had with Mamoulian.

The second of the two films, entitled *Serguei Paradjanov: The Rebel*, was a touching portrait of the highly acclaimed Armenian director Serguei Paradjanov (1924-1990). Coincidentally, Paradjanov also hailed from Mamoulian's birthplace of Tbilisi, Georgia. Though they shared a similar origin, Paradjanov is most notable for his colorful, avant-garde style of directing, as seen in *The Color of Pomegranates* (1968), on the life of the *ashough* Sayat Nova, which highly contrasted with Mamoulian's classical style. The documentary, which includes candid footage of Paradjanov, touches on Paradjanov's turbulent life, including his five-year prison sentence in 1973 by Soviet authorities.

At the conclusion of the film screenings, Patrick Cazals was gracious enough to speak to the audience and answer questions regarding his fascinating documentaries. Many of the audience members expressed their gratitude to Cazals for his hard work and for bringing the lives and art of these brilliant directors to film.



Armenian 1A students at Fresno State with instructor Nazik Arisian, standing.

STAFF REPORT

This semester, Nazik Arisian is teaching Armenian 1A, Elementary Modern Armenian. The interview below was with her.

This is your first time teaching an Armenian course at Fresno State. What is the experience like?

My initial experience in teaching this course has been wonderful. The students in my class are not only intelligent and diligent, but I also have found them to be respectful and hardworking. These students have a deep desire to learn how to speak, read, and write in Armenian. Sometimes, I see their frustration with the language because they are not able to grasp Armenian as quickly as they would like. However, I remind them that if they do their assignments, keep at it, and not give up, they will be able to successfully learn the Armenian language.

What have you enjoyed most about teaching?

I have really enjoyed getting to know the students. The students have an ongoing assignment to write in Armenian about themselves or their families. Through this writing assignment, I hope to get to know the students even better.

What has been the most challenging aspect of teaching the course?

The biggest challenge is planning the methodology for teaching the class. I am still changing my strategies as the class progresses to

achieve optimum learning and retention.

Have you had any unexpected challenges?

An unexpected challenge I faced when I first started to teach is dealing with the different knowledge levels of the students. Some are already able to read and write, but their understanding is very limited. Some students have a minimum knowledge of Armenian, while others have much more.

How was your interaction with students in your class?

In the beginning all of us were a little apprehensive, but as we have moved forward, all of us are more comfortable and have adjusted well. I am hopeful that we will end the semester achieving the goals and objectives of the class. Since this is beginning Armenian, I hope that at the end the students will want to continue to learn Armenian.

What in your own life prepared you for teaching?

When I was matriculating for my Bachelor's degree, I minored in Armenian Studies and became very passionate about being Armenian. I want to pass on to others what I learned.

What have been the most interesting questions that you have had to answer regarding your class?

Interesting questions come up frequently, but the most interesting one is why Armenians in English are referred to as "Armenians" and in Armenian, Armenians are referred to as "Hyes."

Armenians on the Internet

PATEEL MEKHITARIAN
Staff Writer

Armenia Information
www.armeniainfo.am

There are numerous websites on the internet which illustrate the beauty of Armenia. With pictures of all the churches, restaurants, and the people, one may take a virtual tour of Armenia, while sitting in front of their computer. These types of sites are especially useful before one travels to Armenia.

www.armeniainfo.am is an excellent way to view many parts of Armenia. This website provides a virtual tour of the country, the people, the history, and of the Armenian culture. This site is excellent to view the nice entertainment activities, such as theaters, nightclubs, and casinos. This site also provides information about different dinner options and lodging opportunities for those who wish to travel.

There are many new websites dedicated to providing information about Armenians. By visiting these pages, for people unfamiliar with the country of Armenia, it becomes very simple to travel to Armenia.

Students on Armenia Trip Have Lasting Memories and Impressions

ARMENIA, FROM PAGE 1

in the north, to Goris in the South. A visit to Lake Sevan, Dilijan, and the monastery of Haghartsin was another highlight of the trip.

All in all, students enjoyed participating in this once in a lifetime opportunity.

The essays that follow were part of the assignment that students had to complete the course. After they returned to Fresno, they were asked to write an essay about their impressions of their visit. The essays have been edited for reasons of space.

AVO ARIKIAN

For Armenians in the Diaspora, it is a common dream to visit the land where our ancestors originated. Naturally, I jumped at the opportunity to visit Armenia this past summer. While I had been exposed to Armenian culture my whole life, I somehow felt that what I was exposed to only scratched the surface of what my heritage truly encompassed. My two weeks in Armenia were a time of discovery, as I delved deeper into my ethnic roots, explored my ancestral homeland, and learned that Armenia has a more intricate history than I ever imagined.

I would have to say that I was most surprised and impressed by just how wide of a scope Armenian history and culture has. We saw the site of the very beginnings of the Armenian people, by visiting the ruins of Erebuni, which was built by the Urartians almost a thousand years before Christ was born (the Urartians are considered the ethnic precursors to the first Armenians). We visited Karahunge (the Armenian Stonehenge), which is a true testament to how advanced Armenian civilization was at such an early stage – the stones were used to gain knowledge about astronomy thousands of years ago in ways that we might hardly think of today. The Armenian people developed over the course of millennia and that's something I didn't really grasp until I actually saw it for myself.



Photo: Armenian Studies Program Archive

ASP group in front of the Mother Armenia statue. L. to R.: Brad Kalebjian, Ani Menendian, Darren Janigian, Barlow Der Mugrdchian, Avo Arikian Hagop Ohanessian, Pateel Mekhitarian, and Knar Mekhitarian.

still closed. The people are much more relaxed, spending time on the streets in discussion with each other, and the bustle doesn't wind down until the early morning hours.

The experience definitely made me want to get involved in the long-term project of establishing Armenia as a secure, stable, and self-sufficient country. I would definitely be interested in returning and offering my skills as a volunteer. I could see myself investing in Armenia and helping revitalize the economy by offering some capital for them to get started. I think I would most like to start up some philanthropic ventures that could mean anything from opening a community medical clinic, to an orphanage, to sponsoring a school. We saw firsthand the impact these kinds of institutions can have on peoples' lives and I plan on being a part of that someday.

The trip was full of awe-inspiring moments, but there are a few that I would like to highlight. First was the solemn majesty of Etchmiadzin; our participation in the church service

me feel at once proud and connected with the area.

My favorite experience, though, was our trip to Karabagh. I found it to be an absolutely gorgeous setting with a group of amazing people that have been through far more difficulties than could ever be described. Because it is such a small region, the war with Azerbaijan had a direct negative impact on nearly every family. We were exposed to a part of this ourselves as we witnessed a remembrance ceremony for one

of the fallen soldiers, which was attended by mothers of those who had died in the war. In spite of the incredible pain and suffering that these people went through, they were the most warm and welcoming group of people I met over the course of the trip. After visiting Karabagh myself and seeing its appeal, I will be thrilled the day that Karabagh is rightfully reunited with the rest of Armenia.

In summary, my trip to Armenia with the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State was an experience that will have a lifelong impact on me. I learned a great deal both about Armenia and myself—more than I ever expected to. I am definitely going to return one day, in a capacity where I'm able to get involved in a revitalization project. If you are at all interested in visiting Armenia yourself, my strong recommendation would be to follow through and make the trip, whether it's with Fresno State or through some other channel. There really is nothing like seeing Armenia for yourself and you will undoubtedly get a lot more out of it than you put in.

DARREN JANIGIAN

Visiting Armenia, and finally stepping onto the land of my ancestry, was an experience matched by no film, newspaper article, book passage, or family story. I breathed in the rich air brought down into the valley across the Caucasus Mountains, and the penetrating aroma of Armenian coffee boiling on the stovetops. I saw the freshly baked, flour covered *lavash* as it was pulled right out of the stone ovens. I felt the heat of the sun on my face, and the wind against my body. The rain poured down on my head, and the river water ran through my hands. I heard the busy clusters of pedestrians and automobile traffic in the city, the negotiations at the Vernissage, the holy chants of the monasteries and the comfort of being surrounded by Armenian language, though it has changed so much from the time my great grandparents spoke it.

I had very few preconceived notions about what Armenia would be like. All I was sure of was that it

would be different from the historic Armenia that my ancestors knew. I had reviewed a visitor's guide book to Armenia, so I had a pretty good idea of what to expect, but there were some things that I still did not see coming. The food was the one thing that really surprised me. I expected to see skewered shish kebab on every street corner and big piles of rice and bulghur pilaf accompanying every meal. In place of lamb and pilaf I found an abundance of pork and potatoes. I was also looking forward to some traditional Armenian dancing, but found mostly discos playing modern dance music.

I was unaware of the extent of the Russian influence on every aspect of Armenian life. I saw it in the faces I passed in the streets and at the stores and restaurants. It was in the language being spoken, the food being eaten, and the cars that went by.

My visit to Armenia was filled with lasting experiences. I felt the steady pulse of Armenia's religious life during our three visits to Etchmiadzin, where I had the honor of meeting His Holiness the Catholicos and the privilege to take communion. During our stop at the Khor Virap Monastery, I saw the birthplace of Armenian Christianity. I witnessed the strength of the Armenians in Karabagh, and saw the beauty of a land that was understandably worth fighting for. Everyday, we ate like kings. The produce was fresh and full of flavor and the meat was noticeably free of hormones. I saw

but it all came right back. I made the sign of the cross as I approached, stuck my tongue out, acted like I understood the blessing and accepted the consecrated bread. I then made the sign of the cross again and tried to get out of the way without turning my back to the altar like my father had always reminded me never to do. The whole experience was very fulfilling and I felt the presence of God in my heart and all around me.

I spent only two days in Karabagh, but for the short time I was there, I was able to see a lot. I felt a pride emanating from everyone whom I met. That was reinforced by the monument of Tatik and Papik in Stepanakert that reminds its viewers of the roots that Armenians have in this land. You couldn't walk a block without seeing a pair of men in military uniform, but this reminder of the war with Azerbaijan did not frighten me at all. I had never felt more secure. I kept thinking how good it was to have the guys with the guns on our side.

All in all, this trip changed me for the better. My eyes were opened by the vast differences between the Armenia my ancestors knew and what it has developed into today. I learned to better appreciate what I have, and I will always remember how hard some of our people have it in Armenia. I will never forget my trip to Armenia, and I am thankful for the perspective it has brought me, and for the new experiences that have been added to my life.



Photo: Armenian Studies Program Archive

In front of the Tatik and Papik statue in Stepanakert, Karabagh. The group spent two days in Karabagh.

BRAD KALEBJIAN

The trip to Armenia marked my first travel outside of the United States, which I had been eagerly awaiting. I always felt like this would be a great trip, since it was already a place that I felt acquainted with. In many ways, Armenia was just that. In other ways—and just as many—it was a very different, detached place. I would not be doing a service to myself or anyone if I discussed only my most positive experiences.

The post-Soviet influence was one of the most apparent things about this trip—more so than anything inherently Armenian. It was in the food, language, mentality, and painted-over rust of the subway cars. It was in the countryside as your eyes followed the power lines off into the distance. It was everywhere. Despite many obvious shortcomings of the Soviet Union, that period of time meant



Photos: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Students at the 7th century Garmravor Church in Ashtarak.

I was also greatly taken aback by the difference in lifestyle between America and Armenia. Americans are usually early to rise, as they rush to work, and are constantly active throughout the day. In general they tend to not stay awake past 11pm. Armenians are the exact opposite. We found this out the hard way when we tried to go to a coffee shop, a little after 8am in the morning, and it was

and our tour of the entire grounds (as well as our meeting with the Catholicos) were amazing experiences, and we were exposed to a level of Armenian church history that can only be experienced there. We were also lucky enough to take in the sights of Lake Sevan, Shake Waterfalls and the towering image of Mount Ararat. Seeing such beautiful natural sites in my ancestral homeland made

Visit to Armenia Gives Opportunity for Reflection to Students

Photo: Barlow Der Mugerdechian



The Armenian Martyr's Monument in Yerevan, Armenia. Students felt the emotional impact of the Armenian Genocide.

progress for Armenia—and in some ways, that is exactly what it has lacked since the collapse. Seeing the decay, similar to that of a ghost town, weeds sprouting up in every possible crack, one could only imagine how beautiful the courtyard at the David of Sassoon monument, near the train station, may have once looked.

It was an element of confusion that must have struck me every day in Armenia—how there could be so many new buildings *still* being erected, how there could be BMW's, Mercedes-Benz's, and Hummers almost everywhere. Without a doubt Armenia, to me, represents a dichotomy of wealth and poverty. However, along with the poverty, we experienced an amazing sense of generosity, or as one of the Yerevan State University students (who treated us to ice cream) called it, "Armenian hospitality."

One of the most interesting parts of the trip was meeting with the college students. I felt a close connection with this group of students. I felt like these students were more Americanized, not just in appearance, but in thought. I spoke with one of the students about his father's job in importing and exporting agricultural goods in Turkmenistan. He recognized that his education in business, and especially the English language was important, if he wanted to be successful.

Speaking with this student and many others, I got the feeling that if there was going to be any political change in Armenia for the better, it would be by this younger, college-educated generation. They seemed to have a lot of ambition in business, and also knowledge of the corruption of their current government. I saw a lot of promise in these students, but it is just a shame that there were so few of them.

When I got back to Fresno, many people asked me if I would ever go back to Armenia. I might go back, but it wouldn't be any time soon, because I would like to visit again when there would be much more improvement. People also asked me about my "connection" with the homeland. I have to say that, especially as a Fresno Armenian, I felt a connection with the land. It was amazing to see the vineyards integrated into the culture in Armenia, at the churches, on monuments, and of course the open land. As for my connection with the Armenians themselves- it was a much differ-

ent experience than I would have expected. Fresno Armenians are nothing like the people of Armenia, and I would go so far as to say that-compared to the native Armenians, we are an almost completely different nationality.

The best way to help Armenia is to educate the next generation of leaders. Armenians have always been a people of hope and I truly believe that with these young and optimistic college youth who I met, there is a lot of hope for a better Armenia in the future. The next visit I make will hopefully showcase the progress, persistence, and hope of Armenia.

KNAR MEKHITARIAN

I vaguely remember the first time that I visited this mysterious place, called the "Motherland," in 1993 with my mother. All that I could recall was a weakened country, Armenians living in despair and living in great hopes of a better future. I grew to realize that Armenia was misunderstood, small in size, yet rich in culture. My second visit to Armenia reinforced my love for my heritage and changed my perception of the country. This mysterious place thousands of miles away from home turned out to be a powerful adventure I will never forget. We were among thousands of tourists that were welcomed to Armenia in June. The number of tourists per year is significantly rising, because Armenia is being recognized as an interesting destination. Despite having overcome genocide, and years of oppression, it became apparent to me that Armenians still continue to have a strong spirit.

We had the opportunity to tour Yerevan State University and meet with the Rector (President) of Yerevan State University, Dr. Aram Simonyan. Soon after, we met a group of students and it was comforting to know that the youth were well educated and willing to learn and succeed. Although brought up in different environments, there was a special connection between them and us. All differences were put aside as we bonded as Armenians, which brought about a special friendship.

One of my favorite places was the Armenian Martyr's Monument, which was completed in 1968. This monument commemorates the 1915 Genocide and as we gathered in sorrowful silence in front of the flame, I began to reminisce about the stories that my grandfather told about the

Genocide. However, I never understood the entire picture. We also visited the Genocide Museum next to the Monument, filled with gory photographs and facts about the 1915 atrocities committed by the Ottoman Empire. Although I left emotionally impacted, this powerful symbol gave me a sense of unity, and my grandfather's stories became more significant.

A meaningful part of the trip was meeting my extended family, none of whom I had met before. Due to the repatriation of Armenians from all over the world to Armenia in 1946, many Armenian families were separated. My grandfather's brother, a devoted patriot, had emigrated from Lebanon to Armenia with hopes of living a better life. Later he was deported to Siberia because he expressed his opinions during Soviet rule. My sister and I spent a couple days with Ludwig, our second cousin, and his mother Varsig. We witnessed life as a local, taking normal bus routes, and shopping in supermarkets. They lived in a one bedroom and one bathroom apartment. My sister and I were embraced with endless devotion; a living room table served with seven types of Armenian



Fresno State students and Yerevan State University students enjoy an evening out in Yerevan.

home cooked dishes, followed by dessert. The warmth I received in those few hours that day, made me feel as if I had known them my entire life. It was a very distinctive yet delightful visit, one of which I will never forget.

My visit in Armenia, gave me a clear understanding of the importance of my culture, religion, customs, and traditions. With support from the Armenian Diaspora, Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, has developed into a flourishing city. It would be beneficial to the country if every Armenian could help out in any way, whether it is through donation or volunteering. It is very important for me to return to Armenia in the near future as a volunteer at a place such as Orran, a day-care center for the youth. This too, will contribute to a better Armenia.

Mt. Ararat is the strength and inspiration for the Armenians, a holy symbol of Armenian identity. We would wake up in Armenia hoping that it was a clear day, so that we would be able to view the beautiful Holy Mountain. Although it would be just a glimpse, it would be an unforgettable sight. It was a touching moment for me when we had the chance to view Mt. Ararat, because it was something I had always wanted to see.

I acquired so much more on this trip than I had ever anticipated. Armenia has come such a long way since I had first visited, with vast improvements in the economy, education, and government. My trip helped me grow not only as an individual, but also as an Armenian. I gained an in-depth knowledge of my faith, people, and language. Although I do not live there, Armenia will always live in my heart.

PATEEL MEKHITARIAN

I had always heard of the beautiful and historic sites of Armenia, however experiencing the beauty of my motherland in person was more than I anticipated. My trip to Armenia was unforgettable and very educational and each day I spent in Armenia was filled with new experiences, places, and feelings.

Prior to my visit, I had only listened to my family talking about the conditions of the country.

Before I arrived in Armenia, I assumed the conditions of the people were going to be quite similar to the stories I had heard from my mother. However I was pleas-

live similar to how people lived a century ago. Unfortunately, villages outside of Yerevan haven't experienced many technological advances and don't have the educational opportunities. The people in the villages survive off of what they produce themselves.

With the help of generous donors from all over the world, small villages such as Tigranashen are capable of maintaining an elementary school. I have great hope for the smaller, less populated cities outside the main city. I have hope that one day the people in the villages will have a chance to live a happy, stable life and that one day their children will have the opportunity to get educated.

A personal goal I would love to achieve is to return soon to Armenia and volunteer at a facility called Mer Doon (Our Home). Mer Doon houses teenaged young women, who come from disadvantaged households. These girls have outgrown their orphanages, and residing in Mer Doon keeps them from living on the streets. The young women are taught English, French, and Russian, as well as computer skills, how to become self-sufficient, and how to establish a family. I would love to volunteer at a place such as Mer Doon. Volunteering to help in Armenia would be beneficial and rewarding.

Throughout my stay in my motherland, everyday was a day to remember. I enjoyed the beautiful scenery at Dilijan and Noravank, and I also greatly enjoyed the intricately designed churches. The place that touched me the most was Karabagh-everything there was moving and spending only two days in the area was definitely not enough time.

The simple view of Mount Ararat and Massis is something that will stick with me forever. I have seen numerous pictures and paintings of our holy mountains, however seeing the mountains in person, made me realize how important my culture is to me. It was then that I realized how significant it is to keep our heritage in America. I am proud of my family, my culture, and my motherland. I noticed how rich and historic the country is, and the uniqueness will always remain. It is vital to maintain the traditions, the language, and the history in America. It is my duty, as an Armenian to pass on my beautiful heritage.

SEE ARMENIA PAGE 6

Photo: Barlow Der Mugerdechian



L: to R: Avo Arikiyan, Knar Mekhitarian, Pateel Mekhitarian, Ani Menendian, Darren Janigian, and Hagop Ohanessian at the David of Sassoun statue in Yerevan, Armenia.

Trip Introduces Students to Armenia-May 24-June 9, 2007

ARMENIA, FROM PAGE 6

ANI MENENDIAN

My trip to Armenia this summer has opened my eyes to all of the dynamic struggles that face the country both economically and socially. I learned to love the country even more than I had before, and I now appreciate some of the things that would be very easy to take for granted, now that Yerevan is expanding. The country side is serene, beautiful, and sacred...and the reason why I wanted to return to Armenia.

One of my favorite experiences was an unexpected treat and insight into the Armenian spirit that I so looked forward to experiencing. On our way to Karabagh, we made a few stops at some very well known historical places. However we made another stop on that long journey that none of us were expecting. We made what we thought was going to be a five to ten minute stop in a village called Tigranashen to visit a school. It was a very destitute place, however the village was rich with a welcome, generous, and warm spirit that the family we visited showed us. They were elated to have us, and they surprised us with a beautiful picnic beneath the trees surrounding their home. I had been waiting to experience this kind of warmth and it hit me like a ton of bricks.

Another very positive experience was having the chance to meet with a group of students from Yerevan State University. It was great to spend an evening with people our own age, who we all found plenty in common with. While traveling around to different places we could see and hear about how life is lived in Armenia, but speaking with some of the students was as close as we could get to a first-hand experience of life in Armenia. It is one thing to get to know the country in the sense of its land, buildings, and culture; but getting to know Armenia through its people was an amazing experience.



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

The grave of noted Fresno writer William Saroyan in the Pantheon Cemetery in Yerevan, Armenia.

The Armenian government and economy has had a very difficult time with adjusting to its freedom from Soviet rule. After having seen the situation in Armenia, both economically and socially, it is very apparent that help is greatly needed and appreciated. There are simple things like keeping certain parts of the city in Yerevan or the outlying countryside clean. Becoming involved in an effort to keep up the appearance of the city would be a completely worthwhile cause.

There is also a segment of the population that has experienced some of the worst conditions and are the least equipped to deal with them—children from broken families. We visited a facility for children called Orran, and it opened our eyes to the reality that there are too many kids that are in very unfortunate situations. Thankfully there are privately funded places like Orran to aid families and their children. When I return to Armenia, I would love to volunteer my time at a place like that, helping the children in any way that I can. I would also like to contribute to creating more Orrans because unfortunately there is no way to get help to all of the kids in need.

Another way to aid Armenians

living in Armenia is to spread awareness. Unless we are educated about the needs of the home country, we cannot do anything to improve the situation. Now I can give a first-hand report of some of what needs to be done. A little effort from people here at home can make such a huge difference in the lives of those living in Armenia that it sounds ridiculous to not give that little effort.

HAGOP OHANESSIAN

As a student at California State University, Fresno and of the Armenian Studies Program, the opportunity to visit Armenia and Karabagh was the best thing that ever happened to me. I knew that this trip was giving me the chance to visit the lands of my ancestors. Also, it was an opportunity to see first-hand everything I had heard and learned about the country. After visiting Armenia for the first time, I was amazed at the rapid improvements and economic growth.

The visit to Armenia and Karabagh was the missing puzzle piece for me as an Armenian. Having been born in Aleppo, Syria I knew that it was my duty to one day visit Armenia. My personal experience in

Armenia was unforgettable. The country is so technologically modernized and the night life is so alive. The people in the country are welcoming and friendly. They were excited to hear that Armenian students like our group took the opportunity to visit our homeland. After landing in Armenia, I was thrilled to hear everyone around me speak Armenian. It was the best thing because in the United States there are so many different ethnic groups and languages. There are so many memories from the trip to Armenia, one of which was spending time with my group. The six other group members were fun to be with and each day with them will be a memory to cherish forever.

The most memorable Armenian Church was the famous Holy Etchmiadzin. Not only is the Church the face of all the Armenian churches throughout the Diaspora, but it is the home of His Holiness Karekin II. Sitting for the church services on Sundays was so beautiful. Hearing the choir was unforgettable and it reminded me of time when I had seen a service at Etchmiadzin on television. The opportunity to sit down with His Holiness Karekin II was an honor. He was intelligent and his English was great. The tour of his residence was incredible because the paintings on the walls, books, and ancient artifacts of the church were all beautiful.

The Martyrs Monument was emotional for all of us because it reminded me of all those who died in the genocide. It made me think of the struggles our ancestors went through. The Genocide Museum was even more touching because the pictures and the stories told by the tour guide made it clear that the Turkish government wanted to destroy the Armenians.

On the way to Karabagh we stopped at Khor Virap monastery where we had the opportunity to go down the pit and see the place where St. Gregory was imprisoned for 13 years. At first it was frightening but after going down and back up I felt proud to have conquered my fear. Also, we had the chance to visit Noravank monastery. This was one of my favorite monasteries along the way to Karabagh because of its architecture and its high mountain location.

The experience in Karabagh was so unique because it was different from Armenia. The people in Karabagh were more open minded and friendly. The most memorable moment in Karabagh was the Karabagh War Museum and it was sad to see all the pictures of those who died in the war. The most fascinating thing was to know that many Armenians from the Diaspora went to fight in the war. The scenery of the mountains in Karabagh, as well as the pleasant weather, made me fall in love with the country. The opportunity to have been able to visit Karabagh will never be forgotten and hopefully I will have the chance to visit it again.

As an Armenian living in the Diaspora, I feel that it is necessary to volunteer and give back to our homeland. There are many projects that anyone can get involved with. I would like to invest in the country by opening a business in order to help employment and help boost the economy or I would like to volunteer at an orphanage or some other organization. The opportunities are available and it is our job to find something we like to do and contribute.

The trip to Armenia was terrific and when the opportunity comes to go again, I would definitely take it. It was such a unique trip that everything I learned and heard about the country was all so true. Everything about the country is neat because there is history behind everything and every site. Professor Barlow Der Mugrdchian was truly a good leader to have on this trip. He gave us the opportunity to visit every place in Armenia. We had the chance to meet great people and to experience Armenia the way it should be experienced. To all those who have not had the chance to see Armenia, they should definitely plan a visit.

Finally, the trip to Armenia was the best experience for me because it was a life changing experience for the better. As I stated earlier it was the missing puzzle in my life. It helped me see where I'm truly from. Armenians are unique because many of us come from all around the world. The creation of the Diaspora was a result of the Genocide. To finally be able to visit my country, my homeland, and the land of my ancestors was the greatest feeling in my life.

ASO, FROM PAGE 1

TAMAR DER KEVORKIAN
Staff Writer

President: Knar Mekhitarian
Major: Business Accounting
Minor: Armenian Studies
Senior

Why did you run for executive office?

Running for office has always interested me and has been something I have always wanted to do. Last semester I was the Public Relations officer and it was a lot of fun, but this time around it will be a lot better!

What do you plan to bring to A.S.O. this year?

My main focus this year is to have fun, inviting all interested students on campus to join. There are a lot of Armenians on campus, and this is a great opportunity for everyone to meet one another. We will also be doing several fundraisers that will benefit non-profit organizations in Armenia, as well as collaborating with Armenian clubs at other universities. We have a lot of fun things in mind for the club this year, and we hope that students on campus are as excited as we are! Everyone is welcome to join!

Vice President:
Jennifer Torosian
Major: Business
Minor: Armenian Studies
Senior

Why did you run for executive office?

Due to prior commitments, including being a member of a time-consuming social sorority, I never had the chance to be a big part of A.S.O., but this year I found the time. I was always active in Fresno State's Armenian community such as going to the lectures, taking Armenian Studies courses and being a member of A.S.O.

What do you plan to bring to A.S.O. this year?

Personally, I plan on offering my prior experience of fund-raising in my sorority to A.S.O. I feel I can bring my knowledge of activities such as a "Penny Drive" to raise money for projects for A.S.O. I have many new ideas that I want to bring to the club.

Treasurer: Pateel Mekhitarian
Major: Chemistry
Minor: Armenian Studies and Spanish Studies
Sophomore

Why did you run for executive office?

I was on the executive last year and I love to be a part of the Armenian community at Fresno State. I want to get all the Armenians on campus participating in our organization."

What do you plan to bring to A.S.O. this year?

I would love to have all the Armenian students meet and get to know each other. Primarily, this year, I would like to see A.S.O. help Armenia by fundraising.

Public Relations:
Arman Kalamkarian
Major: Physical Therapy
Minor: Armenian Studies
Sophomore

Why did you run for executive office?

I wanted to be a part of the Armenian community and life on campus. I felt I could offer a lot to A.S.O. and I plan on working hard to make this year the best for A.S.O.

What do you plan to bring to A.S.O. this year?

I plan to help organize fun activities and try to get as many people involved as possible.



**Fresno State's
Armenian Radio
Show**

“Hye Oozh”

Every Saturday morning from 9:00AM-noon

KFSR 90.7 FM

On the internet at www.kfsr.org!

**Are you interested in
working on the Hye Oozh
Radio Show?**

**Fresno State students who
are interested in volunteer-
ing may contact station
manager Joe Moore
at 278-2598.**



D. J. Tatevik Ekejian

Obituaries-Charlie Keyan and Matthew Maroot

Photo: Armenian Studies Program Archive



Charlie Keyan

BARLOW DER MUGRDECHIAN
Advisor

Armenian Studies Program and Fresno State benefactor Mr. Charlie Keyan passed away in Rancho Mirage, California on July 23, 2007. He was born on June 22, 1926, to Armenian immigrants Ohan and Jouhar Keyahian.

Mr. Keyan, a Fresno State alumnus and retired businessman and farmer, living in Indio, California had donated \$100,000 to establish the Charlie Keyan Endowed Scholarship in Armenian Studies in 2004. Income from the endowment is used to provide scholarships for students at Fresno State who enroll in Armenian Studies courses, with preference for freshmen.

Mr. Keyan recently made other generous donations to California university Armenian Studies pro-

BARLOW DER MUGRDECHIAN
Advisor

Former *Hye Sharzhoom* editor and Fresno State graduate Matthew Maroot passed away in Fresno on July 13. Maroot was born in 1978 and lived all his life in Fresno.

Maroot served as editor of *Hye Sharzhoom* during the 1999-2000 academic year and was an active member of the Armenian Students Organization. As editor, Maroot was actively involved in the chronicling of student life on campus. He was also interested in his Armenian heritage and successfully completed a minor in Armenian Studies. He was an outstanding student with a wonderful personality. He graduated with honors from Fresno State in 2000.

Maroot operated Jon Jon's Grand Central Station in downtown Fresno and was devoted to improving the downtown area. He was a member of Heritage Fresno, an organization involved in the



Matthew Maroot

Photo: Armenian Studies Program Archive

preservation of Fresno's history and historic buildings.

Maroot's family has deep roots in Fresno. Grandfather Charlie Maroot used to deliver newspapers with Fresno author William Saroyan. His maternal grandparents, Grace and Yervant Ganimian owned the Hye Quality Bakery in downtown Fresno.

Maroot is survived by his wife Kristen and daughter Sydney, extended family, as well as many friends.

Springs, and bought, either by himself or with his brother-in-law, some 140 acres of land. He grew grapes on 75 of those acres, shipping and selling his own produce in his own facilities. The vineyard became quite successful.

Later Mr. Keyan began investing in the stock market where he was also very successful. In 1988 he retired and began traveling extensively, visiting every continent. He went on many cruises, and visited China, Japan, Egypt, India, the European coasts, the Panama Canal, the North Sea, and the coast of Gibraltar.

Perhaps his most memorable journey was taken in 1995 when he visited historic Armenia. There were 10 people in the group, with each person having the opportunity to visit the village or city where their families had once lived. The group traveled more than 2,000 miles in 2 weeks, visiting Aintab, Istanbul, and saw much of historic Armenia. In particular the historic ruins of Ani were a memorable stop.

Mr. Keyan's family includes two sisters, Rose Kasimian (also his former business partner) and Agnes Margosian of Dinuba, a long-time elementary school teacher who recently retired.

GENOCIDE, FROM PAGE 1

appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide and the consequences of the failure to realize a just resolution; and

(2) calls upon the President in the President's annual message commemorating the Armenian Genocide issued on or about April 24, to accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide and to recall the proud history of United States intervention in opposition to the Armenian Genocide.

Both the White House and Turkey have opposed the resolution.

SARAFIAN, FROM PAGE 1

monasteries in Turkey should be brought to the attention of the authorities in Turkey. An example of where the Turkish authorities did take action, was in the renovation work of the monastery of Akhtamar, a major departure of Turkish policy. The completion of the project took place in 2007.

In order to preserve the existing monasteries and possibly reconstruct or renovate the damaged ones, communication with Turkish authorities is essential. Unfortunately, only 10% of the monasteries that once existed, still stand, and 90% have been either severely damaged, or completely destroyed, to the extent that it is difficult to find their original locations. Restoration of the Armenian churches and monasteries is essential in maintaining the rich history of the Armenians in Turkey.

For the Turkish government and the local Kurds, restoration of churches and monasteries would result in increasing numbers of tourists visiting the area, and thus an increase in income.

Sarafian showed images from four monasteries to illustrate his point.

The village of Varents is an abandoned area of Turkey, near the island of Akhtamar, where no one has lived for 80-90 years. In this abandoned land, an altar from

monastery before 1915, is currently unrecognizable. There are now just a few stones that remain where the church once stood. There is a road, which was built that goes directly through the area of the monastery.

Another site was discussed by Sarafian, the "Seljuk Park," an old cemetery in Van. There is an Armenian influenced Seljuk Turkish mausoleum, which is well maintained in that area. The mausoleum has definite stylistic connections to traditional Armenian domes. This is selective preservation. Why are the Armenian monasteries destroyed and the Turkish buildings still standing? Protection and maintenance is possible, if the people of Turkey are interested. Unfortunately, at this point in time, maintaining the monasteries is not appealing to the authorities.

In addition to talking about the disappearing monasteries, Sarafian also shared his experience of visiting the Van Museum. The museum, which is currently closed for "renovation," contains some small artifacts of Turkish history, such as Ottoman cannons. At one time the museum had an exhibit on the "Turkish Genocide." However, the museum was closed two years ago and has not reopened, perhaps because the "exhibit" is an embarrassment to the current regime. Sarafian noticed something very interesting-there were many Arme-



Richard Elbrecht of Sacramento set up a photographic display of images taken in the Lake Van region. Richard and his wife Anne have been visiting Turkey for more than twenty years and their collection of photographs is valuable documentation of the region.

the monastery still stands, but everything else has been destroyed. There is a cemetery near the once existing church, with *khatchkars* (stone-crosses) and family grave-stones. Unfortunately grave-robbing is a common activity that occurs in areas where there are no people.

Saint Thomas, a 10th century church, perched on a mountaintop, is another example of destruction and damage. There are numerous holes in the church walls and dome, leaving the Church close to collapse. Some fifty to seventy *khatchkars* once existed in the area, but all have since disappeared. There is also evidence of disturbed graves in the area.

Garmir Vank (Red Monastery) is another 10th century church, which today also exhibits holes in the dome. When photographed in the 1970's, there was no damage, indicating the damage was done recently.

Sourp Nishan, a functioning

nian historical artifacts scattered around the museum grounds, such as Armenian *khatchkars* with Armenian writing, stones from the Urartian period with cuneiform writing that also had Armenian writing, and even a statue of an Armenian clergymen.

Sarafian's assertion is that there is a chance for an opening with the Turkish government, and that the Armenians should open a dialogue with Turkish authorities, to reclaim the lost Armenian heritage.

The lecture given by Ara Sarafian was very educational and eye-opening. Help is needed in preserving the traditional history of the Armenians, in Turkish territory. Continuous maintenance is essential in preventing the complete destruction of the few remaining monasteries in the Lake Van region. According to Sarafian it is the responsibility of Armenians to keep Armenian history alive, before it is completely erased.

BOOKS, FROM PAGE 2

Hilary Richardson & John Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1990), gift of Hilary Richardson.

Mayda Saris, *Bir Istanbul ressamı Civanyan: Jivanian a Painter of Istanbul* (Istanbul, 2006), major study of one of the most important Armenian artists (1848-1906) of the Ottoman Empire; gift of Mihran and Payline Tovmassian, Istanbul.

James Snapp, Jr., *The Origin of Mark 16:9-20* (Tipton, IN, 2007), gift of the author.

Nira and Michael Stone, *Armenians—Art, Culture and Religion* (Dublin: Chester Beatty Library, 2007), gift of the authors.

Michael E. Stone, *Adamgirk': The Adam Book of Arak'el of Siwnik'*, translated with an introduction (Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), gift of the author.

Michael E. Stone, *Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and Armenian Studies. Collected Papers*, 2 vols. (Louvain-Paris, 2006).

Armand Tchouhadjian, *Saint Blaise. Evêque de Sébaste, Arménie mineure. Saint du IVe siècle universel et populaire* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004), gift of the author. Massive and definitive study of one of Europe's most popular saints of Armenian origin.

Osep Tokat, *Armenian Master Silversmiths*. (Los Angeles: Van Publishing, 2005), gift of the author through the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Mission Hills, CA.

Vazgen I, *Cathlicos of All Armenians, In Homage on the Tenth Anniversary of His Death* (in Armenian) (Etchmiadzin: The Holy See, 2005), gift of His Holiness Catholicos Karekin II.

Puzant Yeghiayan, *Heroes of Hayastan*, (Cairo, 1993) gift of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), *Journal of Armenian Studies*, vol. VIII, no. 2 (Fall 2006), NAASR.

Archives, CDs, and DVDs

Tiroch Khorane (*The Altar of God*) and the CD of the Divine Liturgy at Holy Etchmiadzin. Gift of Archpriest Fr. Hovsep Hagopian, Burbank, CA

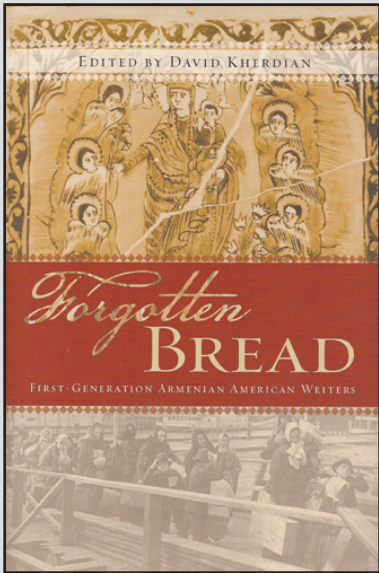
Walter Karabian, Los Angeles, for archival materials and the DVD of *ANCA Washington Power*.

June Kemalyan, Acampo, for the collection of books from the estate of Arthur Armenag Kemalyan and Esther Matilda Kludgian.

Dick & Mary Nikssarian, Fowler, for the collection of Armenian and Turkish records.

Diana & Maral Piloyan, Mexico, for their collection of Armenian books and a complete set of the Armenian Encyclopedia.

Martin Tourigian, Drexel, PA, for the copy of the *Hask* periodical, a book by Yevgeni Yevtushenko, and four watercolors of various scenes of Armenia.



Armenian Studies Program
Fall 2007 Lecture Series

Author David Kherdian will
present his new book

*Forgotten Bread:
First Generation
Armenian-American Writers*

Wednesday, November 14, 2007
7:30PM

Leon and Pete Peters Educational Center
Student Recreation Center
(corner of Shaw and Woodrow Aves.)
Fresno State
Parking available at no charge in Lot V.

Free admission.

Copies of
Forgotten Bead
will be available
for purchase
following the lecture.

Shoghaken Folk Ensemble
of Armenia

The Shoghaken Folk Ensemble was founded in 1991 by dudukist Gevorg Dabaghyan in Yerevan. The group uses only traditional Armenian instruments, maintaining an authentic sound with the *duduk*, *zurna*, *dhol*, *kanon*, *kamancha*, *shvi*, and other instruments. Singers Hasmik Harutyunyan and Aleksan Harutyunyan are known throughout Armenia, the former Soviet Union, and Europe for their unique interpretation of Armenian folk and *ashoughagan* (troubadour) music.



Tuesday, February 26 , 2008
8:00PM

Satellite Student Union
Fresno State

Tickets will be available through the
Armenian Studies Program and other outlets.

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Hold this Date!

Sunday, April 6, 2008
Fresno State

Armenian Studies Program
20th Annual Banquet

Thank you to the Knights and Daughters of Vartan
for providing refreshments at the
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