

HYE SHARZHOOM ***Armenian Action*** ***ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՒՄ***

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

When is the Right Time? House Delays Vote on Armenian Genocide Opinion

BARLOW DER MUGRDECHIAN
ADVISOR

On October 10, 2007, the House Foreign Affairs Committee narrowly passed a resolution condemning the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Passage of the resolution by the full House would mean officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide. Opposition to the resolution had primarily come from the White House and the State Department, along with lobbying by the Turkish government. The Turkish government had hired former U.S. Congressman Richard Gephardt, and others, to lobby against passage of the Resolution.

Congressional supporters of the Resolution called for a vote on the House floor for full consideration and passage. Although more than 225 Congressmen had earlier signed on as supporters (more than the 218 majority needed to pass),

pressure intensified on some representatives to withdraw their support.

The most commonly heard reason for opposing the resolution was, "It is the wrong time to consider the resolution." The argument was that passage would damage relations between Turkey and the United States or that the United States military interests in Iraq would be subject to increased danger. The war in Iraq is a "bad time" to consider a Genocide resolution.

It has been ninety-two years since the Armenian Genocide. When will it be the right time? According to the arguments made by the Turkish lobby and certain diplomatic circles, there never would be a right time.

The same type of argument was made in 1990 in a Senate debate and later in 2000 by President Clinton. There would never be a right time if it were up to the perpetrators, the Turkish government.

SEE **GENOCIDE** PAGE 6

Elbrechts Donate Collection of Photographs of Armenian Churches to Armenian Studies Program



Anne and Richard Elbrecht in front of the walls of the first-century city of Anazarbus, situated below the 12th-13th century Armenian fortress of Anavarza.

Photo: Courtesy Richard Elbrecht.

BARLOW DER MUGRDECHIAN
ADVISOR

A 1987 vacation to Turkey was the beginning of a twenty-year odyssey that has taken Richard and

Anne Elbrecht on what has become a passion – photographing and documenting Armenian churches in the historic homeland of the Armenian people. As an outcome of their visits with Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies and Director of the Armenian Studies Program, they have decided to donate their archive of 157 photographs, "Churches of Historic Armenia: A Legacy to the World," to the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno, where the photographs will become a permanent part of the Armenian Studies

Program Web site, making them available to the world. Part of the Elbrechts' goal has already been accomplished: the 157 images have been digitalized at CSU Fresno under the direction of University Photographer, Randy Vaughn-Dotta and will be available soon on the Fresno State web site – armenianstudies.csufresno.edu.

The Elbrechts' first trip to Turkey included not only the obligatory sights of Istanbul, but also a trip on public buses to the eastern part of the country to see the "real Turkey." There they chanced upon the magnificent Church of the Holy Cross on Aght'amar Island in Lake Van. Built in the tenth century by an Armenian King Gagik Ardzruni, the church is an architectural marvel, its exterior walls covered with intricate carvings of scenes from the Bible and Armenian history. Several hundred miles north of Aght'amar, the Elbrechts visited the medieval Armenian city of Ani, with its world famous cathedral and numerous churches, all in a state of ruin due to recurring earthquakes and human neglect. Since then, they have visited and photographed churches in Kars, Mren, Dogubayazit, Van, Moks, Diyarbakir, Urfa, Tarsus, Sis, Kayseri, Kharpert, Malatya, Merzifon, Shabin Karahisar, Gireson, Trabzon, and the Oltu-Penek Valley.

SEE **ELBRECHTS** PAGE 8

David Kherdian Presents New Book *Forgotten Bread*



L. to R.: Sarkis Manavazian, Pateel Mekhitarian, Barlow Der Mugrdechian, David Kherdian, and Mark Arax.

STAFF REPORT

Forty years ago David Kherdian conceived an idea to gather together the works of Armenian-American writers, and that idea came to fruition in 2007 with the publication of his new book, *Forgotten Bread: First Generation Armenian American Writers*.

The Armenian Studies Program invited Kherdian, who was on a nation-wide speaking tour, to Fresno State on November 14, where he had the opportunity to discuss *Forgotten Bread* before a large audience.

Kherdian is personally familiar with many of the seventeen authors represented in the anthology. William Saroyan was a close personal friend and in fact his early mentor who suggested to Kherdian to follow his heart and do what he liked to do best—write.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, of the Armenian Studies Program, gave a brief background of the book, before introducing four members of the Armenian Students Organization to read some of the poems from the new book.

Pateel Mekhitarian read "With the Bait of Bread" by Helene

Pilibosian; Sarkis Manavazian read "My Escort," "Orange Secret," and "They Bring Me Raisins," by Archie Minassian; Gina Jelladian read "May I Have This Dance," by Diana Der Hovanesian; and Arman Kalamkarian read "Dead Visitor" by Leon Serabian Herald.

Der Mugrdechian then introduced Mark Arax, whose two essays, one on Saroyan and the other on A.I. Bezzerides, are included in *Forgotten Bread*. Arax is an author and award winning former journalist at the *Los Angeles Times* and is the author of two books, *In My Father's Name* and *The King of California: J. G. Boswell and the Making of a Secret American Empire*.

Arax discussed his own feelings as a writer and as someone who has read the works of many of the writers in the book. In discussing *Forgotten Bread*, Arax characterized Kherdian's role as "A selfless act... a labor of love." He then read an excerpt from his own biographical sketch on A.I. Bezzerides, part Armenian and born in Fresno, who was a writer and later one of Hollywood's best screenwriters.

Arax called Kherdian's work, "An excavation of the past," and added, "The work was totally unexpected. A lot of these poems and

SEE **KHERDIAN** PAGE 7

Dr. Levon Zekiyan Visits Armenian Studies Program in November



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Dr. Levon Zekiyan from Venice, Italy paid a visit to the Armenian Studies Program and Fresno State, November 14-15, to meet with students and to introduce the Armenian Language Summer Program in Venice in August. L. to R.: Karine Frnzyan, Dr. Levon Zekiyan, Knar Mekhitarian, Suzy Lopez, Kevork Boghossian, and Pateel Mekhitarian, at the new Armenian Students Organization booth in the Free Speech Area.

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.

- Nicholas Afanasiev, *The Church of the Holy Spirit*, translated by Vitaly Permiakov; edited with an introduction by Michael Plekton. Foreword by Rowan Williams (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007). A gift of the publishers.
- Karabet Akbiyikian, for the banner depicting the Armenian alphabet. *The Flower of Paradise and other Armenian Tales* (Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, a member of Greenwood Publishing Group, 2007), edited and with a foreword by Virginia Tashjian; translated and retold by Bonnie C. Marshall. A gift of the publisher.
- Archpriest Fr. Hovsep Hagopian, for his gift of his CD *The Mystery of Holy Etchmiadzin, Where is Your Faith?*.
- Gohar & Hagop Samarjjan, for a collection of Armenian books.
- Martin Tourigian, for the music book of his original compositions.
- Nerses Virabian, *Mortsvadz Tsegh Me [A Forgotten Race]*, a gift of the author (2007).

L’Années de l’Arménie : 26 Catalogues
Compilé par Dickran Kouymjian

- 2006 Maxime Yevadian, *Enluminures symboliques d’Arménie. Dentelles de pierre, d’étoffe, de parchemin et de métal*, Musée de Montélimar, Lyon, 2006, 167 pages.
- 2006-7 *Les douze capitales d’Arménie*, Centre des monuments nationaux, La Conciergerie, 15 décembre 2006 – 22 avril 2007, photographies de Zaven Sargssian, texte par Mourad Hasratian et Claude Mutaﬀian, Paris : Cofimar, 2006, 64 pages.
- 2007 *Dans les montagnes d’Arménie. 500 000 ans d’histoire avant notre ère*, sous la direction de François Fichet de Clairfontaine, Musée archéologique de Saint-Raphaël 12 janvier-19 mars 2007, Musée départemental des Antiquités – Rouen, 3 avril-23 juillet 2007, Rouen-St Raphaël, 2007, 208 pages.
- 2007 *Livres d’Arménie, collections de la Bibliothèque nationale de France*, 30 janvier-25 mars 2007, catalogue par Annie Vernay-Nouri, Paris : BnF, 2007, 118 pages.
- 2007 *Aivazovski (1817-1900), la poésie de la mer*, Musée national de la Marine, sous la dir. de Chahen Khatchaturian et Marjolaine Mourot, Paris : Thalia, 2007, 127 pages.
- 2007 *Sarian ou les couleurs de l’Arménie*, Musée français de la carte à jouer, 1er février – 31 mars, Issy-les-Moulineaux, Paris, 2007, 45 pages.
- 2007 Léon Tutundjian. *Abstractions 1925-1930*, Galerie le Minotaure, 1er février – 10 mars, Paris, 2007, 154 pages.
- 2007 *Paradjanov le magnifique*, exposition 13 février - 2 avril 2007, Sophie Kaplan (commissaire), Paris : École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 2007, 244 pages.
- 2007 *La Nouvelle Djoulfa, 400 ans de présence arménienne à Ispahan*, 14 février - 29 avril, Arby Ovanessian (commissaire), Antony : Maison des arts, 2007, 32 pages.
- 2007 *À la recherche de Serguei Paradjanov*, sous la dir. de Dominique Bax et Cyril Béghin, *Théâtre au cinéma*, vol. 18, Bobigny : Magic Cinéma, 2007, 175 pages.
- 2007 *L’Orient des photographes arméniens*, Institut du monde arabe , 21 février-1^{er} avril 2007, Paris : IMA, 2001, 95 pages.
- 2007 *Armenia sacra. Mémoire chrétienne des Arméniens (IV^e – XVIII^e siècles)*, sous la dir. de Jannic Durand, Ioanna Rapti, Dorota Giovannoni, Le Louvre, 21 février – 21 mai 2007, Paris : Somogy, 2007, 472 pages.
- 2007 *Ors et trésors d’Arménie*, Musée des tissus et des arts décoratifs et Musée d’art religieux de Fourvière, 22 mars-15 juillet, catalogue sous la dir. de Maria-Anne Privat-Savigny et Bernard Berthod, Lyon, 2007, 152 pages.
- 2007 *Arshile Gorky, hommage*, exposition Centre Pompidou et Centre culturel Calouste Gulbenkian, 2 avril – 4 juin, catalogue sous la direction d’Agnès de la Beaumelle, Paris, 2007, 113 pages.
- 2007 Alexandre Beredjiklian, *Arshile Gorky. Sept thèmes majeurs*, Paris : Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, 2007, 142 pages.
- 2007 De l’Arménie à Montmartre, Musée de Montmartre, catalogue sous la dir. de Claire Mouradian, *Arménie, une passion française. «Le mouvement arménophile en France 1878-1923»*, 4 avril – 24 juin, Paris : Magellan, 2007, 175 pages.
- 2007 *Arménie : la magie de l’écrit*, sous la dir. de Claude Mutaﬀian, 27 avril-22 juillet 2007, La Vieille Charité, Marseille, Paris : Somogy, 2007, 432 pages.
- 2007 *Dans les montagnes de l’Arménie. Trésors du musée de Gumri (Chirak)*, 500 000 ans d’histoire, Musée départemental des antiquités, 17 avril – 22 juillet, Rouen, 2007.
- 2007 *Au pied du mont Ararat, splendeurs de l’Arménie antique*, Musée de l’Arles et de la Provence antiques, Arles, Claude Sintes et Anelka Grigorian, commissaries, 1er avril – 31 juillet, Arles, 2007, 238 pages.
- 2007 *Portrait d’Arménie par un abbé normand, Gabiel Bretocq (1918-1922). De la Cilicie à la principauté d’Antioche*, Evreux, Archives départementales de l’Eure, 12 mai-12 juillet 2007, Paris: Somogy, 2007, 190 pages.
- 2007 *Karine Arabian. Les Arméniens de la mode XVIIe-XXIe siècle. The Armenians in Fashion, 17th-21st Centuries*, sous la direction de Sylvie Richoux, Musée de la mode de Marseille, 16 mai-30 september 2007, Paris-Marseille : Somogy, 2007, 152 pages, English résumé, pp. 130-151 with an important section on Sergei Paradjanov.
- 2007 *Mon cher frère. Les Arméniens dans l’Empire ottoman il y a 100 ans*, cartes postales de la collection de Orlando Carlo Calumeno, Valence, Centre du patrimoine arménien, 26 mai-16 september 2007, catalogue sous la direction de Osman Köker, Valence, 2007, 399 pages, 792 cartes postales.
- 2007-8, *Trames d’Arménie : tapis et broderies sur les chemins de l’exil (1900-1940)*, Muséon Arlaten, commissaire Dominique Serena, 16 juin 2007 –

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
<i>Class meets Friday and Saturday, February 8 and 9, 2008.</i>				
• ArmS 120T Armenian Genocide (Class #43291)	1	5:00P-9:50P 9:00A-5:00P Saturday	Friday	B Der Mugerdechian
<i>Class meets Friday and Saturday, April 11 and 12, 2008.</i>				

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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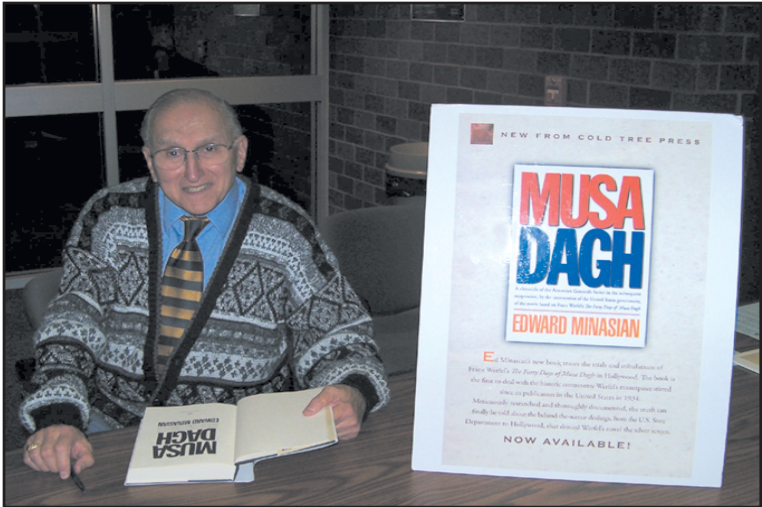
- 6 janvier 2008, Arles, 2007, 240 pages.
- 2007 *Les Boyadjian. Photographes arméniens à la cour du Négus*, commissaire: Abebe Berhane, Hôtel Sully, Paris, 19 juin – 2 septembre 2007, catalogue *Connaissance des arts*, hors series, n° 327, 2007, 35 pages.
- 2007 *Loin de l’Ararat : les petites Arménies de l’Europe et de la Méditerranée*, et *Les Arméniens de Marseille*, Musée des civilisations de l’Europe et de la Méditerranée (MUCEM, exposition virtuel) et Musée d’Histoire de la Ville de Marseille, sous la direction de Myriame Morel-Deledalle, Claire Mouradian, Florence Pizzorni-Itié, 22 juin-29 septembre 2007, Paris: Hazan, 2007, 160 pages.
- 2007 *Peintures en Arménie, 1830-1930*, Petit Palais, commissaire: Paulette Pelletier-Hornby, 21 juin–19 août 2007, catalogue, *Connaissance des arts*, H.S. 330, 35 pages.

Musa Dagh Author Edward Minasian Speaks to Packed Audience

PATEEL MEKHITARIAN
STAFF WRITER

Edward Minasian, a writer and teacher from Oakland, CA gave a very interesting lecture at Fresno State on October 11, about the many attempts to produce a film version of the book *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*. Mr. Minasian has not only studied Franz Werfel's *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, but he has also written his own book called *Musa Dagh*, which includes a review of events in the Ottoman Empire relating to the Armenians, the siege of Musa Dagh in 1915, and a background on Werfel's inspiration to write his novel in 1934.

Musa Dagh is the name of both a famous mountain and the area where Armenian resistance to the 1915 deportation in the Ottoman Empire took place. Out of the hundreds of villages, towns, and cities across the Ottoman Empire, whose Armenian population was ordered to be deported, Musa Dagh was one of only a few regions where Arme-



Author Edward Minasian signing his new book after his lecture sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program. The book explains how Turkish government pressure prevented the Hollywood movie “Musa Dagh” from being produced.

nians were able to organize a defense against the Young Turk regime.

With a limited amount of weapons, the outnumbered and outgunned Armenians still had the courage to put up fierce resistance against the many attacks by the Turkish army. The Armenians, with

little expectations of survival, endured 53 days, from July 21 to September 12, 1915. The *Guichen*, a French armored cruiser, was the first to sight the flag the Armenians had raised. With the help of the French, the Armenians were temporarily resettled in Egypt and stayed until the war was over.

Jeff Atmajian Speaks in Arts & Humanities Distinguished Alumni Series



L. to R.: College of Arts & Humanities Associate Dean Joe Diaz, Dean Vida Samiian, and Jeff Atmajian.

SARAH SOGHOMONIAN
SPECIAL TO HYE SHARZHOOM

When Jeff Atmajian began attending Fresno State in the late 1970s he had to make a choice. He had to decide if he was going to play it safe and study mechanical engineering or follow his passion and study music. He went with music.

“For a long time I worried about how I was going to make a living,” Atmajian said.

When Atmajian, 47, graduated with his bachelor's degree in 1983 he headed to Los Angeles to continue his studies at the University of Southern California.

While studying film scoring at USC, Atmajian worked side jobs. He often took gigs playing piano for dance classes. After graduation he worked for a church in Southern California. Atmajian never gave up on his dream to work in film scoring, but said the competition in Hollywood was tough. Around his 30th birthday everything began to fall into place.

“I was thrilled because I was happy,” Atmajian said. “I was working on films.”

Over the last decade and a half, Atmajian has helped score the music of some of Hollywood's biggest pictures.

Atmajian's name can be found on the credits of films such as “The American President,” “Passion of the Christ,” “Blood Diamond,” “The Sixth Sense,” and “Terminator 3.” He worked with Barbara Streisand on the “Mirror Has Two Faces” and has rubbed elbows with some of Hollywood's best composers.

Twelve film scores, which Atmajian has worked on, have been nominated for the Academy Award. He often works as an orchestrator for composers such as James Newton Howard, Rachel Portman, Marc Shaiman, and Gabriel Yared. In the coming months Atmajian's work will be heard in “I am Legend” starring Will Smith and “The Bucket List” with Jack Nicholson.

Atmajian would like to make the transition to composer. He worked as the composer on “Screamers,” a documentary about the Armenian Genocide and composed a 2005 summer program, titled “Creation,” at Orange County's famous Crystal Cathedral.

“I'm trying to get my music heard,” Atmajian said. “In hopes someone is going to say, ‘I want him to do my film,’ I like his music.”

As a child growing up in Fresno,

Calif., Atmajian said he never would have guessed he would be making a living doing what he is doing.

At age 8, Atmajian began taking piano lessons, with his sister Carrie, from Esther Frankian, the former organist at Pilgram Armenian Church. But after some time, he quit. “This is hard. I want to get it perfect,” Atmajian remembers saying as a teenager.

Atmajian did go back to piano because it was something that he said he truly enjoyed doing.

Carol Karabian, of Fresno, is Atmajian's cousin. She says she remembers piano being so important to Atmajian, that when the family would travel to Santa Cruz for vacation, his mother, Donna, would drive him to the nearby university so he could practice. “His music was always really important to him,” Karabian said. “He just loved the piano.”

Atmajian said his parents always supported him. He knows his father, Ron Atmajian, who passed away in 1984, would be proud of all he has accomplished.

His mother, Donna Robinson, of Fresno, says that when she and Atmajian's stepfather Warren see a movie Atmajian has worked on, they wait with excitement to see his name in the credits. “We're very proud of him,” Robinson said. “He has always been a wonderful son.”

While Atmajian, who splits his time between homes in Los Angeles and London, often gets back to Fresno to visit his family, he hadn't spent much time at his Alma Mater, Fresno State, since graduating.

On Oct. 22 he came back to where it all started, to speak as part of the College of Arts and Humanities lecture series, featuring distinguished alumni.

Atmajian, who spoke about the history of music in movies, used clips from films to illustrate the importance of the score. Without music, movies would lose the viewer's interest and would make establishing emotion more difficult.

There were some 4,000 Armenians from Musa Dagh who decided to stand up and to refuse to be deported. Unfortunately, another 2,000 Armenians obeyed the Turkish officials, who promised the Armenians were to be safely relocated. Instead they were sent out of their homes and to the Syrian desert, Der Zor, where they were tortured and murdered.

There have been many attempts to produce a film about the saga of Musa Dagh and the courage of the people. However, until today there still has been no major Hollywood film produced, because of opposition and intervention from the Turkish government and the State Department.

Irving G. Thalberg was Hollywood's *wunderkind* force behind the original planned production of the film, from 1934-35. Unfortunately, Thalberg died at the age of 37 from a heart attack. Samuel Marx, an MGM story director of the time stated, “A foreign government should not be allowed

to suppress the making of an American motion picture.” People at the time knew and understood what had happened to the Armenians, and many people wanted to help in the production of the film, however there were many obstacles. Mr. Minasian provided a copy of a personal letter, which was sent by the Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Munir Ertegun, expressing his gratitude for preventing the film from being produced. This thank you letter was sent to Wallace Murray, the Chief of U.S. Eastern Affairs. In the end, Robert N. O'Brian was the man responsible for terminating the production of the film.

The lecture was informational and educational, and included many photos from the book. The Armenian people would like to see the production of a film about Musa Dagh. Musa Dagh has been a part of Armenian history, and the stories of the troubling experiences, the people, and the events of Musa Dagh will always remain.

still being used, it was on a smaller scale. But by the late 1960s and the 1970s, many composers found themselves out of work, Atmajian said. This is because songs became the new music of choice.

Atmajian cited “The Graduate” and its song by Simon and Garfunkel, as an example of the use of song in movies. “The words are saying something to you,” he said.

Atmajian credits “Star Wars” as the film that brought back the orchestra. “Doesn't it sound like it could have come from the 40s?,” Atmajian said of the opening film music.

Today music scoring is more advanced because of new technology. Atmajian says the technology doesn't always make things easier. “There is a lot more choice,” he said. “Nothing is finished until the last possible minute.”

Atmajian says he's glad he had the guts to stick with his passion of music, instead of going the more traditional route.

“It's a fascinating and interesting thing to work in,” Atmajian said. “I've been fortunate.”

Second Call for Entries for Ninth Annual Armenian Film Festival

Spring 2008
(Date to be Announced)

Deadline for entries to be received is January 15, 2008.
Please send the video/DVD to:

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

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.

Second 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.

Fresno State Graduates With Minors-Fall Semester 2007

Name: Zhanna Bagdasarov
Major: Experimental Psychology-
Clinical Emphasis, MA



How was your college experience affected through your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program?

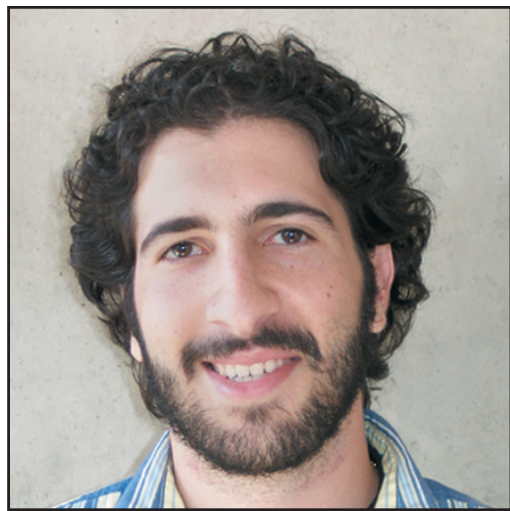
I have been involved with the Armenian Studies Program in various capacities over the years, from being a member of the Armenian Students Organization, to being the editor of *Hye Sharzhoom*, I have gained valuable opportunities for networking. The lectures I have attended over the years have broadened my horizons and the people I have met have made my college experiences much more enjoyable.

How have the Armenian Studies courses expanded your knowledge of the Armenian culture?

Armenian Studies courses have provided the bulk of the knowledge I currently possess about the history, land, arts, and language of Armenia. Prior to taking the various classes offered by the Program, I knew very little about my culture and people. I am truly grateful to the faculty of the Armenian Studies Program for all the help, support, and patience over the years.

What are your plans after graduation?

Immediately following graduation I plan to begin full-time employment while also teaching courses part-time within the Department of Psychology. I plan to work for about a year and use the time to discern doctoral program options. Ultimately, I hope to enter a Ph.D. program in order to continue researching topics in cross-cultural psychology.



Name: Sebouh Krioghlian
Major: Biology- Physiology & Anatomy
Minor: Armenian Studies, Honors Program

How was your college experience affected through your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program?

Whether it was strengthening my ability to speak Armenian, or learning more about the culture and history of the Armenian people, I benefited greatly from the opportunities provided by the Armenian Studies

Program. One of the most positive and enjoyable experiences was traveling to Armenia for the summer study-abroad course of 2005 with eight other Armenian studies students. Being able to see and touch what I had been previously studying from words and slides was an amazing way to reinforce all of the material that had been accumulating from the courses.

How have the Armenian Studies courses expanded your knowledge of the Armenian culture?

The courses available through the Armenian Studies program covered a wide range of topics. Of all of the courses I took, Masterpieces of Armenian Literature was probably the most enjoyable and interesting. Whether it was reading the old Armenian fairy tales, or the painful poems of Siamanto, I was exposed to a world of Armenian literature that I had not previously seen. In the end, these courses individually went into great detail. Although it may be easy to forget some of the many details, the program succeeded in a greater way in that it gave me a base of knowledge that cannot be lost, upon which I can now build on my own.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to enroll in medical school for the Fall of 2008. Until then I will continue working as an instructor at the Eurgubian Academic Center, while also researching.

Name: Tara Lee
Major: Business Administration,
Option: Real Estate
Minor: Armenian Studies



How was your college experience affected through your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program?

I was able to be involved in something I

was passionate to learn about, throughout college. I chose to educate myself in Armenian Studies along with majoring in Business-Real Estate. This allowed me to grow academically, while also learning about issues I am very interested in.

How have the Armenian Studies courses expanded your knowledge of the Armenian culture?

I have gained so much knowledge of the Armenian culture, which has aided me to better understand myself. I am a third generation Armenian-American. The program has given me knowledge that I would otherwise not have; about famous Armenian painters, and about the numerous sufferings that the Armenian people faced, which inevitably strengthened the Armenian culture. These included the fall of the last kingdom of Armenia, Roman and Persian wars, and the genocide less than 100 years ago. I have knowledge of my ancestors' past that ultimately created a strongly bonded Armenian culture. I have gained insight of what the culture has developed into today, and I am able to pass this onto my children in the future. I am a more rounded person academically and culturally because of the Armenian Studies Program.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to take and pass the California Real Estate exam for a Broker's License. I can then own a real estate company to serve the needs of members of our community in both commercial and residential real estate. I have worked in commercial real estate for almost seven years now and have gained much experience and knowledge. I have also conducted business in real estate with a CA Real Estate Agent's License for over one year. Real estate is my passion and I am fortunate to have found a career I love. I hope to be successful so that I can continue my support after college and donate to the Armenian Studies Program and Fresno State.

Name: Ara Nalbandian
Major: Computer Science

How was your college experience affected through your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program?

The Armenian Studies Program has given me the opportunity to become more involved with the Armenian community and by doing so I have become more aware of how unique the Armenian culture is.

How have the Armenian Studies courses expanded your knowledge of the Armenian culture?

The highlight of my Armenian studies came directly from Dr. Dickran Kouymjian. The passion, experience, and extensive knowledge of the Armenian culture that Kouymjian brought to his courses has given me a deeper understanding of our culture that I would not have received anywhere else.

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation I plan on achieving all of my professional and personal goals.



Name: Evan Stockdale
Major: Criminology
Minor: Armenian Studies

How was your college experience affected through your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program?

My college experience has been quite an adventure. I am very proud and fortunate to have been involved with the Armenian Studies Program throughout my college career. The people I have met and the places I have traveled with the Armenian Studies Program have truly impacted my life and allowed me to expand my horizons.

How have the Armenian Studies courses expanded your knowledge of the Armenian culture?

Throughout my college career I have taken many courses because it was mandatory. The Armenian Studies courses are classes that are not mandatory for students to take. I had the opportunity to visit Armenia in the summer of 2005 with Barlow Der Mugrdechian and several other Armenian Studies students. If it weren't for my involvement with Armenian Studies I would not have had the opportunity to submerge into my heritage like I did. I am very thankful for the opportunity to have done so many remarkable things through this program.

Photos of Zhanna Bagdasarov, Tara Lee, Ara Nalbandian, and Evan Stockdale by Randy Vaughn-Dotta.

Photo of Sebouh Krioghlian by Barlow Der Mugrdechian.

Viktoria’s Place Restaurant Provides Home-Style Armenian Food



Viktoria’s Place owners Zograb Tsolokian and wife Viktoria.

SVETLANA BAGDASAROV
STAFF WRITER

In an effort to break my monotonous lunch routine and spend my money at someplace other than restaurants such as *Subway*, *Denny’s*, *Panda Express*, or *Broilers*, I took my sister’s advice and went to *Viktoria’s Place*. The restaurant recently opened and it is located on the corner of Herndon and Ingram streets, across the street from Wal-Mart. I didn’t know what to expect,

because that same corner used to be the home of a Psychic Reader and I just couldn’t visualize it transformed into a restaurant. Nevertheless, I was on a mission to find a new place that I could add to my list of exceptional restaurants. So with my sister for companionship and a second opinion, I was ready to evaluate. When we arrived I felt as though we were going to a friend’s house for lunch instead of a restaurant. As we stepped inside, I was aston-

ished. I couldn’t figure out how something that looked so dull and secluded from the outside managed to look like a trendy restaurant inside. Right away, I noticed an array of beautiful paintings and traditional Armenian musical instruments hung on the walls. I also couldn’t help but turn my attention to the flat-screen televisions and a state of the art kitchen where the head-chef Viktoria, whom the restaurant was named after, was busy preparing something that smelled divine. My sister and I were greeted by Viktoria’s husband and the restaurant owner, Zograb Tsolokian. We were seated at the booth of our choice and given an extensive menu. The variety of options ranged from Zograb’s noteworthy pizza and calzone, to classic Armenian cuisine, to simple but tasty sandwiches and salads with house dressing. Since I usually prefer to order meat, I wanted to order beef or lamb; however, I was craving chicken. I can honestly say that it was the best chicken I have ever tasted, so well prepared and tender that I hardly had to chew. The rice pilaf and bulghur pilaf were the perfect side dishes accompanied

by *hummus*, vegetables, and Arabic pita bread. As for the salad, it was a bit mediocre at first, but after I put the special house dressing on it, it became something to be desired. All in all, the food, the service, and the ambiance were definitely up to par with other local dining establishments. It is certainly a place to bring your friends and family.

Who wouldn’t like a cozy place to unwind, enjoy delicious food, and socialize with loved ones? Trust me—don’t let the exterior fool you because the interior has so much to offer. *Viktoria’s Place* restaurant is located at 488 W. Herndon Ave., at the corner of Herndon and Ingram Avenues. The telephone number is 559-261-1505.



Viktoria’ Place restaurant is located at 488 W. Herndon, at the corner of Herndon and Ingram Aves.

Photos: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Armenians on the Internet

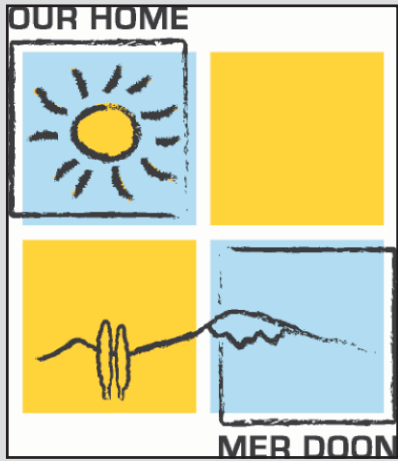
PATEEL MEKHITARIAN
STAFF WRITER

There are many children in Armenia that come from impoverished families and due to the economic instability in Armenia, orphanages are a positive option for many parents. The orphanages in Armenia have a goal of bettering the lives of children through education. There are more than 14,000 children who do not attend school in the Republic of Armenia because their families are unable to meet the basic costs of their education. The existence of these orphanages has positively affected the lives of so many children.

Orran
www.orrn.am

Orran is a benevolent non-governmental organization (NGO), which was established in Yerevan, Armenia, in April 2000. With the help of generous donors, Orran was able to move to a larger center to take in more children in May 2004. The new four-storey center provides the Orran family with five classrooms, a library, a computer room, a social activity area, a dental office, and a garden. There are currently 65 children and 35 needy elderly in the Program. Orran has a goal of helping families in need in Armenia.

Mer Doon
www.mer-doon.org



Mer Doon, established in 2005, provides a family setting for young adults in Armenia who have outgrown their stay in Armenian orphanages. Mer Doon gives them an opportunity to become valuable members of Armenian society. The Mer Doon home is in Etchmiadzin and currently ten young women stay there. Each woman is required to further her education by learning French, Russian, and English. In addition, they receive religious education and are trained by the staff in personal and social skills, and in crafts such as carpet-weaving. Mer Doon’s mission is geared towards education, empowerment, leadership, the family environment, self-sufficiency, and breaking the cycle of dependency.

Armenia can always use help from outside sources for educating the children of Armenia. The children are the future of the country, therefore, it is essential to continue the support for these organizations. For more information about any of these organizations, please visit their websites.

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

Armenian Studies 120T- Armenian Church

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian

The course will examine the history of the Armenian Church, its practices and beliefs. The role of the church in the Diaspora will also be discussed. Students will watch videos featuring the Blessing of the Holy Muron and consecration of churches.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2008 • 5-10 PM
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2008 • 9 AM-5PM

**Meet in Science II, Room 307
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*Fresno State students enroll
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*Contact the Armenian Studies Program, 278-2669,
for more information.*

Dr. David Gaunt Introduces Audience to New Findings on Assyrian and Armenian Genocides



Dr. David Gaunt

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

STAFF REPORT

Dr. David Gaunt, Professor of History at Södertörn University College, Stockholm, Sweden, gave a lecture entitled “Massacres and Resistance: The Genocide of the Armenians and Assyrians Based on New Archival Evidence” on Tuesday evening, May 8, 2007. The lecture, part of the Spring 2007 Lecture Series of the Armenian Studies Program, was co-sponsored with the Assyrian American National Federation (AANF) and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

The lecture was based on findings from Dr. Gaunt’s recently published book *Massacres, Resistance, Protectors: Muslim-Christian Relations in Eastern Anatolia During World War I* (Gorgias Press, 2006).

Dr. Gaunt spoke about an interesting occurrence that took place in Turkey two weeks before his lecture. He was invited to Turkey to see if it would be possible to work with historians from Turkey in a scientific way. He thought there

was a window of opportunity so that cooperation could take place, but in Dr. Gaunt’s words, “It didn’t work out too well.”

The area that was to be jointly studied was on the Turkish border, near Syria and Iraq, but in Turkey. There were formerly Christian (Armenian and Assyrian) villages there, which were then converted to Islam by the Ottoman Turks. Scientists found an opening in the ground and discovered 38 bodies, thought to be Armenians and Assyrians, who had been massacred in World War I. The grave was in a very isolated place, where it would have been easy to get rid of people, since there were many storage holes and other natural caves. Yusuf Halaçoglu, President of the Turkish Historical Society, who frequently denies the Armenian Genocide, had Turkish archaeologists examine the site and then claimed that “Turks were massacred by Armenians.”

Halaçoglu challenged Dr. Gaunt to come to the site, hoping that Dr. Gaunt would ask for forgiveness

and state that he had misstated his assertions about the Armenian Genocide. On April 23 and April 24, they set out to meet in the small village where the mass grave had been discovered. The hole was examined by Dr. Gaunt to see what had been discovered. What he discovered was that there were no bones at all in the hole. Dr. Gaunt believed that the site had been manipulated and tampered with before his arrival, but the Turkish officials became angry with him, because they thought that he would agree with their position and statements about the site.

All of this was going to be used as an example by Halaçoglu, that there was no Armenian Genocide. The Turkish government is so convinced that nothing happened, yet they still manipulate evidence.

Dr. Gaunt conducted research for his book in three Ottoman Turkish provinces-Diarybekir, Bitlis, and Van, and the Persian province of Azerbaijan. These are the areas that he concentrated on and conducted research in Russian, western European, and Turkish archives.

Dr. Gaunt is a social historian and for him there were many interesting questions. Who was doing the killing of Christians in 1915 and what were the reasons behind the killings? He especially wanted to understand how it was that neighbor was killing neighbor. How do you kill someone you know, your neighbors?

Dr. Gaunt showed the audience a map of the area in question, which had a mixed Armenian and Assyrian population. There were Christian Orthodox Assyrians, Catholic Chaldean Assyrians, and Assyrians of the Nestorian Church. There were many Assyrians in the Kharpert area who spoke Armenian, and who

mixed in well with the population.

Dr. Gaunt has also researched the deportation routes that have not before been seen on the usual maps-Erzurum-Diarybekir-Mardin to Mosul for example. This new information was from Assyrian documentation-the Assyrians usually were in place for a little longer than the Armenians, especially in mixed population areas. The Armenians were always arrested first-the notables, clergy, wealthy merchants, physicians were put into prison and tortured and killed. Then this would be extended to other religious groups. It gave the initial appearance that the Assyrians were not being deported, but they were deported, only later. Dr. Gaunt’s book *Massacres, Resistance, and Protectors* documents 250 separate massacres of Armenians in villages and towns.

Dr. Gaunt was surprised to find that a large number of Ottoman Turkish officials refused to carry out the orders of the massacres and deportations. Some sent letters to Constantinople, protesting against the planned actions against the Armenians. High officials sometimes were reassigned and *kaimakans* (officials) were murdered if they did not accept the orders. The governor of the region would report that Armenian rebels had killed these men-however the families of the *kaimakans* knew what had happened. All of these Turks who protested, were witnesses to what the central Government was planning, namely the Armenian Genocide.

In Diarybekir, the governor most responsible for the massacres was

Mehmet Reshid Bey, a military doctor, one of the first Young Turks, and a member of the “Special Organization” (Teshkilati Mahsusi). When he was asked why he, as a doctor, could have committed such a loss of life, he said, “As a doctor it is my responsibility to remove microbes from the body of the nation.”

Mehmet Reshid was not above manufacturing evidence. He purported to find a cache of weapons by going through the Armenian houses. We actually know the exact number of weapons, because it was reported to the military-they found 12 weapons. Rafael de Nogales, a Venezuelan mercenary for the Turkish army, when shown the pictures of the weapons, saw them as a falsification. De Nogales had an interview with Reshid, where Reshid said he had an order from Talaat Pasha to “Burn. Destroy. Kill.” Three words. Reshid was scaring the government by constantly talking about *kaimakans* that were killed by the Armenians and large numbers of weapons that the Armenians had. His killing of Armenians was so extensive, that even the German government, allies of Ottoman Turkey, tried to force the government to dismiss him. Reshid deported or killed 120,000 Armenians from his province by September 1915.

Dr. Gaunt presented much valuable new information to the audience, from a perspective that many had not heard of before. Following his lecture there was an opportunity for a question and answer period.

Solar Energy Prophet Ciamician is Armenian

GEORGE B. KAUFFMAN

PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF
CHEMISTRY, CALIFORNIA STATE
UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

AND

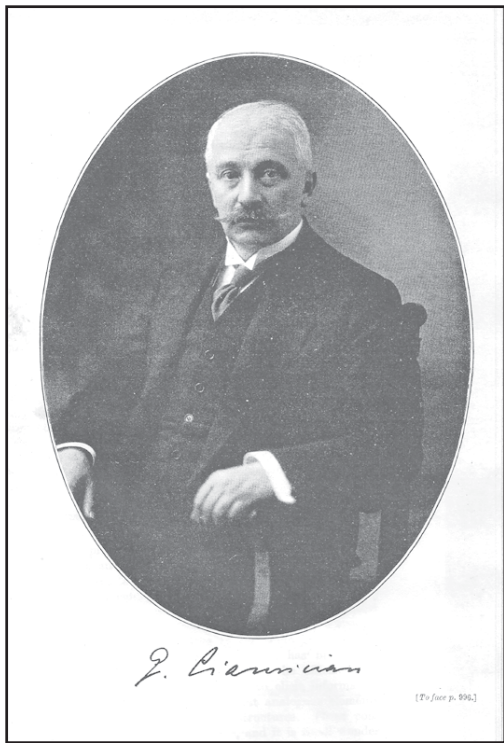
GIORGIO NEBBIA

PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF
MERCEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF
BARI, BARI, ITALY

SPECIAL TO HYE SHARZHOOM

Concern with solar and other forms of alternative energy, global climate change, and myriad environmental problems have recently proliferated in the media. But Al Gore, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, and others are not the first to advocate measures to mitigate the adverse effects of our actions on the environment. That priority belongs to Giacomo Luigi Ciamician (1857-1922), the Italian-Armenian chemist, several-time Nobel Prize nominee, Italian Senator for Life, and founder of photochemistry (reactions catalyzed by light), who researched and lobbied for solar energy in the early 1900s at the University of Bologna, where the 150th anniversary of his birth was celebrated.

His family claimed descent from Mikayel Ciamician [Chamchian], the great eighteenth-century Arme-



Giacomo Luigi Ciamician

nian historian. In 1850, Ciamician’s family moved from Constantinople (now Istanbul) to the thriving Armenian community of Trieste, where they had ties with one of the Mekhitarist bishops. This congregation of Roman Catholic Armenian monks contributed to the Renaissance of Armenian philology, literature, and culture early in the

nineteenth century and published old Armenian-Christian manuscripts. Founded in 1701 in Constantinople (now Istanbul) by Mekhitar Bedrosian of Sivas (1676-1749), the order was expelled from Constantinople in 1703 and settled in 1717 on the island of San Lazzaro, Venice. Their community argued over a revised constitution by Abbot Stephen Melkonian, and in 1772 a group of dissidents left Venice for Trieste.

The Ciamician family was fortunate by moving to Trieste. They avoided extermination

during the persecutions of Armenians by the crumbling Ottoman Empire, beginning at the end of the nineteenth century and culminating in the first genocide of the twentieth century. Thus Giacomo Ciamician, who was a century ahead of his time, lived to become the father of solar energy.

GENOCIDE, FROM PAGE 1

It is clear that the resolution will not be brought up soon and may be delayed until 2008. Under pressure from lobbyists, House sponsors of the resolution, that would label as genocide the 1915 killing of Armenians by Ottoman Turks, have asked Speaker Nancy Pelosi to delay a vote on the measure.

A letter signed by four primary sponsors of the resolution, California Democrats Adam Schiff, Anna Eshoo and Brad Sherman, and Frank Pallone, D-N.J. requested that the vote be delayed. “We believe that a large majority of our colleagues want to support a resolution recognizing the genocide on the House floor and they will do so, provided the timing is more favorable,” the lawmakers told Pelosi in a letter.

The group said they would continue to work with leadership “to plan for consideration sometime later this year, or in 2008.”

Is it expected that Armenians and supporters of the resolution will be satisfied with the delay? When is the right time? The campaign against passage was marked by persuasion and coercion, with our own State Department leading that effort.

Republican Leader John Boehner (R-Ohio), who opposes the resolution, called the debate a “debacle” by Democratic leadership. “This entire situation calls their judgment into question,” said Boehner. I think that it is Boehner and like-minded Congressmen whose judgment should be called into question. Since when is it right to avoid having the courage to speak the truth on such an important question? Political expediency is no excuse for standing up for the truth.

Efforts to pass such a resolution are important in the struggle for admission of the Armenian Genocide.

The right time is now.

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“Hye Oozh”

Every Saturday morning from 9:00AM-noon
KFSR 90.7 FM
On the internet at www.kfsr.org!

Fresno State students who are interested in
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Joe Moore at 278-2598.

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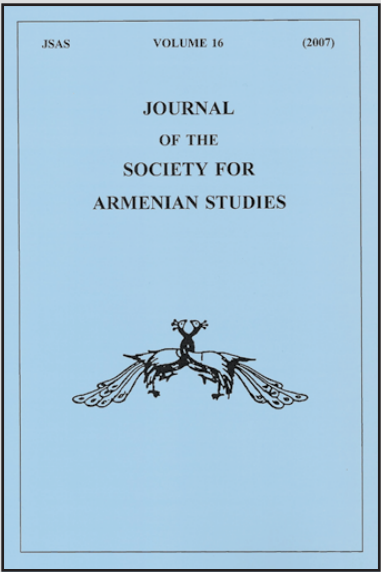
Volume 16 of the Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies Published With Eight Articles

The Society for Armenian Studies announces the publication of volume 16 of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*. This latest volume includes eight articles and fourteen book reviews.

Dr. John Greppin of Cleveland State University served as the editor and Dr. Peter Cowe, Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies at UCLA, as the book review editor. The eight articles are as follows:

1. Matthew Jendian (California State University, Fresno), “Inter-marriage and Ethnic Boundaries of Armenian-Americans in Central California.”
2. Armen Petrosyan (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, Yerevan), “The Problem of Identification of the Proto-Armenians: A Critical Survey.”
3. John A.C. Greppin (Cleveland State University), “Some New Ideas on the Status of the Urartian Language in Armenian.”
4. Hagop Gulludjian (UCLA), “On Armenian Parallels to *Beowulf*.”
5. Simon Payaslian (Boston University), “Hovhannes Shiraz, Paruyr Sevak, and the Memory of the Armenian Genocide.”
6. Earl R. Anderson (Cleveland State University), “Traditional Epic Themes in the Armenian *Sasna Crer*.”
7. George Bournoutian (Iona College), “Five Armenian Chronicles of the 17th-18th Centuries.”
8. Artyom Kosmarski and Nona Shahnazaryan (Central European University, Budapest, Hungary and Kuban State University, Krasnodar, Russia), “Krasnodar, Karabakh, Moscow: Reflections on a Post-Soviet Anthropologist at Home/in the Field.”

The fourteen book reviews in *JSAS* 16 cover a broad spectrum of



works related to Armenian studies.

Dr. Joseph Kéchichian of Los Angeles has been appointed the editor of *JSAS* beginning with volume 17 (2008). The *JSAS* welcomes articles for consideration and books in the field for reviews. The editor can be contacted by email at JoeGCC@aol.com.

JSAS plays a valuable and continuing role in the dissemination of Armenian studies throughout the academic world. The *Journal* reflects the scholarship of its members and is a window to the world of Armenian studies.

Volume 16 and back issues (Vols. 2-15) of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* may be acquired by contacting the Society’s Secretariat in care of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, 5245 N Backer Ave PB4, Fresno CA 93740-8001 or call 559-278-2669 or by email at barlowd@csufresno.edu.

The cost of each *Journal* is \$20 plus mailing.

The website for the Society for Armenian Studies is at <http://armenianstudies.csufresno.edu/sas/index.htm>. Membership information and general information on the Society can be found at the site.

KHERDIAN, FROM PAGE 1

short stories were new to me. It was hard to read them and not have your breath taken away... Writing these stories and poems were the first acts of remembrance, the first acts of honoring.”

Arax then introduced Kherdian, a native of Racine, Wisconsin, whose early experience there framed much of his later work. Kherdian then moved west, to San Francisco and Fresno, where he met William Saroyan. Kherdian is a prolific writer, who has dedicated his entire life to literature and he writes across genres: books, journals, and edited collections among others.

Kherdian read several excerpts from his book and discussed some of the influences behind his work. In 1950 when Richard Hagopian, Marjorie Hovsepien, Peter Sourian, and Harry Barba were published, that gave hope to the young Kherdian that there would be a possibility to be an Armenian writer, writing in English. The early writers such as Surmelian and Herald, made a conscious decision to write in English, although they had earlier written in Armenian, and this gave voice to a new Armenian identity in America.

Kherdian said that *Forgotten Bread* will last for a long time, because it brings to light writers who had long been neglected. They have much to say to future generations. “This is an important work as a first-time anthology of Armenian-American literature, and other books and articles can come out of it,” stated Kherdian. Writing was a luxury in the early period, because the new immigrants were concerned with establishing themselves and raising their children to give them a better opportunity. Kherdian said about *Forgotten Bread*, “This work has unearthed a buried treasure, and now we can begin to see our own lives in terms of our own culture and history.”

Kherdian is well known as the author of the Newberry Award Winner *The Road From Home:*

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Armenian Studies Program

Armenian Studies 120T-
Armenian Genocide

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian

The course will look at the Armenian Genocide of 1915, from a variety of perspectives. Students will learn about the causes of the Genocide and its effects on future generations. Various videos will also be shown in the class.

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The Story of An Armenian Girl, which detailed his mother’s experiences in surviving the Armenian Genocide. He has been widely recognized as one of the most important and distinctive voices in Armenian-American poetry for nearly four decades. He was accompanied at the lecture by his wife, Nonny Hogrogian, an accomplished author and illustrator.

The presentation was part of the Armenian Studies Program Spring 2007 Lecture Series and was co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Humanities, Department of English, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, and Armenian Students Organization. The lecture was funded by the Associated Students of Fresno State.

ELBRECHTS, FROM PAGE 1

Asked why they have devoted so much of their lives to this project, the Elbrechts explained: “The photographs give meaning to historical accounts, and promote a deeper understanding of the elusive and plaintive history of an extraordinary people and their relationships with the people around them.” The photographs interest people of all ages, including children who ask when and why the churches were built, scholars of art, architecture, and religion, who can see details of church design and decoration not readily available, and Armenians who treasure the images of their historical roots.

The detailed, brightly colored photographs that make up this collection express the reality and spirit of the churches and their natural surroundings. Almost all were made using a large-format Toyo 45A field camera and 6 x 9 cm color film. To help achieve a “complete record,” church interiors were photographed using extra wide-angle lenses, including a 35-mm Rodenstock Grandagon, a 47 mm Schneider Super-Angulon, and a 75mm Rodenstock Grandagon. The film Fuji Realia was chosen

because of its low contrast and highly saturated color, which facilitates photographing both the unilluminated church interiors and the open skies and surrounding landscapes at the same time. While some church drums and domes remain intact, many are missing due to earthquakes and vandalism, leaving the interiors open to the sky. In the case of one tenth-century church – Surb Sarkis at Khtskonk near Ani – the surrounding landscape is visible from inside the church through walls pierced by explosives planted at the four corners in the 1960’s. With the exception of the Armenian church of Saint Gregory the Illuminator in Kayseri, none of the churches are currently functioning as churches. Asked how did this project come about, the Elbrechts explain that on returning from their 1987 vacation, asked themselves whether identifying, locating, and photographing these and other Armenian churches might facilitate their restoration. They began to comb scholarly publications about Armenian church architecture and learned that there were hundreds of Armenian churches still extant in Turkey, some built as early as the seventh century. Often located atop

the highest hill in the area, most were rarely visited. Someone, they felt, had to document these monuments by photographing them before they disappeared altogether. Each of the Elbrechts’ nine trips has included surprises. Typical were their attempts in 1996 to reach the Armenian churches at Horomos and Mren. Horomos is located on the Turkish-Armenian border about four miles northeast of Ani. Relying on roadmaps and the scholarly articles they brought with them, they took an unpaved road, hoping to find a trail that would lead to the church. At the end of the dirt road stood a military base with a sign reading “DUR” (STOP). “Tour-ist, tour-ist,” they said, hoping to get a friendly response from the officers who came running over to their car. One of the Turkish officers spoke English. Horomos, he said, was off limits and could only be reached by helicopter. But in typical Turkish fashion, he invited the Elbrechts into his office for tea. It was, he explained, a very lonely posting. The soldiers weren’t allowed to leave the base, even to go to nearby Kars for a movie.

But could they get to Mren, a

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seventh-century church located on the border about fifty kilometers southeast of Ani, which some French scholars said was still intact? The Elbrechts phoned an Armenian friend in Los Angeles who leads tours of Armenians to Turkey and knows Turkey well. “Hire a taxi,” he said. So the next day, maps in hand, Richard and an obliging taxi ventured south toward Mren. On reaching yet another military roadblock, he was told again that the church was off-limits and reachable only by helicopter. Returning to the main road, they stopped at a village whose Kurdish chief offered to transport them to the church on a tractor – an offer Richard accepted. Mounting the tractor and sitting on one of its fenders with one hand on his camera case, the other holding a tripod and gripping the tractor’s supporting canopy, Richard endured the 45-minute ride across the desolate terrain of rocks and potholes, reaching Mren in time to take the photographs that are included in this collection. The resulting photos of Mren – with both drum and dome still intact – made the trip altogether worthwhile.

“At each of the photographed churches, the Turkish and Kurdish villagers who live near the ruins have helped us locate and photograph the churches,” the Elbrechts report. “The villagers usually identify them as Armenian in origin. They seem to view them as part of their own heritage, and apparently want to care for them, especially those in use as mosques, museums,

or barns. Despite the evidence of vandalism, the major risks to Armenian churches in eastern Anatolia at this time seem to be earthquakes and aging.”

As long as time and health permit, the Elbrechts will return to Turkey to photograph the extant churches – almost all of them edifices of majesty and beauty. Their presence tells the story of the three thousand years of Armenian presence in the lands where Armenian Christianity took root far more accurately and persuasively than might be told by words. “It is imperative that the government of Turkey with active support from the world allow properly-trained specialists to restore and maintain these monuments – which are indeed Treasures of the World – before they disappear forever.”

Anne Elizabeth Elbrecht is a graduate of Wheaton College, University of California Berkeley School of Library Studies, and McGeorge School of Law. She has just completed a lengthy thesis for a Masters of Art Degree at California State University Sacramento. Her thesis examines the reporting of news in the *New York Times* and the *Missionary Herald* about the Armenian Genocide. Richard A. Elbrecht is a graduate of Yale University and the University of Michigan School of Law. As an undergraduate, he managed the photographic staff of the Yale Daily News. Both Elbrechts retired from their positions as staff attorneys for the State of California in 2003.

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.



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