





## Armenian Studies Program Book/Video/CD Archival Gifts

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Prof. Sergio La Porta, 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.

**Peter Balakian**, Hamilton, NY, for the copy of his book *June Tree: New and Selected Poems* [1974-2000] (Perennial, 2011). 178pp.

**Kajak Balekjian**, Bethesda, Maryland, for the donation of three copies of his book *Language & Eternal Word: Indo-European & the Armenic Cradle of Man* (2010), 132pp. The book seeks to place the Armenic languages in their proper linguistic and historical context.

**Susan Carson**, Black Diamond, Washington, for a gift of several books from the collection of her late father, the Rev. Dr. Hagop A. Chakmakjian former Pastor of the Pilgrim Armenian Congregational Church in Fresno.

**Agop J. Hacikyan**, Quebec, Canada, for the copy of his new book *My Ethnic Quest: Minorities in Turkey* (London: Gomidas Institute, 2012). The book delves into questions of national identities, religious intolerance and social prejudice against Turkey's minorities. It is based on Hacikyan's personal narrative. 187 pp.

**A. Armen Kandarian**, Fowler, CA, for the gift of the *Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies Volume VI, Issue 1. 2011* (Yerevan: Zangak-97, 2011).

**Adrienne Krikorian**, Woodland Hills, CA, for two dictionaries from the library of her late father Haig Krikorian: *A Comprehensive Dictionary Armenian-English* by Mesrob G. Kouyoumdjian (Beirut: Atlas Press, 1970) and *A Comprehensive Dictionary English-Armenia* by Mesrob G. Kouyoumdjian (Beirut: Doniguian & Fils, 1981).

**Deacon Kevork Panoyan**, Glendale, CA, for the gift of his new book *The Authors of the Hymns of the Armenian Apostolic Church: V-XIV Centuries* (Los Angeles, 2011). 94 pp. In Armenian. A study by the author of the Armenian *sharakans* and their authors.

## Now Embarking: An Artistic Interpretation of the 1947 and 1948 Armenian Repatriation

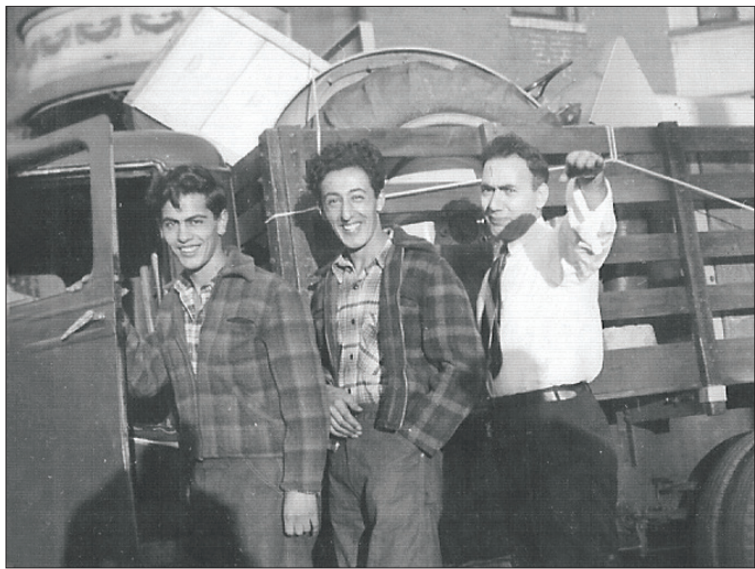


Photo: Hazel Antaramian-Hofman

The oldest of the Antaramian brothers from Kenosha, Wisconsin, Paul (left) and Massey (center), and an unidentified friend (right), on the road to New York in 1947, to join other American-Armenian repatriates on their journey to Armenia.

### HAZEL ANTARAMIAN-HOFMAN

I was born in 1960, in Yerevan, Armenia, but spoke little Armenian and what I did speak was Western Armenian. As a young child, I always wondered why I came from such an exotic background when my father was born in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and my mother was from Lyon, France. Only after years of hearing stories did I realize that I was the product of two Armenian Diasporan repatriate children, who were compelled by their father and mother's *Hayrenik* (fatherland) to leave one cultural and ideological ground for another.

The 1947 and 1948 Armenian repatriation uprooted many under an outward show of prosperity in the land of their forefathers. But where they were heading toward was a "Sovietized" Armenia under Stalin. It was a migratory event complete with personal and spiritual dispossession, and cultural contrasts. As an artist

and the daughter of repatriated youth, I want to document and artistically interpret the culture shock, loss of freedom, and the ideological turmoil that shaped this historical time in Armenia for the "akhbars."

I have just begun this artistic historical journey. Thus far I have collected over 30 black and white images of repatriate children from family photographs taken in Armenia from 1947 to 1966. I plan to use these photographic images to interpret cultural and economic issues through drawings, paintings, and mixed media. I have also been collecting short anecdotal stories that help narrate the circumstances and emotions of the people and of the times. I am interested in collecting more, so if you are a repatriate or know of a repatriate, who is interested in my project, please contact me at hazelantaramhof@yahoo.com, with "repatriate project" in the subject line.

I would be pleased to discuss my project with you in greater detail.

## California State University, Fresno Armenian Studies Program Fall 2012 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
• Arm 1A-Elementary Armenian (Class #72189)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B Der Mugrdechian
• Hum 11-Hum Baroque/Mdrn (Class #72645)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	S La Porta
<b>General Education-Arts &amp; Humanities, Area C1</b>				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #73078)	3	9:00A-9:50A	MWF	B Der Mugrdechian
<b>General Education-Social Sciences, Area D3</b>				
• ArmS 10-Intr Arm Studies (Class #72190)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	S La Porta
<b>Upper Division Armenian Studies Courses</b>				
• ArmS 108A-Arm History I (Class #72191)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
<b>General Education-Arts &amp; Humanities, Area IC</b>				
• Arm 148-Masterp. of Arm Culture (Class #73140)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	S La Porta
• Arm 148-Masterp. of Arm Culture (Class #73185)	3	3:30P-4:45P	MW	S La Porta

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 2012-2013 catalog: <http://www.csufresno.edu/catoffice/current/armstudhd.html>

## HYE SHARZHOOM ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐԺՈՒՄ

### Editor

Tamar Karkazian

### Layout

Barlow Der Mugrdechian

### Photographers

Barlow Der Mugrdechian  
Erica Magarian

### Staff Writers

Denise Altounian  
Armen Arikian  
Andrew Esguerra  
Tatevik Hovhannisyan  
Suren Oganessian  
Ruzan Orkusyan  
Marine Vardanyan

### Advisor

Barlow Der Mugrdechian  
[barlowd@csufresno.edu](mailto:barlowd@csufresno.edu)

### Armenian Studies Program Faculty:

**Barlow Der Mugrdechian**, Coordinator, Armenian Studies Program and Director of the Center for Armenian Studies, ASO Advisor, *Hye Sharzhoom* Advisor ([barlowd@csufresno.edu](mailto:barlowd@csufresno.edu))  
**Sergio La Porta**, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies  
**Dickran Kouymjian**, Berberian Professor Emeritus of Armenian Studies

## ASO Supports Armenian Programming at ValleyPBS- Screening of "Armenian Exile"



Photo: ASP Archive

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, left, hosted the April 12 screening of "Armenian Exile" for ValleyPBS, joined by ASO members.

*Hye Sharzhoom* is an ethnic supplement of *The Collegian*, funded by the Associated Students, and is the newspaper of the Fresno State Armenian Students Organization and the Armenian Studies Program. Articles may be reprinted provided *Hye Sharzhoom* is acknowledged. *Hye Sharzhoom* welcomes prose, poetry, articles and other material from its student readers. For further information concerning the newspaper or the Armenian Studies Program contact us at:

**Armenian Studies Program**  
5245 N. Backer Ave. PB4  
Fresno, CA 93740-8001  
Telephone (559) 278-2669 •  
FAX (559) 278-2129  
<http://armenianstudies.csufresno.edu>



## Elbrecht and Sarafian Present New Book- “Telling the Story”



L. to R.: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Ara Sarafian, and Anne Elbrecht at the presentation of the new book, “Telling the Story.”

Photo: ASP Archive

DENISE ALTOUNIAN  
STAFF WRITER

Did the world know that the first Genocide of the 20th century was taking place when it was actually happening? Who was willing to help? Was there media coverage? As an Armenian-American these questions cross my mind whenever I think of the Armenian Genocide, and on Thursday, March 29th some of these questions were answered.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program, welcomed Ara Sarafian (London) and Anne Elizabeth Elbrecht (Davis) for a lecture that shed new light on the American media response to the Armenian Genocide.

Elbrecht spoke on her newly published book, *Telling the Story: The Armenian Genocide in The New York Times and Missionary Herald 1914-1918*, based on her Master’s thesis completed at California State University, Sacramento.

Elbrecht explained how the Armenian story was introduced to the American public. The book fills in missing gaps, which were not previously known about. She was joined by Sarafian, the director of the Gomidas Institute in London, England, who published *Telling the Story*.

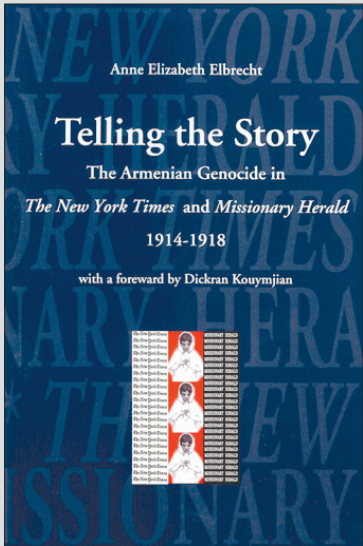
Sarafian, an archival scholar specializing in late Ottoman and modern Armenian history, added his historical expertise to the lecture. The overall theme of the night was just how important this work, the documentation of media coverage, is for the Armenian community.

Often we hear about the events of Genocide from eyewitness accounts, but rarely do we hear it mentioned through media coverage. As it turns out, the American newspapers played a crucial role in informing the world and motivating them to help. According to Sarafian, Americans should be proud of the effort that was mounted to help the victims of the Armenian Genocide-humanitarian efforts, some of which were started as early as October 1915, by the Near East Relief.

The book documents the Genocide coverage of two newspapers: *The New York Times*

and the *Missionary Herald*. Most Americans were not aware of Armenia, and it was *The New York Times*, the preeminent newspaper in the United States in the early 1900’s, that introduced the public to the Armenian relief efforts and encouraged its readers to donate. The less familiar *Missionary Herald* communicated to supporters from the perspective of Protestant ministers who were working in the Ottoman Empire and Armenia at the time.

Elbrecht has spent the last twenty-five years traveling to Turkey with her husband, Richard, to document the churches of historic Armenia, and gain more insight on her thesis. Over the years the Elbrechts became acquainted with the Armenian culture and fell in love with the Armenian churches.



The Elbrechts took many photos on their trips, and organized 157 high quality ones of Armenian churches, which now serve as an important documentation of Armenian history. These photos have been displayed at various conferences all over the world, and have generously been donated to the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

The photos are part of the exhibition, “Churches of Historic Armenia: A Legacy to the World,” on the Armenian Studies Program website at <http://armenianstudies2.fresnostate.edu/resources/churches/index.shtml>. The lecture concluded with a brief visual tour of the new website for the audience.

It was clear to see just how important the Elbrecht’s work is for future research on the Armenian Genocide.

## Dr. Richard Hovannisian Presents Lecture on “The Changing Landscape of Historic Armenia”

MARINE VARDANYAN  
STAFF WRITER

When we think of Armenia today, we visualize the small landlocked nation bordered by Iran, Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. Although modern-day Armenia may be smaller than the state of Maryland, it was once a great empire, stretching from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean, under the rule of King Tigran the Great. Throughout history the Armenian nation has significantly shrunk in size and the Armenian people have lost much of their land, yet even though much of the original land has been lost, the historical presence of the Armenian people has remained.

On Thursday evening, April 19, Dr. Richard Hovannisian, Professor Emeritus of Modern Armenian History at UCLA, presented a talk on “The Changing Landscape of Historic Western Armenia: Reflections on a Journey Into the Past.”

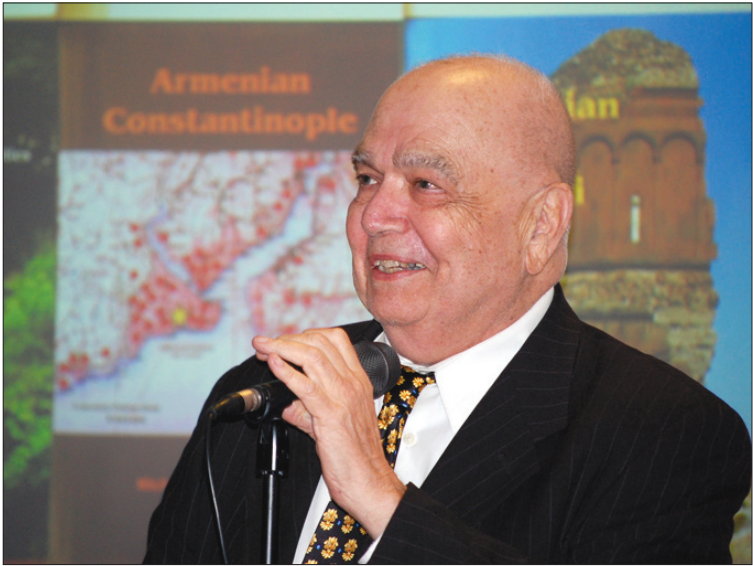
Dr. Hovannisian’s presentation was part of the Armenian Studies Program Spring Lecture Series. Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Barlow Der Mugrdechian introduced Dr. Hovannisian to the audience.

Western Armenia was the formerly Armenian-inhabited area of the Ottoman Empire, where much of the Armenian population was eliminated during the Armenian Genocide. Dr. Hovannisian displayed photographs from his travels to Erzerum, Kharpert, Van, Moush, Malatya, Bazmashen, Kars and many other formerly Armenian-inhabited areas, most of which are now heavily populated with Kurds. Visiting the land where less than a 100 years ago generations of Armenians lived, Dr. Hovannisian stated that he was originally hesitant to take the journey in fear of being hurt by seeing the ruin and devastation.

Dr. Hovannisian has visited Turkey several times, with the most recent trip being last year to the region of Ani and Samsun.

“It was very emotional and difficult because of the contradictions,” said Dr. Hovannisian. Although most of the soil that belonged to Armenians is now occupied by the Kurds and Turks, the Armenians have not been forgotten. During his trip, a Turkish man invited Dr. Hovannisian to witness a play by the satirist Hagop Baronian, a Kurd showed him photographs with Armenian writings of old Kharpert, and many others spoke to Dr. Hovannisian about the Armenians who once lived amongst them or the very few who still do.

Along with those experiences, Dr. Hovannisian also witnessed the once beautiful Armenian churches, most of which were damaged or destroyed. Those that were not dynamited by the Turks were either converted to mosques, stables, barns, or parking lots. Dr. Hovannisian commented that the only way to survive the trip was



Dr. Richard Hovannisian

Photo: Erica Magarian

to “put myself out of my own body.”

Many members of the audience observed photographs of the villages from where they, their parents, or grandparents came from. For many Armenians in the San Joaquin Valley, Western Armenia brought to them more feelings of familiarity than what they find in modern day Armenia.

Dr. Hovannisian stated that the “sound, taste, music, motion, and dance” witnessed on his

journey was very familiar. His photographs and stories held aspects of humor and sorrow, and those members of the audience who wished to learn more about his journey to Western Armenia were eager to purchase one of the volumes from Dr. Hovannisian’s series of conferences on “Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces.”

The lecture by Dr. Richard Hovannisian gave an overview of what once was, and what has been lost. It was enlightening for all who attended.

## Armenians on the Internet



ARMEN ARIKIAN STAFF WRITER

### Naregatsi Art Institute

<http://www.naregatsi.org>

#### Main Categories:

About, Center in Shushi, Grigor Naregatsi, Productions, News, Events, Future Plans, The Artists Websites, Photo Gallery, Press.

#### Summary:

Naregatsi Art Institute is a non-profit organization in Yerevan, Armenia, dedicated to serving Armenia’s existing cultural heritage by supporting Armenian contemporary artists. Founded in 2002, the institute searches for talented Armenian artists and its purpose is to entertain and inspire the Armenian people, similar to the way St. Gregory of Nareg did through his poetry. Naregatsi Art Institute provides its visitors with a balance of art, with famous artists and aspiring ones, creating in a variety of art styles.

The museum is named after Naregatsi, an Armenian poet and saint from the 10th-11th century, who was known for writing about his relationship with God in his well known *Armenian Book of Prayers* or *Book of Lamentations*. The Art Institute was named after Naregatsi because of his “sense of spiritual purity,” which has encouraged many Armenian writers and artists to continue to express and maintain an Armenian cultural identity through their works.

Users of [naregatsi.org](http://www.naregatsi.org) can access the institute’s featured artists through “The Artists Websites” category. In this section of the website, artists are organized by genre: film, painting, music, poetry, photography, or sculpture. Another focus of the Naregatsi Art Institute is assisting with the cultural awakening of Shushi, a historic city in the territory of Artsakh. They opened a new center there in 2006 that seeks to support the cultural awakening of the city that was destroyed and psychologically emaciated as a result of the war. The website not only preserves Armenian heritage, but also helps develop it by sharing the artwork of undiscovered talent.

The Naregatsi Art Institute is not just a museum, but a place for the Armenian community to gather together and celebrate their culture through activities such as musical performances, photography classes, dance classes, sculpting classes, films, and lectures by guest speakers.

Naregatsi Art Institute is an organization that thrives on Armenian art.



# Congratulations to May 2012 ASP Graduating Students and Minors

**Jaime Cardenas**  
**Psychology**  
**Minor in Armenian Studies**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

I believe my involvement in the Armenian Studies Program greatly enriched my college experience. It broadened my horizons and allowed me to take part in a world I might otherwise not have known. I feel very fortunate to have been a participant in the Armenian Studies Program.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

The class that intrigued me the most was the introductory course, Armenian Studies 10. I originally took this course to fulfill a GE requirement, but it was this course that engrossed me in the world of Armenian Studies. I became fascinated by all things Armenian and continue to be.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

Ideally, I would like to enroll in a graduate program to obtain a Masters degree in counseling.



**Heidi Lea**  
**Political Science**  
**Minor in Armenian Studies**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

My involvement in the Armenian Studies Program was really important to my college experience. It was a good opportunity to learn more about my heritage. I also met a lot of people through my involvement in the Armenian Studies Program that have made my time at Fresno State a fun experience.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

My favorite Armenian Studies class and event was the trip to Armenia this past summer (2011). This was one of the most memorable things I have done through the Program and I really enjoyed getting to visit the country and experience the culture that I had learned about in my classes.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

I plan on attending the American University of Paris to study Middle Eastern Studies. I hope to use what I learned in my Armenian Studies classes to help me succeed in my graduate studies.



**Faten Myaznih-Kassabian**  
**Communication; Minor in Biology**  
**Armenian Students Organization: President, Treasurer, & Public Relations Officer**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

My involvement with the Armenian Studies Program has affected my college experience tremendously. I was involved with ASO, first as Treasurer, then as Public Relations officer, and finally as President. Each of the positions was a great experience—but being President was the most memorable. I became a better communicator and gained leadership skills that will benefit me for the future. I am extremely proud and honored to have been a part of such an excellent program here at Fresno State.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

My favorite class was Armenian 148, Masterpieces of Armenian Culture, taught by one of our great professors, Dr. La Porta. I'm half Armenian and the class really broadened my view on our beautiful heritage. It brought out the past that I was not too familiar with. One of the events that I consider my favorite, and makes me proud, is the Armenian Genocide Commemoration. We spread awareness about our culture, heritage, and history.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

My goal is to become a Registered Nurse. Caring for others has always been my passion and I am waiting to see what path God has planned for me.

**Adrina Shamlian**  
**Biology-Anatomy and Physiology**  
**Minor in Armenian Studies**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

I really enjoyed learning about my Armenian ancestry. I now have more background knowledge on my heritage that I can share with friends. I also have a greater appreciation for my forefathers: the people who fought for our Christian faith.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

Arts of Armenia was my favorite class because I had the opportunity to learn about Armenian architecture and miniatures. It was very interesting.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

I was accepted to USC Dental School in Southern California and will be starting there in the Fall of 2012. I will be getting married this summer as well.



**Mari Koshkakaryan**  
**Chemistry**  
**Hye Sharzhoom Staff Writer**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

My involvement with the Armenian Studies Program had a tremendous effect on my college experience. I was able to learn the history of the Armenian culture and the Armenian people from the start. In addition, I always felt a connection to the topics being discussed in class, and those courses had a positive influence on my other courses.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

I truly enjoyed every course that I took in Armenian Studies. However, my Armenian language course (ARM1A) was probably the most beneficial. I came to America as a little girl and started school here, so my Armenian reading and writing skills weren't good. Although I speak the language fluently, I was thankful for the course because it allowed me to learn and progress in reading and writing.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

After graduation, I'll be attending UOP Pharmacy School in the Fall of 2012 for my PharmD. After working in the pharmacy as a technician, I have developed a great passion for the career and am excited to further my career in the field.

**Janik Oganesyanyan**  
**Biology**  
**Minor in Armenian Studies and Gerontology**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

Not only was my involvement in the Armenian Studies Program beneficial to my college experience, it also reminded me to take part in Armenian activities, with other Armenians.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event? Why?

My favorite Armenian Studies class was Arts of Armenia (Arms 20). The class covered different arts, sculptures, buildings, and much more. The architecture of our churches are amazing and cannot be compared to other churches because they are in their own category of amazing. I am also glad to have taken part in the yearly commemoration of the Armenian Genocide held in the Free Speech area. It tears me up inside that our people have suffered so much.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

I am planning on attending a Pharmacy school after graduation.



**Stephanie Cassidy**  
**Chemistry (cum laude)**  
**Armenian Students Organization: Public Relations Officer**

## How did your involvement with the Armenian Studies Program affect your college experience?

My involvement greatly affected my college experience. For example, I was awarded multiple scholarships for enrolling in Armenian Studies classes. In addition, I was able to be "a screamer" - an advocate to raising cultural awareness of the events of the Armenian Genocide in 1915.

## What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?

It was a mix off all the classes, activities, and events I participated in. Because I am half Armenian each experience allowed me to gain knowledge about my culture, where my family came from, how to read, write and speak to my family members in the Armenian language and also in various other places, such as church or at work.

## What are your plans for after graduation?

I plan to move to Hillsboro, Oregon where I'll start Pharmacy school in August at The Pacific University School of Pharmacy, Oregon. Once I obtain my Doctor of Pharmacy I will continue to practice as a licensed pharmacist.

*Photos: Cary Edmondson, University Photographer*

**The Armenian Studies Program  
 congratulates  
 all graduates of Fresno State.**

**May 2012**



## Students Relate Impressions of Trip to Armenia

*The Armenian Studies Program, under the direction of Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, organized a study trip to Armenia in May and June of 2011. The four students essays below conclude a series on the reactions of students participants to their trip.*



**Sarkis Manavazian**  
Mass Communication and Journalism

I have always enjoyed traveling, and I especially enjoyed going to Armenia to visit the motherland and see where my ancestors came from. As an Armenian, I think it is especially important to visit Armenia. When the trip for Armenia with the Armenian Studies Program was announced, I knew it was a great opportunity, and one I didn't want to miss. It was a great experience and it's great to say that I have gone to Armenia. I enjoyed all of the sites and churches we visited. What I enjoyed the most was taking pictures in Armenia and in London, where we had a nine hour layover, I gained a new passion for photography through the trip that I am now pursuing through classes at Fresno State. The beautiful sites made it very enjoyable to take pictures and document the trip in a photographic sense.

The amount of places we visited was incredible; I don't think there was anywhere we missed. It was a completely different experience seeing Armenia's churches and landmarks, than having learned about them. The impact of visiting them was greater than learning about them in the classroom. The different places we visited were also a nice part of the experience. My favorite site was Khor Virab and being able to go down into the pit where St. Gregory lived for thirteen years. As a whole it was a great and memorable experience.



**Heidi Lea**  
Political Science

Visiting Armenia was a very special and unforgettable experience. My whole life I had wanted to visit Armenia so this trip was really important to me. Although it was only two weeks long, I was able to see so much of the country and learn a lot about the culture and the people.

One of the most important parts of this trip was learning about Armenian culture and how the people there live. It was fun meeting students from Yerevan State University and getting to know them during the time we were there. I saw what life and school was like for university students in Armenia. Many memories from the trip are of the people I met in Armenia, who made my trip more enjoyable and whom I learned a lot from.

I have so many amazing memories of Armenia and the group that I traveled with. The best experience I had in Armenia was visiting Etchmiadzin and seeing the church service there on a Sunday morning. This is the most important place for the Armenian Apostolic community and it was nice to be able to visit a place that was very beautiful but also very important at the same time. Our group saw many other churches and monasteries during the trip that were memorable as well.

Another positive experience I had was visiting beautiful Lake Sevan in a breathtaking region of the country. It was really fun to spend time on a boat tour and walk around. Travelling around the country and seeing different regions was an important part of the trip because we were able to see how beautiful and natural Armenia is.

I would love to visit Armenia again someday and see even more of the country. I learned a lot while there and created so many memorable moments from this trip. I would highly recommend that people visit Armenia and experience it for themselves.



**Nishan Karagozian**  
Mass Communication and Journalism

My personal experience on the trip to Armenia is one I will never forget. Prior to last summer's trip I had been to Armenia twice, but this time was much different. Visiting the country as a college student gave me a whole new perspective and appreciation for the society. Learning so much about Armenia throughout my college education allowed me to experience the country, its culture, and its history in a way I never could before.

It really is something great when you can actually go out and see all the different places you hear about in stories and read about in history books. It was interesting for me to go around Armenia visiting different towns and ancient churches. My favorite place that we visited was the monastery of Tatev. I was amazed

by the amount of hard work and effort the Armenians put into building it and locating it at the peak of a mountain. However, there was much more to the trip than that. We also got a chance to interact with local students, teachers, and other people living in Armenia. This was something no one could experience with just pictures and books alone. Having the opportunity to go out and explore the city of Yerevan was something else I enjoyed. It was strange to see how much had changed since I was last there.

We can all imagine the cities, the lifestyles, and the traditions of different countries, but there is no comparison to the real thing. I think that it is important for any college student to immerse him or herself in a different country so they have the chance to interact first hand with the culture. Interacting with so many different people and places in Armenia gave me a whole new impression of the country. It is a great place for Armenians living here, in the United States, and around the world to visit and reconnect with their roots, as well as learn more about their background.



**Zachary Kache Gavroian**  
Enology

When I first heard that the Armenian Studies Program was organizing a trip to Armenia, I



**Fourteen Armenia Summer Study Trip 2011 participants at the statue of "David of Sassoun" in Yerevan, Armenia.**

figured it would be a fun vacation to take with some friends. I had no idea that it would turn out to be a life-changing experience for me. Growing up in an Armenian family, I had always heard stories of the motherland, so I knew that at some point in my life I had to visit. When we got off the plane, all of the images and expectations of what Armenia was supposed to be like all vanished.

The city of Yerevan was an amazing place—full of great food, busy streets, and nice people. The aspect of Armenia that blew me away was how rich the culture is and how deeply rooted the community is within Christianity. The people of Armenia live harsh lives; many lack the luxuries we consider common. What I noticed

while I was there was that even though they lead hard lives, they work extremely hard to put the food on the table and a roof over their heads. Most importantly, through their adversity, they didn't lose faith in God. We saw people going to church everyday of the week, while back home we have to be dragged by our parents to go to church for just one hour a week.

My trip to Armenia really made me take a step back and look at my life. It made me realize how many things we take for granted every day, and it gave me a new sense of pride in my family and culture. The lessons I learned on this trip will stick with me throughout the rest of my life.

## Armenian Folk Dance & Song Teacher Hasmik Harutyunyan Charms Students



**Hasmik Harutyunyan, fifth from left, with students.**

**TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN**  
STAFF WRITER

Armenia has an ancient history and with its history comes a great culture, featuring different kind of dance and song.

On Saturday, March 31, respected folk singer and dancer teacher Hasmik Harutyunyan held an Armenian Dance and Song Workshop for students at Fresno State, sponsored by the

Armenian Students Organization and partially funded by the Associated Students, Inc.

It has already become a tradition at this time of year, for Harutyunyan to visit Fresno State and teach students traditional Armenian dances and songs and have a wonderful time.

Harutyunyan used the first half of the workshop to teach some beautiful Armenian folk songs: *Noubar Noubar*, *Sari Aghjik*,

*Sareri Hovin Mernem*, and *Bingyol*. For some in attendance, the songs were familiar, but for others they were new. She explained every single word to the people that didn't understand the Armenian language.

After singing those traditional songs Harutyunyan, with her positive and bright energy, then took to the dance floor, where she taught some folk dances; *Kochari*, *Tamzara*, *Gyovand*, *Pompouri*, *Shoror*, *Hamshen* dances, *Ver Veri*, and *Mayroke*, each representing a different region of Armenia.

Harutyunyan explained that in each region dances are performed in a unique way. While teaching the dances she also told some jokes. The time passed with a lot of laughter and positive moments.

After the workshop was over, Harutyunyan gathered all the students and gave them advice on how to keep the Armenian traditions alive.

"I love teaching. It gives me so much happiness," stated Harutyunyan. "Plus, I especially



La Porta Details Armenian Reactions to Latin Missionaries in the Fourteenth Century

ANDREW ESGUERRA  
STAFF WRITER

Illuminating a period of internal conflict within the Armenian faith, Professor Sergio La Porta, holder of the Haig and Isabel Berberian Chair of Armenian Studies, spoke before a sizeable audience at Fresno State on Thursday, March 22. This talk was part of the Armenian Studies Program Spring lecture series.

Delivering a lecture entitled “Knowledge, Heresy, and Inquisition: The Armenian Reaction to Latin Missionaries in the 14th century,” Dr. La Porta discussed the cultural and religious reaction of the Armenians to Roman Catholic missionaries in the fourteenth century.

Greater Armenia, the landlocked region where the current Republic of Armenia sits, was ruled by a few, prominent families at this time. Armenians there lived sandwiched between two political powers in the region, the Mamluks of Egypt and the Mongol Empire. Although Cilician Armenia had had extensive ties with the Roman Catholic since



Dr. Sergio La Porta

Photo: Erica Magarian

the twelfth century, Franciscan monks had started making their way into Greater Armenia only in the second half of the thirteenth. Their early attempts at spreading Catholic teaching in Armenia was followed by Dominican missionaries who quickly came to dominate the missionizing activity in the region.

Initially some Armenians were welcoming to the Latin monks. Zakaria Dzordzoretsi, the head of the monastery of St.

Thaddeus, allowed the Franciscan missionaries to lecture on theology. According to statements by European travellers, Zakaria also assisted in the conversion of approximately 4,000 Armenians to Roman Catholicism.

The quick success of the Catholic missionaries alarmed some Armenian bishops such as Stepanos Orbelian, who had also criticized Cilicia’s close relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. In contemporary

letters, the head of the monastic school at Gladzor, Esayi Nchetsi, cautions fellow Armenians to be wary in their dealings with Catholics and Armenians who follow their teaching; to treat them as Christians, but not to engage them in debate.

Nonetheless, the popularity of Catholic teachings continued to increase, particularly after the Papacy’s formal recognition of the Unitor Brothers, an Armenian monastic order that was fully united with Rome. Dr. La Porta questioned why so many Armenian monks were attracted to Roman Catholicism during this period. He suggested that intellectual curiosity was a primary motive. Dr. La Porta suggested that the Latin Aristotelian tradition that developed in the Dominican order during the course of the thirteenth century was extremely attractive to Armenian students who were familiar with their own Aristotelian tradition.

The Armenian Apsotolic response to the increasing successes of Roman Catholic and Armenian Catholic missionaries become more intense during the

second half of thee 14th 14th century. La Porta illustrated how leading Armenian Apostolic monks launched investigations similar to the inquisition to insure that Armenians did not convert. Although these investigations do not seem to have been authorized or officially sanctioned by the Church leadership in the manner of the Inquisition in Europe, they often were violent, even fatal. Dr. La Porta observed, however, that European missionaries were never harmed and that the investigations and the violence were internal.

Despite this strong reaction against Armenians who had converted, Dr. La Porta stressed that the same people who headed the inquisitions were themselves quite knowledgeable of the Catholic literature that had been translated into Armenian. They incorporated elements of Roman Catholic literature into their own works and reformed the Armenian monastic education system along Catholic lines.

They thus changed the shape of the Armenian intellectual tradition while setting up boundaries of Armenian identity.

Der Mugrdechian Gives Lenten Presentation on Armenian Art at St. Gregory Armenian Church



Photo: Ken Melkonian

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, left, with Rev. Fr. Archpriest Yeghia Hairabedian, pastor, St. Gregory Armenian Church.

ANDREW ESGUERRA  
STAFF WRITER

On the evening of March 21, the eyes of the congregation were glued to a slideshow of historical Armenian manuscripts painting, presented to community members at the St. Gregory the Illuminator Armenian Apostolic Church of Fowler.

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, spoke as part of the Lenten Series organized by Rev. Fr. Archpriest Yeghia Hairabedian, pastor of the Church. Following evening prayers and worship in the Church’s Markarian Social Hall, Prof. Der Mugrdechian delivered a lecture on the art of Armenian manuscripts and their spiritual background.

There are more than 30,000 Armenian manuscripts that have survived the centuries, scattered in various collections throughout the world. The largest collection of more than 13,000 is housed in the Matenadaran, in Yerevan. Another 4,000 are held at the St. James Monastery, in Jerusalem, and a similar amount

of manuscripts are found in the Mekhitarist Monastery on the island of San Lazzaro in Venice.

The most commonly copied text in the Armenian tradition was that of the Gospels, manually copied by scribes and often illustrated. The Gospels were utilized during the Church services and were sometimes donated by a wealthy or prominent household.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian used examples from two illustrated Gospels, to explain the difference in styles and to also explain how the paintings expressed the faith of the Armenians.

The first manuscript Der Mugrdechian presented was the eleventh century “Vehapar Gospel,” executed in a naive, monastic style, with two-dimensional images and use of less vibrant colors. However the images are striking in their simplicity, painted by monks in an isolated area of Armenia.

The second manuscript discussed was the “Mughni Gospel,” also from the eleventh century, but executed in a “royal,” or “sumptuous” style. The scenes in this manuscript are vibrant,

more artistically and aesthetically pleasing, and demonstrate depth and perspective. The “Mughni Gospel” contains a full cycle of illustrations from the life of Christ, including scenes of the angel Gabriel revealing news to Mary about the birth of her son Jesus (The Annunciation); a Nativity scene; the Baptism of Jesus; Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey; the Last Supper; the Crucifixion and Resurrection; and the Ascension. Artwork also graced the Canon Tables (an index to the Gospels) and the donor page, at the beginning and very end of the Gospel, respectively.

The images of the centuries-old manuscripts capture the intensity of the Armenian passion for their faith. Writing out the word of God by hand was not enough for them; they added flourishes to the initial letter in paragraphs, illuminated the parchment with beautiful paintings, and bound the book, sometimes using precious metals or gems.

The Armenians have valued the manuscripts over the centuries, through a very long and turbulent history, often at a high personal cost. One such example that Professor Barlow cited was that of a large manuscript, wider than one’s arm span, that two Armenians women cut in half and carried on their backs to safety to keep the manuscript out of the hands of invading Turks.

The art of the Armenian manuscript simultaneously expresses the faith of the Armenian people as well as reminds us of a time where there was no convenient or easy way to prepare the manuscripts. The effort that went into making the manuscripts is a testament to the Armenians’ drive and dedication to their faith and a reminder of all that we have to be thankful for.

Eench Ga Chga

What motivated you to be involved in the planning of the Armenian Genocide Commemoration? How do you feel the Genocide memorial events impact the community?



ANI GRIGORYAN

I’m Armenian, and I think it is something that all Armenians must do-get the word out to others. Not many people have heard of the Armenian Genocide and I hope that the more people learn, the stronger we will be in our fight for recognition.



TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN

I love doing this because it makes me feel that I am doing something for the people who lost their lives and land during the Armenian Genocide. I am happy that I can make a difference and inform other students about the Genocide. We prepared many events during the week to teach everyone the basics about the Genocide.



MICHAEL RETTIG

I get involved in these events because of how important it is for we, as Armenians, to remember the suffering of our ancestors—no matter how much time has passed and no matter how far we are from our homeland. It’s important as Armenians to continue to gather yearly on this day to be a voice for justice and the rights of all people. These events do an amazing job drawing curious students on campus. I’m very proud of ASO for their work in spreading awareness of Armenian culture and cause on campus.



NOEL LENARD

The Armenian Genocide is often an overlooked atrocity, and if I can do anything to make people aware of its occurrence, I will. I also want to honor the memory of the lives lost during the Genocide. By gaining knowledge, people can speak intelligently on the issue, and if more people want to acknowledge the Genocide for what it was, change can eventually occur.

Photos: Andrew Esguerra



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Fresno State and Armenian Studies  
Benefactor Pete Peters Passes Away



STAFF REPORT

Pete Peters, a well known Fresno business man and philanthropist, passed away on Tuesday, March 13, 2012.

A beloved father, grandfather and uncle to many nephews and nieces he was fondly called “Uncle Pete” by everyone he met, a name he dearly cherished. He lived a full life with his twin daughters, grandchildren, sons-in-law, nephews and nieces and all his friends and extended family members.

Pete was born on May 27, 1917, in Fowler. The youngest of five children he was born to Samuel and Lillian Bagdesarian Peters from Armenia. Upon graduating from Fowler High School in 1935, Pete worked the night shift at Gobel Disc then joined his brother Leon at Valley Foundry and Machine Works. With the onset If World War II, Pete enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps and served in Burma and India working as an airplane mechanic.

After the war, Pete returned to Valley Foundry as Vice president and sales manager. Pete and Leon became “the perfect team” quickly setting their sights on meeting the needs of the wine industry by designing and manufacturing crushers, tanks and presses. As a result, Valley Foundry enjoyed many profitable years thus merging with Ametek in 1968. Dad remained instrumental in the company’s growth until he retired at the age of 73.

Peters was active in numerous clubs and charities. His philanthropic efforts included the Boy Scouts, California State University, Fresno; Community Regional Medical Centers and the Fresno Metropolitan Museum of Art. Everyone who knew him as Dad, Grandpa or Uncle Pete, can agree he was sharp as a tack, a successful businessman, played a mean hand of pinochle and gin rummy, generous to many and above all, grateful to be able to give back to the community of Fresno.

Peters generously established a scholarship fund for students in the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

Many students have been helped by his generosity.

He is survived by his daughters, Lorraine Peters Wilson and Elaine Peters Neuss; son-in-law, Carl Neuss; and grandchildren, Carl, Alex and Rebecca Neuss. He is also survived by numerous nephews, nieces and cousins.

**BALAKIAN, FROM PAGE 1**

of Creative Writing at Colgate University, has written frequently on the Turkish government’s campaign to exterminate the Armenian people in World War I.

“Peter Balakian has been called ‘the American conscience of the Armenian Genocide,’” said Sherrie Spendlove, who established the prize in honor of her parents, lifelong Merced residents Alice and Clifford Spendlove.

Balakian is the author of five poetry books, a memoir titled *Black Dog of Fate*, and the nonfiction book *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America’s Response*.

Balakian was invited to speak by the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, in conjunction with UC Merced. He made two presentations, one in the afternoon at Fresno State, and a second to a larger community gathering at the UC Merced center.

At the Fresno State event he spoke to an audience of mostly students and faculty, discussing the impact that the Armenian Genocide had on modernity. This was a theme he expanded upon at the evening lecture.

Balakian felt that it was important to contextualize the Genocide within other social and historical events going on at the time, and to examine the impact it had on future events, such as providing a template for the Holocaust during World War II.

Balakian argued that historical amnesia regarding the Armenian Genocide is what allowed the Holocaust to happen, referenced by Hitler himself in his famous 1939 quote on the topic. This was not only caused by the deliberate whitewashing of history by Turkey, but by a generation of Armenians who had been left shell-shocked and unable to speak about the experience.

The main focus of his

ASO Enjoys the Snow at Badger Pass Outing

MARINE VARDANYAN  
STAFF WRITER

In Armenia, snow is an inevitable part of winter. But here in the San Joaquin Valley, it’s not something we get much of. The Armenian Students Organization didn’t let that stop them, as they decided to take their members up to the snow in Yosemite Valley for a fun-filled day of snowboarding and skiing. On Friday, March 30, a holiday, twenty-three ASO members and their friends commenced their Spring Break with a trip to Badger Pass Ski Area.

The trip began with an hour-long skiing or snowboarding lesson with the Badger Pass staff. Soon after, everyone was ready to take on the slopes and put their skills to use. Some were first-time skiers or snowboarders, others were more experienced, but regardless of their level, all of the members stuck together and helped each other out.

“We all had lots of fun and shared a good amount of laughter together. Since most of us were first time skiers, it made things even more fun,” explained Emma Shaljyan. “We fell lots of times and helped each other up, and



Photo: Vartush Mesropyan

**Left to right: ASO members Anto Sakayan, Hrach Hambartsumyan, Tadeh Issakhanian, and Tony Terzian.**

kept trying over and over.”

The ASO snow trip gave the students an opportunity to view the beauty of our Yosemite Valley and to enjoy some winter sports, snowball fights, and a lot of laughter.

The ASO ski and snowboarding trip was a new event for the organization and a true adventure for all of those who participated.

“It was a bit challenging to organize the trip and gather everyone together, but we reached our goal and in the end everyone had a blast,” commented ASO

President Vartush Mesropyan. The day spent in Yosemite Valley was a huge success, as members enjoyed the pleasant weather, breathtaking scenery, and the sparkling white snow.

On their way back, the ASO members made a stop in Oakhurst to freshen up with some “Jamba Juice” and have dinner at one of the local restaurants.

Although sore, sun burnt, and exhausted, the students maintained their satisfied smiles as they headed back to Fresno.

**COFFEE HOUR, FROM PAGE 1**

students have showcased their experiences abroad, exposing students, faculty, staff and community members to countries and cultures they otherwise would have had little experience with.

To orient audience members, general information about Armenia was presented through a power-point program. It was a daunting task to portray Armenia’s vast cultural heritage, but various important events in Armenian history were highlighted.

The importance of Christianity to Armenian culture was emphasized, focusing on the more than 2,800 churches and monasteries that have been constructed throughout historic and present-day Armenia.

Discussing traditional Armenian holidays, food, dances, music, film, clothing, and places to visit brought a new perspective to the audience.

Each student had recently traveled to Armenia, and they shared their our own memorable experiences. Marine Vardanyan talked about her travels to the monastery of Amberd and the Salim Caravansaray, while

Hagop Ohanessian focused on Lake Sevan and the Khor Virap Monastery. Meanwhile, I expressed my fascination with the southern region of Armenia, most notably Uxtasar and the Monastery of Tatev. All of us expressed a great love for our beautiful homeland, emphasizing the natural beauty and power of the Armenian landscape.

Audience members also enjoyed hearing about the Armenian school system, which is quite different from what one might encounter in America. Also discussed was the Armenian Diaspora, emphasizing the prominence of the Fresno Armenian community.

The program concluded with highlights of the many cultural, scientific and societal improvements occurring in Armenia, as well as with a few quirky facts, such as Armenia’s love of soccer and chess. Undoubtedly, a presentation about Armenia would be incomplete without Mt. Ararat; accordingly, the students expressed their love of the holy mountain and echoed the hopes of the Armenian people, by articulating the desire

to someday again visit the lands of their ancestors.

After the presentation, an eager audience composed of many students, interested and curious about Armenian customs and traditions, asked questions. In addition to the presentation, books, pictures, musical instruments, and traditional clothes were displayed for the audience members, who observed the objects with great fascination.

The presenters were very pleased by their ability to reach such a large and varied audience.

“I felt proud to be able to present about my homeland,” recalls Hagop Ohanessian. “The best part was the reaction of the audience; they were very interested in learning about Armenia.”

Our nation and culture will only be forgotten if we neglect to preserve it, therefore, the presenters felt proud to represent their culture and raise awareness about Armenia’s past, present, and future.

We were honored to have an opportunity to do our part to preserve our culture.

presentation was on the advent of modernity in the form of advanced technology and communication, which facilitated the Genocide.

On this note, Balakian segued into speaking about his literary work, much of which is based on trans-generational memory, the way trauma can be passed across generations. Peter Balakian’s grandmother was a Genocide survivor, and Balakian read three of his poems, “Road to Aleppo 1915,” “Ellis Island,” and “World War Two,” which chronicled different times in her life—during the Genocide, later as an immigrant coming to America, and the paranoia she

suffered after World War II, when she began having flashbacks of her traumatic past. These poems were written in the 1970’s, before the experience of the Genocide had been thoroughly explored through poetry.

“All writers can be witnesses, you don’t have to have been there,” said Balakian when explaining what it was like to write about something he had never witnessed firsthand.

Balakian’s visit to Fresno State provided a special opportunity for students, but especially aspiring writers, to interact with the author and to hear his views on literature and writing.

**HARUTYUNYAN, FROM PAGE 4**

love to teach these dances and songs to young people and the people that live in the Diaspora, because I want them to always remember the dances we learned and how rich their culture is. It’s especially hard to keep your culture when you are away from your country. We have to always hold our heads up especially our youngsters.”

“I wish each of you good health. Always be positive,” stated Harutyunyan. “Walk with your heads held high and always be proud of what you are. I love you all and I will see you soon.”



APRIL 24, FROM PAGE 1

Following the program, a group of thirty students and community members, marched across campus in a silent tribute. “Fresno State students are just as passionate as the students at larger campuses and we wanted to pay our respect and raise awareness,” explained Andrew Esguerra. The silent march was a representation of the suppression of truth by the Turkish government’s denial of the Genocide.

Fresno Community Commemoration

Every year San Joaquin Valley Armenians come together at one of four local Armenian churches, to pay their respects to their ancestors. This year the annual



Photo: Erica Magarian

L. to R.: Noel Lenard, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, & Marine Vardanyan.

service and commemoration was held at the Holy Trinity Armenian

Valley legislators recognized Dr. Hovannisian with a proclamation lauding his years of teaching and research, thanks to Mary Alice Kaloostian, District Director for California State Senator Tom Berryhill.

Fresno State President Dr. John Welty awarded Dr. Hovannisian the “President’s Medal of Distinction,” the highest non-degree award presented by Fresno State to citizens of the region, state or nation whose contribution in the area of professional achievements or public service are of national or international significance, or represent a contribution of great significance to the university.

Dr. Hovannisian, gave an inspiring speech as he reflected on a long academic career. His address was both emotional and inspirational. He was the first to

Apostolic Church of Fresno.

After the services and teach Armenian courses at Fresno State in 1960-1962, when he taught several extension courses. While teaching those Armenian courses, he learned more about Armenian history, rediscovering his own roots.

Dr. Hovannisian reflected on his childhood and the role his grandparents and parents had in shaping his life. His childhood on the family farm affected him greatly and he emphasized the most important lesson he had gained, which was the idea that change is possible for everyone, slowly, but surely.

Each student recipient of an Armenian Studies scholarship received a congratulatory letter from California Senator Dianne Feinstein, and a gift from the Armenian Studies Program of a book, *Follow*, written by William Saroyan.

More than 40 students were recognized for receiving an Armenian Studies scholarship. Students graduating with a Minor in Armenian Studies and the executive members of the Armenian Students Organization were also recognized.

Prof. Der Mugrdechian concluded the program by thanking all those who had helped make the Banquet such an enjoyable evening.

The 24th Annual Armenian Studies Program Banquet was a great success. It was an occasion to reflect on the successes of past years and to look forward to the future.

ASP BANQUET, FROM PAGE 1

and its growth in recent years. He expressed his belief that one of the factors that makes the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State so unique and special is the amount of community support it receives.

Honored guest at the Banquet and keynote speaker for the evening, Dr. Richard Hovannisian, AEF Professor Emeritus of Modern Armenian History at UCLA, was recognized with several proclamations, including one from the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, bestowed in person by Debbie Poochigian, Chairman of the Board. The Fresno City Council also declared March 11 as “Dr. Richard Hovannisian Day,” thanks to the efforts of Councilman Andreas Borgeas.



L. to R.: Supervisor Debbie Poochigian, Prof. Der Mugrdechian, Dr. Richard Hovannisian, and Dr. La Porta.

Photo: Alain Ekmalian

messages in the sanctuary, more than 400 people gathered in the church social hall to hear Dr. Sergio La Porta’s keynote address. Dr. La Porta explained what steps people should take to ensure that atrocities like the Armenian Genocide, and others don’t happen again. Instead of focusing on getting recognition, he emphasized that people should focus on raising awareness of the truth.

Dr. La Porta discussed the unprecedented humanitarian effort mounted by the United States to help the Armenians beginning in 1915. It is an exemplary example in history of America’s strength and compassion. The relief effort sent to Armenia during the Genocide represents

directed by brothers Paolo and Vittorio Taviani, adapted from a novel by Antonia Arslan. The film followed the lives of the Avakian family, as the Young Turks began to implement their plans of annihilation. The audience saw the atrocities of the past from a more personal perspective, as they witnessed the killing of the men, and the women and children deported on a death march. Although in Italian, with English subtitles, the audience could feel the pain of the Armenians.

The solemn mood from the movie transferred into the night as those present took part in the night vigil. Led by the notes of a *duduk*, played by Aramais Orkusyan, the group held candles and made their way across campus. The vigil



Photo: Erica Magarian

The Arax Armenian Dancers at the Free Speech area.

the greatest such effort by the United States, in absolute terms, since that time. Those involved in the humanitarian effort ranged from everyday people, actors, actresses, presidents, politicians, and to even athletes, such as Babe Ruth. By sharing this shining moment in American history, Armenians would accomplish a goal of raising awareness about the Genocide

In closing, Professor La Porta stated, “Never be afraid of truth.” **Night Vigil and Movie Screening**

The April 24th commemorative week concluded with the screening of the feature movie “The Lark Farm” and a night vigil at Fresno State. Students and community members relived the pain of the Genocide through the Italian film

began with a prayer by Fr. Vahan Gosdanian, pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic church. The vigil ended with a short program encompassing the many talents and experiences of Fresno State students. Aramais Orkusyan and Michael Rettig honored their ancestors by performing “Adanayi Voghperk,” while Ruzan Orkusyan and Tatevik Hovhannisyan sang “Chinar Es.”

Faten Kassabian gave a brief message and survival account and ASO President Vartush Mesropyan closed the evening by stating, “We must fight for the truth and it must be recognized.”

As the month of April passes it is important to remember the truth. We will never forget the atrocities of the past, and now we must strive to share that truth.

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