

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.

Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia, Antelias, Lebanon, for a gift of his new book *Issues and Perspectives* (Antelias, Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia, 2013), 242pp., in English. A volume by Catholicos Aram I composed of lectures, articles, and notes, covering issues of religion, church, the ecumenical movement, interfaith dialogue, identity, human rights and democracy, and their impact on daily life.

Dr. Hayk Demoyan, Director, Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, Yerevan, Armenia for a copy of his new book, *The Foreign Policy of Turkey and the Karabagh Conflict: A Historical Comparative Study* (Yerevan, 2013), 492pp., in Russian, with an English summary. The monograph analyzes the political attitude of Turkey towards Armenia and the Karabagh conflict in both historical and current perspectives.

David Gasparyan, Yerevan, Armenia, for the gift of his following three books: *Amerikahay Angliagir Banasteghdzner* (Armenian-American Poets Writing in English) 186pp., in Armenian; *Haykakan Apagayapashutyun* (Armenian Futurism), 174pp., in Armenian; and *Kensamatenagitutyun Davit Gasparyan* (A Bibliography of Davit Gasparyan) (Yerevan: National Institute of Education, 2005), 159pp., in Armenian. Prof. David Gasparyan is a writer, literary critic, and an expert on the writer Yeghishe Charents.

Tamar Hovhannisyan, Carmel, California, for the gift of her new book of poems *Linulutyan Hamanvag* (Symphony of Being) (Yerevan: HGM Publishing, 2013). 479pp., in Armenian.

Shahen Khachatourian, Yerevan, Armenia, for a series of six monographs by him on noted artists of Armenia: Hagop Ekizyan, Petros Kontrachyan (Peto), Martiros Saryan, Arshile Gorky, Minas Avetisyan, and Hagop Hagopian. In Armenian, Russian, and English.

George Mouradian, Commerce Twp., Michigan, for a copy of his *Armenian InfoText* (a CD that pictorially covers major events in Armenian history) and the book *Notable Armenian Sayings and Family Reunions* (Commerce Twp., Michigan, 2010) by George Mouradian and Aris Sevag, 87pp., in English. The book is a collection of Armenian sayings and proverbs that have been used and passed down over the generations. Also for the book *What Do You Know About Armenia: Your Journey into Armenia* (Commerce Twp., Michigan) by George Mouradian, 60pp., in English, a primer of Armenian history for children.

Gaytzag Palandjian, Delray Beach, Florida, for a copy of the book *Poetic Memoirs* (Yerevan, 2012), 68pp., in Armenian, Spanish, and English, written by his late grandson Ivan Gilabert Palandjian and translated by Gaytzag Palandjian.

Lousik Agouletsi Samvelyan, Yerevan, Armenia, for the gift of the book *Yuri Samvelyan: With You and Without You* (Yerevan, 2012), 195pp. in Armenian and English. This beautifully composed and illustrated book is dedicated to the life of the artist, painter, and sculptor, Yuri Samvelyan, by his wife Lousik Agouletsi Samvelyan. Yuri Samvelyan (1939-2010) is the nephew of the late Fresno artist Varaz Samuelian.

Berdj Terzian, Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt, for copies of his latest works including *Retrospective Reflections: A Selection of essays, speeches, interviews, and studies* by the author (Cairo, 2010), 315pp., in Armenian, and for a variety of the author’s works.

Jack Tucker, Potomac, MD, for the book *Innocents Return Abroad, Volume II: Exploring Ancient Sites in Eastern Turkey* (2013), 266pp., in English. Pages 207-244 cover some of the ancient Armenian Christian sites now in Turkey. Special attention is devoted to the Cathedral of Mren and efforts to protect the church.

California State University, Fresno

Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2014 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32264)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B Der Mugrdechian
• Hum 10-Hum Antqty/Ren (Class #32358)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	S La Porta

Upper Division Armenian Studies Courses

• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32263)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
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General Education-Arts & Humanities, Area IC

• Arm 148-Masterp. of Arm Culture (Class #33160)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B Der Mugrdechian
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New Course

• Arm 120T-Arm Cultural History (Class #36304)	3	4:00P-6:50P	W	S La Porta
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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 current catalog: <http://www.fresnostate.edu/catalog/subjects/armenian-studies/armenia-mn.html>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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Fresno State's Armenian Students Organization

Cordially invites you to attend their

Holiday Party

Friday, December 20, 2013
6:30pm to 11:00pm

Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church
Social Hall
(2226 Ventura Ave, Fresno CA 93721)

TICKETS \$20

Formal attire required
R.S.V.P. by December 13th

For questions and tickets contact:
Vartush Mesropyan
559-916-0074
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559-288-7299

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to the Armenian Studies Program

There are many ways to support
the Armenian Studies Program.

1) A gift today could come through the donation of cash, stock, or goods.

2) The Armenian Studies Program can also be supported in the future in estate plans.

Regardless of how a donation is made, each gift impacts
the lives of students and faculty at Fresno State.

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HALO Trust Discusses De-Mining in Karabagh



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Left to right: HALO volunteers and representatives Ojeni Sammis, Galina Danilova, and Amy Curren.

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

Imagine stepping outside of your home only to find yourself surrounded by land mines, not knowing if your next step will activate a mine or a cluster bomb. Would you be able to live in such conditions? Citizens of Nagorno-Karabakh are forced into such situations every day, as they exist alongside the remnants of war. However, the process of mine and cluster munition clearance, which has been taking place in the region since the year 2000, brings promise of a future where such danger will no longer exist.

The Landmine Free Artsakh Awareness Campaign is a project initiated by the HALO Trust, an American non-profit organization and a British charity dedicated to the removal of the hazardous debris of war. On Tuesday, October 8, 2013, community members learned about this project during a presentation by HALO Trust representative Galina Danilova, held at the Charlie Keyan

Armenian Community School. Danilova was accompanied by San Francisco-based HALO Development Manager Amy Curren and by Los Angeles volunteer Ojeni Sammis.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict took place almost 20 years ago, yet the people of the region continue to deal with the aftermath, one that is not as obvious, but which still takes lives, maims and injures, and leaves the country in a war-torn condition. Deadly mines and cluster bombs litter the region and many Armenians are in danger, as their means of survival, which includes collecting wood, herbs, and handling livestock, puts them at high risks of encountering explosives.

Danilova screened two videos giving insight on how the explosive devices do not discriminate, creating victims of all ages. The videos evoked an emotional response from the audience, and gave an idea of the extent of damage these mines and bombs cause.

“You’ve seen only two stories, I know 350,” stated Danilova.

Danilova spoke about the munitions that range from large antitank mines the size of big plates, to small cluster bombs that appear harmless to children. Mine clearance has brought benefits such as giving the people of Karabakh employment opportunities, with a national staff of 170. These trained clearance teams work attentively with their detectors to cover every inch of the land. A slow and lengthy process, mine clearance is most effectively executed through this “one man, one lane” method, since the mountainous and rocky terrain prevents any faster means. When coming across a mine or bomb, the team destroys or detonates the item in place.

Mine risk education is also part of the process and it is important to focus on children and teach them about the danger. The minefields have also had a tremendous impact on the economy. Large areas littered with explosives have prevented farmers from utilizing fertile fields. For example, the Fizuli minefield, originally a 650 acre vineyard, has resulted in an estimated \$2.5 million dollar a year loss.

“After war, we all like to think that casualties end, but not in Karabakh,” commented Professor Barlow Der Mugrdchian, on the grim reality of the region.

However, Danilova’s presentation on the work by HALO Trust gave hope that the situation in Karabakh will eventually be resolved and that the Armenian people will finally be able to live without the everyday risk of encountering a dangerous explosive.

Partamian Presents Armenian World Contributions

RUZAN ORKUSYAN
STAFF WRITER

What do the spiritual leader of the Salvation Army, the inventor of the MRI, the creator of automatic transmission, and the founder of GNC have in common? Along with countless intellectuals and public figures, they share a unique American-Armenian heritage and serve as prominent reminders of Armenians’ survival, growth, and civic contributions.

In a two-part lecture on Thursday, October 3, talk-show host and founder of the Armenian Arts Fund, Stepan Partamian, spoke about “The Armenian World,” in a presentation sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program of Fresno State and supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation. Specifically, Partamian covered American-Armenian contributions to humanity and his extensive journey to document 21st century Armenian landmarks in America.

As a child, Partamian dreamed of a planet of Armenians. Since childhood, he has collected information about Armenians who have made a difference to humanity. Recently, he compiled the various stories into the book *Yes, We Have* (Armenian Arts



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Left to right: Ruzan Orkusyan, Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Alek Khatchigian, guest speaker Stepan Partamian, Marine Vardanyan, and Vartush Mesropyan.

Fund, 2009), which chronicles the contributions of over one hundred American-Armenian scientists, artists, musicians, politicians and other public figures who changed American history through their inventions, discoveries, and reforms.

The book opens with a picture of the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama, and the quote from his April 24th Armenian Genocide commemoration speech stating that the “United States of America is a far richer country because of the many Americans of Armenian

descent who have contributed to our society...”

After setting this tone for the lecture, Partamian offered brief glimpses into his book by mentioning some of the more distinguished individuals. Notable figures included Nishan Der Garabedian, also known as “Joe the Turk,” who was the spiritual leader of the Salvation Army; Gabriel Kazanjian, inventor of the hair dryer; Varaztad Hovannes Kazanjian, a dentist who established the first reconstructive

SEE PARTAMIAN PAGE 7

Karabagh (Artsakh) Focus of Two Talks at Fresno State



The lecture on Karabagh was held Friday, November 15. Left to right: Tatevik Hovhannisyan, Marine Vardanyan, Dr. Arsen Saparov, Dr. Sergio La Porta, and Vartush Mesropyan.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

EMMA SHALJYAN
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Arsen Saparov, visiting lecturer at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, was the guest of the Armenia Studies Program on Friday, November 15, speaking on the topic of “Drawing Borders in the Caucasus-the Early 1920’s.” Dr. Saparov earned his Ph.D. from the London School of Economics, where his research focused on the issue of the creation of autonomous regions by the Soviet Union in the 1920s.

The lecture was the first in a two-part presentation on “Karabagh: An Historical Perspective,” with the second presentation

by Dr. Ara Sanjian (University of Michigan-Dearborn), on “Irredentism at the Crossroads of Nationalism, Communism and Diverging Interpretations of the Soviet Experience: The Armenian Diasporan Press on Mountainous Karabagh, 1923-1985.”

Dr. Saparov started his lecture with an analysis of the historical status of Karabagh in 1921 and how that status was determined. He discussed four Soviet decisions taken between November 30, 1920 and July 4, 1921 on the Karabagh issue, all without exception deeming that

SEE KARABAGH PAGE 6

Armenians on the Internet

SUREN OGANESSIAN
STAFF WRITER

Armeniapedia
http://www.armeniapedia.org/wiki/Main_Page



Main Page: Provides the best way to navigate the website, listing categories covered in the Wiki, such as history, travel, society and culture, language, food, art, books, and maps.
Armenian Language Lessons: An online textbook is provided to help English-speakers learn Eastern Armenian, accessible on the main page.
Navigation: A sidebar present on all pages of the Wiki, that can instantly take one to the Main Page, to the chat room section, to a random page, and to view recent edits to articles.

Longtime readers of *Hye Sharzhoom* may recall a brief blurb in the May 2005 “Armenians on the Internet” article about a site called Armeniapedia.org, which specialized in Armenian recipes and cooking. A lot has changed in eight years, and now the website deserves a second look. Armeniapedia has since grown to cover nearly every aspect of Armenian history, language and culture, currently boasting 7,035 articles. The site is what is known on the internet as a Wiki; like the well-known site Wikipedia, a Wiki is an online encyclopedia that anyone can edit. So Armeniapedia owes its growth not so much to its creator, but to the scores of individuals who over the years have created accounts and created or edited pages on the Wiki themselves.

According to the “About” page, the website was started in 2004 by Raffi Kojian, who intended it from the start to be “an online, living encyclopedia and general repository of all things Armenian.” The site has expanded to achieve that goal, covering a myriad of subjects pertaining to Armenia. Among its many articles, the site hosts an online textbook that can help English-speakers learn Eastern Armenian, also perfect for anyone who wants to review the basics. A tutorial on Western Armenian is currently in progress. Armeniapedia even hosts the text to Raffi’s novel *The Fool*, a rare English translation that has fallen into the public domain. And yes, there are still an ample amount of articles about Armenian cuisine as well. The site is quickly becoming an easy resource for all things Armenian. And if it’s missing any information on anything, why not start an account and edit it yourself?

Der Mugrdechian Presents Talk on Armenian Cilicia and Trip to Historic Armenia



Left to right: Michael Rettig, Vartush Mesropyan, Marine Vardanyan, Tatevik Hovhannisyian, and Alek Khatchigian, with Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, right.

TAMAR MELKONIAN
STAFF WRITER

Have you ever wondered what a trip to historic Armenia would be like? On Friday, September 27, 2013, Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program, shared a presentation on his summer trip to historic Armenia.

Titled “Historic Armenia II: Armenian Cilicia,” this event was part two in a series by Der Mugrdechian, following a lecture about his first trip to historic Armenia in 2012. All eyes focused on the images shared in the

an enormous reaction from the audience, as the foods were familiar to those prepared by Armenians with roots in Western Armenia.

Professor Der Mugrdechian then went into more detail about two main fortresses of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia (12th-14th century). He shared photos and his experiences at Hromkla, which was the spiritual headquarters of the Armenian Church from 1149-1292 A.D. and was also the home to Catholicos St. Nerses the Graceful and the noted artist Toros Roslin. Roslin was known for his use of rich colors and beautiful detail seen in manuscripts executed during the period of the Cilician Kingdom.

The second fortress was that of Sis, the capital of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia and also significant as the site of the Armenian Catholicosate until the time of the Armenian Genocide.

Professor Der Mugrdechian and his group then traveled to the island castle of Korikos, along the Mediterranean Sea. Stops in Adana and Tarsus gave testimony to the Armenian history of the region.

The remnants of the once vibrant Armenian communities were embodied in the Armenian churches that remained.

He later visited Vakif, in the region of Musa Dag, which is

the only remaining Armenian village in Turkey.

Professor Der Mugrdechian presented images of Armenian churches that had been intentionally destroyed, as well photos of the Armenian quarter of Moush, which is currently being razed. Many people were moved by the photos.

included many asking about the possibility of re-appropriation of Armenian property and churches. This was sparked by all the images highlighting the changes in Turkey. Professor Der Mugrdechian explained that it would be a lengthy process to attain property, requiring Turkish acknowledgement of the



Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian at the Fortress of Sis.

In contrast to this destruction, Professor Der Mugrdechian explained that in some areas Armenian churches are being renovated with the permission of the government, such as St. Giragos in Dickranagerd and Holy Trinity in Malatia.

The lecture concluded with a question and answer session that

Armenian Genocide, and also opening the legal case in Turkey.

A large audience was in attendance and it was great to see people being so engaged. Many appreciated Prof. Der Mugrdechian’s presentation and thanked him for taking the time to connect cultural history with today’s Armenians.

ASO, FROM PAGE 1

support the organization at their largest fundraiser of the year. Dedicated ASO members worked hard while listening to upbeat Armenian music, which gave them the energy to wash cars and have fun. The event was a success; members spent time with friends, helped raise money for ASO, and most importantly, they worked as a team.

The next event, Game Day, took place at Fresno State’s O’Neill Park. This is an event that is eagerly awaited as it serves as an icebreaker for many of the new members. The event started off with some light snacks, pleasant conversation, and Armenian music. The executives prepared a variety of games, including dodge ball, a water-balloon toss, and catchphrase. Game Day left everyone with high spirits and fun memories.

ASO also planned Halloween-themed events such as Halloween Movie Night, which took place on the evening of October 26. The



Suren Oganessian, center, won the “Best Dressed” award at the ASO Halloween party and movie night held on Saturday, October 26.

event began with the screening of the horror movie “Strangers,” followed by a costume contest where a “best dressed” winner was announced. This year’s winner was Suren Oganessian who dressed up as a very convincing Charlie Chaplin and he even copied Chaplin’s walking style! There were many beautiful and creative costumes at the event such as a “Mickey Mouse,”

a “1920s Great Gatsby group,” a “musketeeer,” and many others. ASO also visited the Raisin Hell Ranch with a large group of people who successfully found their way out of the Black-out Maze, and escaped from Chupacabra’s Feast and Scarecrow’s Revenge. With their visit to the Raisin Hell Ranch, ASO concluded their Halloween celebration for this year.

One of the final events of the semester is also the one where members become most competitive. You may have guessed it—bowling. Organized at the Fresno State University Student Union bowling center, everyone showed up prepared to make some strikes! But who lost and who won didn’t matter because the event was full of fun and laughter, the most important factor of every ASO event.

The organization now looks forward to their Christmas Party on Friday, December 20—an evening that will be full of dancing, delicious food, and great company—a welcome ending to the Fall Semester.



ASO members organized a successful Car Wash on Saturday, October 12, at the Viktoria’s Place restaurant.

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BARLOWD@CSUFRESNO.EDU

Kevork Ajamian Graduates with Minor in Armenian Studies

Kevork Ajamian
History
Minor in Armenian Studies

What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?

I was encouraged to take Armenian Studies courses primarily because I am Armenian, and also because of the great things I had heard about the Program and Prof. Der Mugrdechian, through my mother and aunt who had also taken courses. It also complements my major in History.

What did you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?

The most valuable experience from the Armenian Studies Program would be the information I learned. I now have a deeper understanding of my culture and why it’s so unique.

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

It’s difficult to say which class was my favorite, since they each offered their own unique values. However, my two most memorable would be a course on the “Armenian Genocide and



Photo: Cary Edmondson, University Photographer

Kevork Ajamian

Diaspora” with visiting Professor Dr. George Bournoutian, and an Armenian Studies 20-Arts of Armenia course with Prof. Der Mugrdechian, where I learned about Armenian church architecture and manuscript illumination.

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans are to begin the credential program to become a teacher. I would like to relay Armenian history to my high school students down the road.

National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia in Fresno



The National Chamber Orchestra, with pianist Vahan Mardirossian, center.

Photo: Vartush Mesropyan

TATEVIK HOVHANNISYAN
STAFF WRITER

The works of composer Aram Khachaturian are always beautiful to listen to, but when they are performed by an Armenian orchestra, the same compositions transport the audience to another world—the Armenian world.

On Saturday, November 16, the National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia visited Fresno for a concert dedicated to the 110th birthday of Aram Khachaturian, one of the greatest composers of the 20th century.

The concert was organized by the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School of Fresno in cooperation with International Competitions and Festivals, Inc., and in partnership with the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia.

The event took place in the Paul Shaghoian Concert Hall, filled with an audience excited to enjoy a delightful evening of beautiful music, under the direction of Robert Mkoyan.

The National Chamber Orchestra of Armenia (NCOA) was formed in 1962 in Soviet Armenia and recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary.

One of the many talented members of the NCOA is Artistic Director and Principal Conductor, pianist Vahan Mardirossian.

The program began with the performance of a popular Mozart composition “Eine Kleine Nachtmusik” (A Little Night Music) followed by Haydn’s “Piano Concerto in G Major,” featuring Mardirossian.

“I really enjoyed the concert,” said community member Narine Orkusyan. “We don’t always

have classical concerts with Armenian music, so this was a very nice change. I enjoyed all of the compositions, but the second half was closer to my heart.”

Beautiful Armenian pieces followed the intermission, beginning with a medley by Komitas Vartabed: “Ay Aylughes,” “Kele-Kele,” “Shogher Djan,” “Habrbat,” “Erkin Ampela,” and “Vagharshapat.” This was followed by an exquisite composition called “Shushanik” by Edvard Mirzoyan, which carried the audience to another world, with the help of first violinist Astghik Vardanyan, who performed with great emotion.

The evening concluded with the most dazzling piece, “Khachaturiana” by Ruben Altunian, based on the popular compositions of Khachaturian, such as “Sabre Dance,” “Waltz Masquerade,” and the “Dance of the Rose Maidens.”

The musicians poured their soul into the music and mesmerized the audience.

Armenian Students Organization President Vartush Mesropyan commented, “When I listen to classical music it makes me feel calm and at peace. The NCOA performed beautifully—it was breathtaking.”

The audience was so pleased with the orchestra that they did not want the evening to end, filling the auditorium with loud applause and calls of “Bravo.”

Following an encore, the audience departed deeply satisfied with the exceptional evening of music.

December 7, 1988-Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Armenian Earthquake Recalled in 2013 Memoir

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

The clock tower froze at 11:41 while children were at school, parents at work, and busy people were running errands. These individuals became the unsuspecting victims of a terrible disaster, one that devastated the historical city of Gyumri (then Leninakan) and stole the lives of an estimated 25,000 Armenians, injuring 15,000. With a reported magnitude of 6.9, followed by an aftershock of magnitude 5.8, the Gyumri Earthquake called for rapid international response.

To this day the 1988 earthquake has left a haunting presence over the city. Some buildings continue to lay in ruins, and the Armenian people continue to carry the pain of losing their families and homes.

December 7, 2013 marks the 25th anniversary of the Earthquake. Many reading this article cannot begin to imagine the amount of fear, chaos, and heartbreak experienced by the victims of the earthquake. Unlike most of her classmates in Dr. Sona Haroutyunian’s Spring 2013 course, who presented their memoir projects on the Armenian Genocide, student Roza Marabyan chose to share her mother’s personal experience of the earthquake. The following is an excerpt from her mother’s

eye-witness account of what took place on December 7, 1988.



Roza Marabyan

When the earthquake began, I was a little kid and I don’t remember all of the details. My parents told me that my brother and I were in kindergarten, my sister was in school, which was next to our house, and my father was at work.

My mother described the earthquake and her memory of that day.

“I was home alone around 11:41 local time and I felt that the ground started to shake. At first I didn’t want to believe that it was an earthquake. I thought it was just my imagination, yet the very next second furniture began to fall and I quickly ran outside. When I was outside, I saw that the city was covered in dust, buildings were shaking and collapsing, people were running in panic, and I listened to the cries and shouts of ‘help, help, help,’ coming from

every direction. The first thought that came to my mind was ‘my children, I want to see them’ and I started running.

On my way to the school I saw a group of students with teachers who were standing outside and crying. I approached them and started looking for my older daughter, and on the other side I saw her. She was very scared and she was crying. After finding her we went to the kindergarten. In the yard I saw that nothing remained of the building and I shouted ‘No!’ not allowing myself to believe that something happened to my children. The most painful part was seeing my son’s jacket under a big piece of stone. I fell down, closed my eyes, and felt numbness in my legs and body. I didn’t realize how loud I was crying.

In that moment, one of the kindergarten teachers came to me and said that my children were alive and that my husband had already picked them up. Hearing this, my daughter and I rushed home. On our way we saw that my daughter, son, and husband were looking for us. I cannot explain in words what I felt the moment I saw that everyone was alive. Many people went mad from losing their loved ones. Aside from the large amounts of deaths, many were left physically disabled. The whole city was in mourning.”

Armenian Genocide Ephemera Project Launched at Fresno State

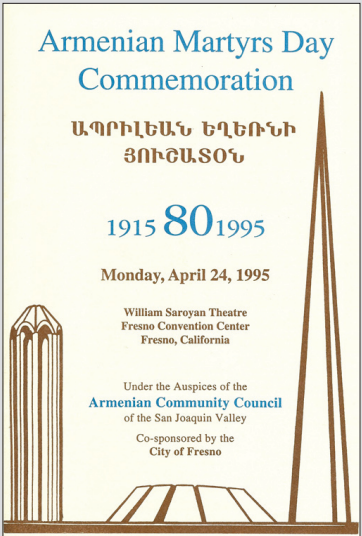
ANDREW ESGUERRA
STAFF WRITER

Armenian Studies began at Fresno State with a mere couple of classes just over half a century ago. Today, the Armenian Studies Program is one of the staple such Programs in the United States, offering courses that disseminate knowledge of Armenian language, culture, art, literature, and history to students. In addition, the steadily growing Program, based in the College of Arts and Humanities, advises *Hye Sharzhoom*, advises and supports the Armenian Students Organization, and lines up engaging speakers from all over the world for its Lecture Series, among many other special projects.

One such newly launched project is the Genocide Ephemera Project. This Project aims to collect ephemera, or printed materials, related to the commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, from the local community.

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Professor Barlow Der Mugrdchian is heading this project, with the goal of collecting memorabilia focused on the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian Studies Program is seeking posters, photographs, booklets, newspaper articles, programs, and other printed artifacts that provide a holistic view of what has been said and done over the past decades to commemorate the Armenian Genocide in the San Joaquin Valley.

Materials that people may have from previous Genocide commemorations will prove a valuable contribution for this project. In the spring of 2014, commemorations marking the 99th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide will take place throughout the world, making now the opportune time to begin the call for artifacts in



Genocide Program (1980)

time for a planned exhibit of the collection, explains Professor Der Mugrdchian.

Learning about the scope of this project, one can only wonder what ephemera from Genocide commemorations will show about how Armenians of the San Joaquin Valley have changed in the ways they have addressed the Armenian Genocide.

While many types of printed artifacts could prove priceless to this collection, for community members who do not want to part with their memorabilia, copies will be made in the Armenian Studies Program office and the originals returned. Everyone should be encouraged to become a part of this project by contributing.

A collection showing the dedication of the Armenian community to the truth is something that should be on display, not gathering dust. Just as the Genocide is an integral part of who the Armenians are today, so too are the decades of effort to recognize the tragedies that began on April 24, 1915, and that commemorate the loss.

If you would like to participate and contribute materials to the Project, contact the Armenian Studies Program office by calling (559) 278-2669, or email barlowd@csufresno.edu.

Family History Project Excerpts

MARINE VARDANYAN
EDITOR

In the October 2013 issue of *Hye Sharzhoom*, excerpts from family histories prepared by students who had enrolled in a Spring 2013 course taught by Dr. Sona Haroutyunian (University of Ca’ Foscari Venice), Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies, were published. Following are the three remaining excerpts:



Suren Oganessian

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Second International Armenian Studies Congress Organized by Academy of Sciences in Yerevan



Photo: ASP Archive

Participants and guests from the second session of the section on "Problems of the Armenian Genocide."

STAFF REPORT

The Second International Congress on Armenian Studies "Armenian Studies and the Challenges of Modern Times," was held October 17-19, 2013 in Yerevan, Armenia.

The Congress was sponsored and organized by the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, under

the Presidency of Dr. Radik Martirosyan.

The Congress coincided with the 70th anniversary celebration of the founding of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, and a gala celebration was held in the Opera Building on Monday, October 14. The President of the Republic of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, Catholicos Garegin II of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin

and dignitaries from throughout the world were present.

More than two hundred scholars from throughout the world gathered to present their new research and to discuss issues in the field of Armenian Studies.

The Congress was organized in sections, including "History," "Archaeology and Ethnography," "Linguistics," "Literature," "Art and Architecture," "Problems of the Armenian Genocide," "Problems of Armenian Identity," "Armenian Philosophical," "Socio-Political Thought: Achievements and Modern Problems of Development," and the "Armenian Church and Armenian Studies."

Fresno was represented by Armenian Studies Program Director Barlow Der Mugrdchian who co-chaired the second session of the section on "Problems of the Armenian Genocide," and who also delivered a paper in the third session on "The Theme of the Genocide in 20th Century Armenian-American Literature."

A plenary session closed the Congress, which had last been held in 2003.

KARABAGH, FROM PAGE 3

Karabagh should be administered by Soviet Armenia. Ultimately however, Nagorno-Karabagh was granted the status of an autonomous region, but under the jurisdiction of Soviet Azerbaijan. The process of how this decision was made was the focus of Dr. Saparov's presentation.

The declarations of independence of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan in 1918 did not mention territorial boundaries, which led to disputes over the regions of Zangezur, Nakhichevan, and Karabagh. By 1921, the Russian communists had taken over Armenia, Georgia,

and Azerbaijan. The Bolsheviks saw regions such as Karabagh as a means to communicate with Kemalist Turkey, which whom the Bolsheviks shared common enemies.

Dr. Saparov concluded that the Soviets were trying to resolve, rather than to manipulate, further conflicts. He identified a pattern that emerged in the disputed regions— whoever first controlled these territories would retain control under Soviet rule. The effect of these decisions made nearly one hundred years ago, are still a source for discussion today.

Dr. Ara Sanjian's presentation sought to give an overview of how Armenians viewed the Karabagh issue in the Diasporan press, between the years 1923-1985. Due to illness Dr. Sanjian was not present at the lecture, but his paper was read by Dr. Sergio La Porta of the Armenian Studies Program.

In his paper Dr. Sanjian compared how the issue of Karabagh was raised in the newspapers of the three major Armenian political parties: the Dashnaks, the Hunchaks, and the Ramgavars. There were numerous polemics in the press on how demands for return of

FAMILY HISTORY, FROM PAGE 5

that even the drops of water from the ceiling could not find their way to the floor." In his memoir, *Under Stalin's Sun: Reflections, 1920-1945*, tr. by J. Tashjian (Los Angeles, 1981), Suren notes that while he was a legitimate political prisoner, the majority of the prisoners were simply villagers, incarcerated for petty things like stealing a loaf of bread or owning more cows or goats than the government allowed.

In July 1931 Suren was transported from Medekh to a prison in Tashkent, Uzbekistan and in the spring of 1932 to yet another prison in Moscow, where he spent most of the time in solitary confinement, before being loaded on a crowded train with other prisoners to a concentration camp in Siberia in October, 1933...

April 17, 1935, was a rest day at the camp, when many of the guards traveled to nearby villages to shop and mingle with Russian women. "If you're really planning on escaping, this is the time. You'll never have a better chance than this," Suren told himself. Here his autobiography becomes scant, but what I do know is that he managed to arrive

in America...

When my father was young and his family had immigrated to Chicago, my grandfather offered his advice, learned from his terrible five years as a Gulag prisoner. "Son, never get involved in politics," he would say, holding up the hand where two of his fingertips had been severed during his torturous interrogations, "Look what it did for me."

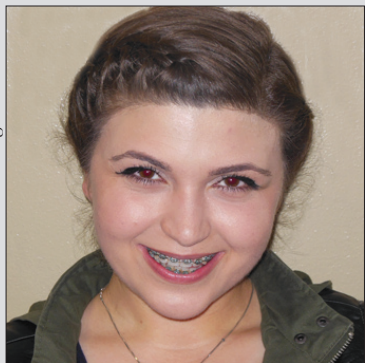


Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Tatevik Hovhannisyan

My grandfather Asatur was born in 1909. This is part of his story.

"I remember being happy in Kars in a complete family, with two brothers, a sister, and parents that I loved so much, but one day it all ended. Mom would

always say, 'As long as you are healthy that is all I want.' But this little happiness didn't last long for us. We were separated by a devastating event that took place in 1915.

I was six years old. I didn't know who we were running from, why we were going away from our own town... As the hours passed I realized that I lost my mom and my two brothers. I sat on a rock and began to cry, because I didn't know what else to do. The sadness of losing my mother was stronger than the hunger I was feeling. I hadn't eaten for six days. Out of nowhere, two very nice looking people came up to me and started speaking with me. I couldn't understand them as they were speaking in Russian. All I remember was that the man grabbed me and took me to their big house. The lady, realizing that I couldn't understand her, began to speak with me in my language and I felt a relief. But I didn't want her to be my new mother! Was this the end? Was I never going to see my mom and brothers? I didn't want to believe that. Every night I would remember our house in Kars and my family that I lost...

Months passed. One day my stepmom and I were in the carriage,

going to Alexandropol (today's Gyumri), when suddenly I heard a lady scream, 'Asatur!' I turned around. It was my mother!"



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdchian

Vartanush Mesropyan

My grandmother! She is sitting in the living room alone, with her legs crossed. She has a very serious face and keeps looking around. She feels weak and has fear inside her eyes. She tries to whisper to herself but her voice is coming out loud. At times she does not know where she is and does not understand how her life flew by so quickly.

She continues speaking: "Where is my husband? Where is my father? Where is my mother? And where is my older son? I miss them." She begins crying

Eench Ga Chga

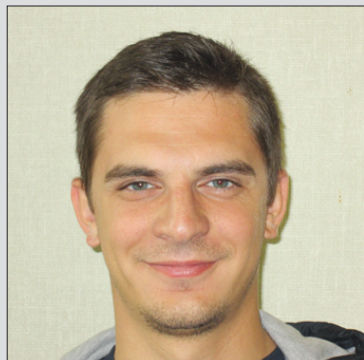
DENISE ALTOUNIAN • STAFF WRITER

As the holiday season approaches, what are you most looking forward to?



Menas Arisian
Junior
Major: Business

I really look forward to spending more time with family and friends. I am also excited and thankful for the good Armenian meals that will be provided.

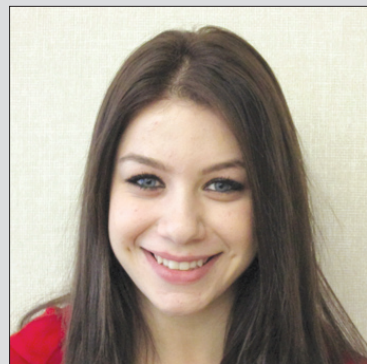


Vachagan Vardanyan
Senior
Major: Computer Science

What I look forward to most is the company of friends and family. Being so busy all the time, it's nice to relax for a couple of days

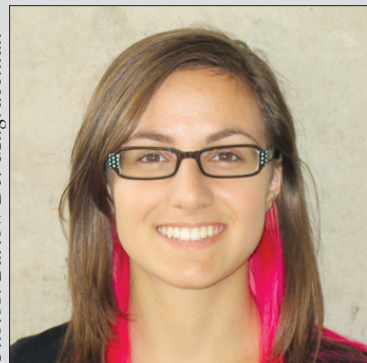
Karabagh should be pursued. In the 1960's, the issue of "Karabagh and 'internal lands' was raised in the Armenian press, especially in Lebanon.

and appreciate those you have around you.



Elena Sarmazian
Sophomore
Major: Psychology

As the holiday season approaches I'm really looking forward to all the "holiday" food that we are going to eat, like *blinchiks*, *khash*, *t'u*, and so on.



Sona Soghomonian
Sophomore
Major: Chemistry

I am most looking forward to eating and spending time with family.

Dr. Sanjian's research delineated the various themes in the Armenian press regarding

SEE **KARABAGH** PAGE 7

and I hear her wiping her tears and nose.

"I do not know where I was born exactly nor do I remember who my mother was," she starts her story. "When I was six months old she passed away. With no choice, my father gave away my twin to his friend and me to his other friend... At the age of nineteen I met my thirty-one year old husband who had come to Bulgaria from Greece to find work. During the same year, I became pregnant and my husband and I decided to move to Armenia..."

On May 11, 1965, my husband died from a severe infection and I was left with my 19, 14, and 8 year old children...

For many years I have struggled, I have seen so many deaths and have buried so many dead. The most painful time was when I buried my own husband. He was not able to see his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren grow up. I am still growing strong as an 86 year old woman. I have three proud children, seven grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren. I am living a happy life with my loved ones. I pray to God for good health, peace, and happiness.

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SAS, FROM PAGE 1

Among these were several panels sponsored by the SAS, including a panel on “Recapturing Armenian Ottomanism Through a Man of Tanzimat: The Ottoman Life of Bishop Mkrtich Khrimian,” organized by Dzovinar Derderian (University of Michigan); a panel on “Armenian Art and Architecture in 18th-20th Century Constantinople: A Re-Evaluation,” organized by Prof. Der Mugrdechian; a roundtable on “New Strategies and Methodologies for Teaching of Modern Armenian Language,” organized by Ani Kasparian (University of Michigan) and chaired by Prof. Der Mugrdechian; and a roundtable on “Challenging Entrenched Categories: Re-Thinking Approaches to Armenian Literature,” organized by Tamar Boyadjian, with the participation of Dr. La Porta.

Other panels were held with scholars participating from many

different parts of the world.

Reports of ongoing projects and also future plans were presented at the SAS Annual Membership meeting. In 2014 SAS will mark its 40th anniversary with an Armenian Studies Conference in Yerevan, to be held jointly with the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia.

A new SAS website has been launched, societyforarmenianstudies.com, with many new features for members, including a directory and access to past issues of the SAS Newsletter. Those who are interested in joining the SAS can go to the website and apply for membership. There are several categories of membership including supporting.

The SAS Secretariat is based in the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno States and inquiries about membership can also be made by email at barlowd@csufresno.edu or by phone at 559-278-2669.

KARABAGH, FROM PAGE 6

the Karabagh issue, including arguments that “these lands were historically Armenian,” and “Soviet Armenia should have full republican sovereignty over these issues.” It was interesting to see the various shades of responses by the newspapers.

The attitudes of the three Armenian political parties differed towards the communist

authorities and even changed as circumstances changed within Soviet Armenia. However, in the period 1953-1985, none of the articles dealing with the ‘internal lands’ foresaw the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Dr. Sanjian’s presentation gave a new perspective to the Karabagh issue as seen through the eyes of Diasporan Armenians and the press.

DAVID OF SASSOUN, FROM PAGE 1

Fresno State, *David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic*, edited by former Armenian Studies Program Director Dr. Dickran Kouymjian and Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, current Director of the Program, chronicling the study of Armenia’s most famous folk epic.

The formal launch was marked by opening statements by Dr. Vida Samiian, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities and director of The Press, followed by a presentation on “The Armenian Epic” by Prof. Der Mugrdechian. Closing remarks were made by Prof. Sergio La Porta, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies at Fresno State.

David of Sassoun includes essays by Charles Dowsett, Dickran Kouymjian, Aram Ter-Ghevondian, Earl R. Anderson,

Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, Frédéric Feydit, Arpiné Khatchadourian, Aram Tolegian, Vahé Oshagan, and an original poem by Ashough Hovani, all of whom were originally present at a scholarly symposium held at Fresno State. The symposium had been organized by Dr. Kouymjian a year after he established the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, and he saw it as Fresno’s contribution to the centennial of its first publication.

“David of Sassoun” has become a symbol of Armenian pride and identity and UNESCO has included the epic on its list of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2012, giving it international recognition.

Originally the epic was told orally and was passed down from generation to generation

SEE DAVID OF SASSOUN PAGE 8

The Armenian Studies Program also has a complete DVD collection of films from the Armenian Film Foundation, donated by the late Dr. J. Michael Hagopian.

The cataloging of the Program collection also reveals the significant support it has received from the community over the years. The collection will be available soon for use in the Armenian Studies Program office.

The Program is appreciative of all those who have donated and contributed to the extensive collection. Because of those donations and the new cataloging project, the Armenian Studies Program is giving back to a community that has long supported it.

PARTAMIAN, FROM PAGE 3

surgery department at Harvard; and Raymond Vahan Damadian, inventor of the MRI machine.

In the second half of the lecture, Partamian described and displayed photos from his self-funded, cross-country travels in 2009 and 2012 to document 21st century Armenian landmarks consistent with one of his three criteria: they had to depict the Armenian alphabet, the Armenian tricolor, and/or Armenian words or names in public view.

Of the 568 American locations, many included street signs, memorials dedicated to war heroes or Genocide victims, Armenian churches including Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church in Fresno, trees dedicated to Genocide victims, cross-stones or *khachkars*, and much more.

Partamian also briefly mentioned his travels to Europe and the sites he visited in Switzerland, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and Greece.

In all, Partamian has documented over 1,100 identifiable Armenian locations

in eleven countries. Partamian’s ultimate goal is to create an “Armenian Empire” with pictures to preserve our language, culture, and heritage, and to ensure that the Armenian culture lasts another 100 years.

As controversial as it may sound, he aims to spread knowledge of Armenian culture by making it “sexier” and more marketable. Furthermore, he is working on apps for the iPhone and iPad to provide the public all of the information contained in his books and future discoveries for free.

Overall, the lecture was intriguing and eye opening. Many in the audience were pleasantly surprised by all the contributions by American-Armenians and actively asked questions and purchased Partamian’s books to learn more.

Partamian’s focus on Armenian culture and identity and his emphasis on positive contributions by American-Armenians inspired the audience to further research the topics and pay closer attention to their surroundings.

ASP CATALOG, FROM PAGE 1

The catalog is now available through a link on the Armenian Studies Program website, <http://www.fresnostate.edu/artshum/armenianstudies/> or by going directly to the Library World website <http://opac.libraryworld.com/opac/home>.

Fascinating print and visual/audiovisual collections have come to light during the process of cataloging. La Porta was especially fascinated with a couple of rare finds. “The Arpiar Markarian Collection offers a wonderful window onto the varied tastes and interests of a bibliophile, ranging from 19th c. Armenian translations of French classics, to Armenian poetry published in Buenos Aires, to an almanac produced in New York in 1925, detailing Armenian businesses across the country. The collection also contains a pristine copy of *Navasart*, an illustrated literary journal edited by Daniel Varoujan and Hagop Siruni in Constantinople in 1914, on the eve of World War I. Only a handful of libraries in the world own this publication,” stated La Porta. She was very excited to find these one-of-a-kind resources, now available for the public to utilize.

In addition to these uncommon finds, other large individual collections are being cataloged, among these a broad assortment

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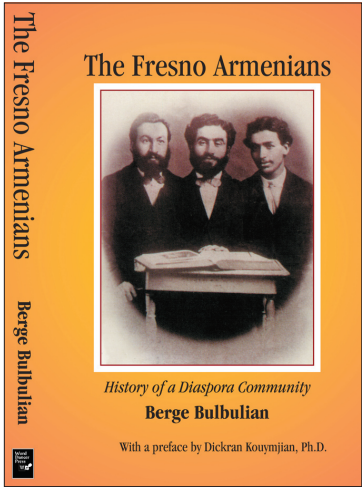
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Bulbulian’s *The Fresno Armenians* Republished as eBook by The Press

STAFF REPORT



The Fresno Armenians

Berge Bulbulian’s *The Fresno Armenians* has been republished as an eBook by The Press at California State University, Fresno, in cooperation with the Armenian Studies Program.

The Fresno Armenians explores the fascinating journey of Armenians to the San Joaquin Valley and how the community thrived.

Available at The Press website <http://www.thepressatsufresno.org/> or by calling 559-278-3056.

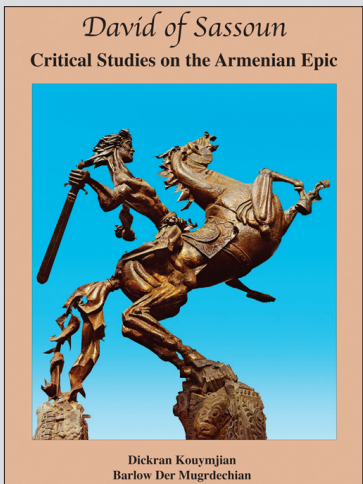
DAVID OF SASSOUN, FROM PAGE 7

for around a millennium before finally being transcribed and published by ethnographer and priest Garegin Srvantztians in 1874. He transcribed the epic, as told by a villager named Krpo from the region of Moush.

Scholars believe that the core of the epic hearkens back to when the Arabs ruled Armenia between the 8th and 10th centuries, although the enigma of the epic is that no Armenian literary sources allude to it before 1874, and only in isolated Arab and Portuguese sources is it briefly mentioned. This may have been because for centuries the most educated and literate of Armenian society were priests whose priority was the Bible, while “David of Sassoun” was told and retold by the rural common folk.

In 1939, the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic published a “1000th Anniversary Jubilee Edition” of the epic. Scholars edited 65 known variants of the epic and integrated them into one official comprehensive edition with all four cycles, putting the epic into modern Eastern Armenian as well. This has presented its own challenges, as the epic was usually recited in the dialect of the village where it was told. In the variants collected by scholars, the number of times each cycle was repeated varied, and only one version actually included all four cycles.

Professor Sergio La Porta concluded the event with comments on the epic, noting



that the Genocide had caused the disruption in the transmission of the epic to future generations. He also noted that the 1939 Jubilee Edition created a single, canonized version of the epic, whereas many new variants have recently emerged that have yet to be fully evaluated. He called for future research on the epic and stated that *David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic* is a valuable addition to the understanding of the epic and how it has been received.

All of these topics and more are covered in depth in Der Mugrdchian’s and Kouymjian’s new book, available from The Press at Fresno State.

David of Sassoun is a welcome addition to the personal library for anyone interested in this indispensable piece of Armenian heritage and culture.

For information about how to order the book contact The Press through their website <http://www.thepressatsufresno.org/> or by calling 559-278-3056.

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HYE SHARZHOOM, FROM PAGE 1

Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program, was the advisor and moving force behind the founding of the paper.

Hye Sharzhoom has developed throughout the years to become a cherished publication where audiences on campus, in the community, and around the world learn of the dynamic activities of the Armenian Studies Program and Armenian Students Organization and read about the issues important to Armenian college students.

The paper you are reading today would not have been as successful if not for the tremendous dedication and effort put forth by advisors, editors, and writers over the last thirty-five years and without the constant support of its readers.

When *Hye Sharzhoom* was launched as an ethnic supplement

to Fresno State’s *The Collegian* in 1979, Dr. Kouymjian understood the immense value of developing a student newspaper. “It was important that Armenian students have a vehicle of expression, a paper of information and commentary, not just for the four or five hundred Armenians on

campus but for the entire student body and for the Armenian community at large.”

Thirty-five years since its initial publication, *Hye Sharzhoom* continues to stay true to its original purpose, evolving to further enhance the reading experience and its impact.

Hye Sharzhoom’s 35th anniversary!
April 2014

We ask our readers to provide us with their comments and feedback about *Hye Sharzhoom* over the years.

Please email your input to mvardanyan@mail.fresnostate.edu.

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