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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

ASO Goes On San Francisco Outing

ASO members enjoyed a one-day outing to San Francisco on Saturday, April 12.

Photo: ASP Archive

ASO Armenian Genocide Commemoration, April 24.

RUZAN ORKUYAN
STAFF WRITER

The Fresno State Armenian Students Organization (ASO) has blossomed into a thriving Armenian community characterized by a fierce love of Armenian culture and an undying passion for bringing justice to the victims and survivors of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. On no day is this clearer than on April 24, the fateful day marking the start of the atrocities and massacres committed by the Turkish government during World War I.

As has become a long-standing tradition, members of the ASO and Armenian Studies Program organized commemorative events during the week of April 22-24. 2014 marks the 99th anniversary of the Genocide, and sadly, the perpetrators remain in denial of the horrific events.

Spurred by ignorance, the Genocide has remained unpunished for 99 years; therefore, the ASO organizers believe the acts of the Genocide must be remembered and understood by all so that they will never happen again.

The Fresno State Armenian Students Organization (ASO) and Armenian Studies Program, to highlight some of the new documentation on Bitlis and to show never before seen photographs of Bitlis. This initiative is a way to build bridges between people.

Exhibit on “Armenians of Bitlis” in Madden Library

For many Armenians in Fresno, the city of Bitlis, located today in the Republic of Turkey, holds a special place in their hearts. Not only was it the birthplace of the family of noted Fresno native William Saroyan, but also the birthplace to many of the Armenians who settled in Fresno in the years following the Armenian Genocide.

Much of this legacy has almost vanished in the nearly hundred years following the Genocide of 1915. However, in recent months there has been an attempt to shed light on the history of the city and the impact Armenians had there. Ara Sarafian, director of the Gomidas Institute in London, England, returned to Fresno State to discuss his most recent endeavor, a "bridge-building initiative" which was started in June 2013 to build contacts between Armenians, Turks, and Kurds.

On Sunday, March 30, Fresno State students, faculty, and the Armenian Genocide Committee worked tirelessly for three months to create events aimed at raising awareness about the Genocide and honoring the victims and survivors. Long hours of research, planning, advertisement, and community outreach culminated in a week of educational and interactive events that captivated students and community members alike. In honor of the 99th anniversary, members of the Committee gathered 99 facts about the Armenian Genocide and displayed them on trees around campus.

The week began with a memorable event to raise awareness of crimes against humanity. “Genocides Around the World” was organized by ASO and USU Productions, to educate students about the horrific events occurring worldwide and to poignantly illustrate the similarities between these tragedies.

Left to right: JCAST Dean Charles Boyer, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Fresno State President Dr. Joseph Castro, First Lady Mrs. Mary Castro, Sergio La Porta, and Dean Vida Samilian of the College of Arts & Humanities.

ASO Armenian Genocide Commemoration, April 24.

Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Ara Sarafian of the Gomidas Institute, and Dr. Sergio La Porta.

The powerful narration and at times heart wrenching stories left a lasting impression on the audience. A special moment arises each year for the faculty, students, and supporters of the Armenian Studies Program. It is an occasion that serves as a reunion, a celebration, and a reflection on the successes of the Program. The Armenian Studies Program Banquet took place on Sunday, March 2, 2014 at the Fort Washington Golf & Country Club in Fresno. The Armenian Studies Program has much to take pride in. It has succeeded in not only offering Armenian Studies Program 26th Annual Banquet

26th Annual Armenian Studies Program Banquet

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


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Sergio La Porta, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies
Dickran Kouymjian, Berberian Professor Emeritus of Armenian Studies

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There are many ways to support the Armenian Studies Program.
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Regardless of how a donation is made, each gift impacts the lives of students and faculty at Fresno State.

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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.

Armenian Numismatic Society, Pico Rivera, California, for a collection of books related to the study of Armenian coinage.


Harry Demirgian, D.D.S., Scottsdale, Arizona, for the CD with an oral history of Marie Demirgian (1908-1998). The interview was conducted in 1993 with Demirgian, who was a Genocide survivor.


Dr. Kay Mouradian, Los Angeles, California, for the gift of her books and a video: My Mother’s Voice (Balboa Press, 2013), 225pp., in English: A Gift in the Sunlight: An Armenian Story (London: Taderon Press, 2005), 2nd edition, 208pp., in English; and My Mother’s Voice, a video directed by Mark Friedman and based on the novel of the same name.

Ara Sarafian, Gomidas Institute, London, for copies of the following books: Hagop Oshagan, Remnants: The Way of the Womb, Book I (Gomidas Institute, 2014, second edition, tr. by G. M. Goshgarian, 207pp., in English; Thomas K. Mugerditchian, The Dyarbakir Massacres and Kurdish Atrocities (Gomidas Institute, 2013) 76pp., in English; Ara Sarafian, Talat Pasha’s Report on the Armenian Genocide, 1917 (Gomidas Institute, 2011), 70pp., in English; Sonia Megheblian, An Armenian Odyssey (Gomidas Institute, 2012), 151pp., in English; and Lewis Einstein, Inside Constantinople: A Diplomat’s Diary During the Dardanelles Expedition, April-September, 1915 (Gomidas Institute and Armenian Studies Program, Fresno State, 2014), 177pp., in English.
Dr. Russell Discusses Work of Poet Kara Darvish

Hye Sharzhoom

Suren Oganessian

STAFF WRITER

Armenian literary history is full of gifted poets and storytellers, from Agathangelos and Moses Khorenatsi, to Sayat Nova and Hovhannes Toumanian, but few broke as many rules and experimented with language, as did the early 20th century poet Kara Darvish.

On Thursday, March 20, Dr. James R. Russell introduced this obscure but nonetheless important figure in Armenian literature to an audience at Fresno State through his lecture “An Armenian Eccentric: The Life and Times of Kara Darvish.” The lecture was part of the Spring Lecture Series sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program with the support of the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Dr. Russell is Mashtots Professor of Armenian Studies at Harvard University and though having specialized in ancient and medieval Armenian literature, he has recently turned his focus to modern Western Armenian literature, which brought him to the work of Kara Darvish.

Kara Darvish was born Hakop Genjian, and lived most of his life in Tiflis, Georgia, once a cultural hub for Armenians. His pen name comes from the Turkish word for “black” and the Persian word for “poor bard.” He was heavily inspired by the futurist movement, a popular philosophy in the first half of the 20th century which advocated breaking traditions and looking to the future, and he associated with other Armenian poets such as Yeghishe Charents.

Kara Darvish also wrote novels, proverbs, and manifestos, but was most famous for his poems, which he would often print on postcards and sell in front of cinemas and cafes. These poems would sometimes be nonsensical, containing words both Armenian and made-up, occasionally pasted together from several different languages. They would sometimes evoke imagery from Armenian mythology and occultism. The letters were not always read from left to right, and were of varying sizes and fonts, or sometimes faced sideways. The point was to paint a picture of the chaotic nature of real life with the words.

Kara Darvish enjoyed causing scandal as well by thumbing his nose at traditional Armenian literature, publicly criticizing Sayat Nova and even Moses Khorenatsi, which was tantamount to blasphemy in many literary circles, akin to a British writer denouncing Shakespeare. He would argue, why reprint and pay so much attention to thousand-year-old books when there are talented writers today starring on the streets? Kara Darvish was of the opinion that every new writer should bring something new to the table, and not only rely on traditional methods to get their points across. His subversive, eccentric opinions were attacked by the establishment.

Wearing a coat during the 1917 Russian Revolution as the dawn of a new era of enlightenment, Kara Darvish and his fellow futurists fell out of favor when the Bolsheviks came to power, and his work fell into obscurity, perhaps because people at the time were much more concerned with the here and now than the future. He died in 1930, with his work forgotten until more recent times. Kara Darvish’s poems represent an important part of modern Armenian literary history, and he is one of the few writers to treat the Armenian language as organic, versatile, and evolving, rather than rigid and unchanged. Perhaps his work can still teach us something in the modern day.

New Hye Sharzhoom Website-hyesharzhoom.com

while the majorities of population, with few Turks in the region. The Turkish government has deliberately argued that Armenians and Kurds were not in the majority.

One interesting outcome of the initiative was the immense support and interest in the project shown by the Kurdish population of Bitlis. They were very supportive of unearthing Armenian history in Turkey. Many Kurdish youth acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and want to know what role they can play in moving forward. Several Kurdish politicians and prominent attorneys attended the debut of the exhibit in Istanbul, according to Sarafian, as many as one in six Kurds in these areas may have Armenian ancestors.

This exhibit was a significant step forward in the future of Armenian Studies in Turkey. It is important that projects like these continue to record history before it is lost. Many Armenian landmarks still exist in Turkey and any attempt to falsify history can never eliminate local memories. The Armenian issue is far from closed and it is up to the new generation to continue scholarship in the area.
Congratulations Graduating Seniors and Armenian Studies Minors for 2013-2014

Miranda Bulbulian Ferrell
Anthropology
Minor in Armenian Studies
What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?
Part of the reason I wanted to attend Fresno State was because I had heard there was a good Armenian Studies Program. I wanted to learn more about my culture and my family’s history, so I decided to make it my Minor.
What do you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?
I loved learning about the architecture and the churches, as well as the ancient art. I valued everything I learned in all of my classes, and it has made me want to do my own research outside of class.
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
I can’t decide which class was my favorite—I loved them all. I really loved the language course—it was so much fun to learn the alphabet and conversation starters. I also really loved the Arts of Armenia class, in addition to the Armenian Diaspora class that Professor Bournoutian taught a few years ago.
What are your plans after graduation?
After graduation, I plan on going back to school to get a nursing degree, then after that, I would like to pursue a Masters in Medical Anthropology.
Andrew Esquerra
Business Administration, Marketing Option
Minor in Armenian Studies
Co-Curricular Leadership Certificate, Fall 2011 Cohort
What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?
I was encouraged to take an Armenian Studies course to gain the knowledge of Armenian language, art, culture, and history that the classes have to offer. I was excited to participate in these classes for the opportunity to connect with other students who had an interest in the subject matter, and broaden my own horizons beyond simply my major courses. The opportunity to work towards my career in my classes is very beneficial, but the opportunity to learn more about myself, my family, and my culture, is fulfilling and has motivated me to continue being active in the Armenian Studies Program.
What do you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?
I must value the knowledge that I have grasped from my experience in the Armenian Studies Program, whether through the classes, the Hye Sharzhoom, or the Armenian Students Organization. Also appreciated is the recognition and support that I have received from the community members, both indirectly, with the generous contributions to the department, and directly, for providing positive feedback for the Hye Sharzhoom.
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
My favorite Armenian Studies event would have to be the Annual Banquet, where one can see a majority of the students, educators, and supporters that make the department what it is today.
What are your plans after graduation?
After graduation, I plan to travel this coming summer, and then look for work in my field of study. I would also look forward to getting involved in the community, my church, and a few organizations.
Denise Altounian
Political Science
Minor in Armenian Studies
What encouraged you to take an Armenian Studies course?
I was always looking for opportunities to get more connected to my culture and I thought that taking an Armenian Studies course would be the perfect introduction.
What do you value most from your experiences in the Armenian Studies Program?
I am forever grateful to the Armenian Studies Program for allowing me the opportunity to fully embrace my Armenian culture. I have learned so much more than I ever imagined in the past four years. Thanks to this program I can now read and write Armenian, I traveled to Armenia, attended countless fascinating lectures and met the most amazing people. The Armenian community as a whole really adopted me as one of their own and made my time in Fresno one that I will never forget.
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
By far my favorite experience was traveling to Armenia in the summer of 2011, with the Armenian Studies Program. I never dreamed I would have the opportunity to go to Armenia, let alone see so many historic sites in one trip. It was the experience of a lifetime to see the country that my dad grew up in and left so many years ago.
What are your plans after graduation?
I will be taking the next school year off to prepare for the LSAT exam and apply to law school. My goal is to be enrolled in a law school in Southern California by Fall 2015.
Photos:
Cary Edmonson, Campus Photographer
Thomas Ramirez, Best Shots Photo Booth
Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Suren Oganesian
Creative Writing
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
My favorite event will probably be an upcoming trip to Armenia with the Armenian Studies Program, but if I had to choose one that already happened, I would probably say taking Dr. Sona Haroutyunian’s class on “The Armenian Genocide in Literature, Cinema, and Translation.” I learned a lot and enjoyed it.
What are your plans after graduation?
I would like to get a job in the writing field, and become a published author.

Jessica Boujikian
Political Science
Smittcamp Honors College
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
My favorite Armenian Studies event(s) was the lecture and film series put on through the Armenian Studies Program. My personal favorite was seeing a documentary entitled “Grandma’s Tattoos” by Suzanne Khardalian. I particularly enjoyed this film because I felt an immediate connection to the main character’s struggle to understand the mysteries and pain of her family’s past, and her resentment over the world’s self-inflicted ignorance over the events that transpired in and around Armenia in 1915.
What are your plans after graduation?
I plan on attending law school at UC Hastings to pursue a Juris Doctor, with an emphasis in either Constitutional or International Law.
Noel Lenard
Graphic Design
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
The ASO Genocide Commemoration Week activities have always been the highlight of the year. We come together to put on events that entertain and educate, all the while growing closer as friends, students, and Armenians.
What are your plans after graduation?
I plan on working at a design firm or ad agency in Fresno.

Kristina Koroyan
Kinesiology-Exercise Therapy
Smittcamp Honors College
What was your favorite Armenian Studies class, activity, or event?
My favorite course was Arts of Armenia that I took my first semester as a Fresno State student with Professor Der Mugrdechian. This was my first course in Armenian Studies and it prepared me immensely for Armenia 120T, our excursion to Armenia, which was an amazing experience.
What are your plans after graduation?
I would like to study abroad in Greece over the summer and begin a doctoral program in Physical Therapy in August. I have been accepted to Idaho State University and am very excited to become a healthcare professional in this growing field.

Ruzan Orkusyan
Biology
Smittcamp Honors College
What was your favorite Armenian studies class, activity, or event?
My favorite event/activity was the International Coffee Hour presentation allowed me to learn more about my history. It was challenging, but also thrilling preparing a dance number for the International Culture Night, I had never done something similar and it was exciting to share our hard work with our friends and classmates. Both events allowed me not only to learn more about my culture, but also to share my love of Armenia and Armenian traditions with the Fresno State community, and I am so happy that I was able to participate in both.
What are your plans after graduation?
I will be attending the UC Irvine School of Medicine for my M.D. degree. I plan on returning to Fresno after my training to use my multicultural and multilingual background to help the underserved and diverse communities of Fresno.
Dr. Hovannisian Speaks on “Armenians of Kayseri”

Suren Oganian

Staff Writer

Cappadocia, a region in central Anatolia just west of the Anti-Taurus mountains, has a marvelous, mountainous landscape dominated by tall rock formations called “fairy chimneys,” and featuring ancient churches built into solid rock and in secret caves, from a time when Christianity was frowned upon by Islamic Arab rulers. Unsurprisingly given its proximity to historic Armenia just to the east, Cappadocia has played a key role in Armenia’s history from ancient to modern times.

The latest in Professor Richard G. Hovannisian’s ongoing series of books detailing regions of historic Armenia, Armenian Kesaria/Kayseri and Cappadocia, charts the history of the region as it relates to its once-thriving Armenian population. A frequent visitor to Fresno State, Dr. Hovannisian returned on Friday, April 25, to present a talk “Armenian Kayseri,” as part of the Armenians Studies Program Spring Lecture Series, with is supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

In a broad ranging presentation Dr. Hovannisian discussed the history of the Armenians in the region, and also brought the lecture to life with video clips. In Diyarbakir, one of the last Armenians in the city, Digen (Mrs.) Baydzar was interviewed by Dr. Hovannisian’s daughter Ani. Baydzar instantly became an audience favorite with her warm personality and modest smile. An interesting clip on the Hamshen, an Armenian speaking ethnic group, who live in the region of Northwestern Turkey, was also shown.

Dr. Hovannisian presented historic photos from the many Armenian inhabited villages that were in the region of Kayseri. Evkere, Talas, Topmar, Chomakli, and Erevaj among others. Through the photos the audience learned of Armenian customs, of the beautiful Armenian churches, and of the many educational institutions that once existed.

Cappadocia was a long-time cultural and political contact zone between East and West, and like the Armenian Hamshen region to the east, passed hands between empires several times in its history, with fleeting moments of independence in between. It was briefly a vassal state of the Great Empire, making it a buffer state between Armenia and Rome. But for much of its history it served as one of the easternmost provinces of Rome and later the Byzantine empire, depending on byzantine people of the Byzantine empire. Armenians were nomadic from the 4th century. At different points in its history the Byzantine government, looking to weaken the power of the many Armenian tribes in the east, either enticed or forced entire Armenian communities to move west. They would do so again after the Ottoman Turks took over the area in the 16th century, the challenges for Cappadocian Armenians were the same as about the Armenians living anywhere else, being Christians in a Muslim-dominated empire. Armenians would maintain a presence in the region up until 1915, when the Armenians of this region were either deported or massacred in the Armenian Genocide.

Professor Hovannisian, Professor Emeritus of Modern Armenian History at UCLA, first began researching the Cappadocia region in 1997, when initiating a series of eighteen conferences on “Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces,” areas from which the Armenians were eliminated during the 1915 Genocide.

Armenian Kayseri is the twelfth volume published in the series. After three years of gathering information, editing and indexing, the newest volume on Cappadocia has now been published, and this past weekend a special hooked chapter in Armenian history is finally being given some much overdue attention.

Babayan-Trifonov Keyboard Concert Enchants Audience

Tatevik Hovhannisyan

Staff Writer

It is a rare occasion when two talented virtuosos unite for a concert—the result was a great performance and a night of incredible melody.

Friday, March 7, 2014 was one of those moments, when a sold-out audience appreciated the performance with a standing ovation, not wanting to let the musicians go, and demanding not one, but two encores.

The Philip Lorenz Memorial Keyboard Concerts and the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State organized the concert that featured the exceptional pianists Sergei Babayan and his protégé Daniil Trifonov, as part of the 42nd Season of the Keyboard Concert Series.

The concert commenced with the performance of the “Sonata in D Major for four hands” by Wolfgang Mozart, an uplifting and refreshing introduction for what lay in store for the remainder of the evening.

This sonata was written in three movements: Allegro con spirito, Andante and Allegro Molto. It was one of Mozart’s few compositions for two pianos, composed in a galante style that interlocks melodies with amorous cadences.

“Fantasy in F Minor” by Franz Schubert, consisting of four parts: Allegro molto moderato, Largo, Allegretto and Finale, took the listeners to a world of reverie and love.

The sonata, composed in 1828, the last year of Schubert’s life, was dedicated to his student, Karoline Esterhazy, with whom he was in love. The lyrical rhythms were played with great emotion.

A performance of Sergei Prokofiev’s “Romeo and Juliet Suite, Op. 64,” based on the composer’s 1935 ballet, opened the second half of the concert.

The introduction of this suite, which begins in forte then drops to pianissimo, has no thematic content and is intended only to create a dark and intense atmosphere.

Throughout the entire suite, the atmosphere remains consistent as it prepares for the approaching sadness and danger in the scene.

Guest speaker Ara Sarafian, left, with Edward Hagopian.

Ara Sarafian, director of the Gomidas Institute, (London), with the support of the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, was a guest speaker, moderated the event. The United States and the Armenian Genocide Thesis, 1915, presenting new insights of Inside Constantinoiple, spoke at Fresno State on Tuesday, April 22, 2014, as part of Armenia. The 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

The audience, which included the recently appointed Fresno State President Joseph Castro and First Lady Mrs. Mary Castro, witnessed the focus and explosiveness of the artists, who were completely drawn into the compositions, feeling every note they performed.

The pleasant evening approached its end with the last composition of the program, “Suite No. 2, Op. 17” by Sergei Rachmaninoff, which was followed by a standing ovation and calls for an encore.

Babayan and Trifonov performed the Suite in complete harmony and cooperation, leaving the audience amazed and awed by their technique and professionalism.

Sergei Babayan started his piano journey at the age of six in the Republic of Armenia, continuing his studies in the United States. In 1997, he won the 14th International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow.

“The sold out crowd and most importantly the musicians were phenomenal. I have worked with the Armenian Studies Program for more than twenty years...these are the concerts I always look forward to,” said the Keyboard Concert Artistic Director Andreas Werz.

The Armenian Studies Program has co-sponsored many Keyboard Concert Series artists.

During the concert, Professor Der Mugrdechian was recognized for his work in bringing virtuosos to Fresno State and providing classical music lovers the opportunity to hear the energetic artists.

Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Yerevan Times
students a Minor in Armenian Studies, but has an array of achievements and includes the establishment of the only university-published Armenian student newspaper in the United States. "Hye Sharzhoom is a unique publication that represents our Program and the students of the university and to the community," said Professor Der Mugrdechian. Hye Sharzhoom’s 35th Anniversary was a focal part of the evening’s celebration.

With previous editors and staff members in attendance, the audience enjoyed listening to their recollections, and viewing “Hye Sharzhoom, A Retrospective,” a power point presentation of the newspaper’s cover pages throughout the years.

Editor Vahé Messerlian (1984-1985) stated that Hye Sharzhoom had done an outstanding job of showcasing the successes of the Armenian Studies Program and the Armenian Students Organization, keeping up with current events, and presenting the richness of our culture and heritage.” Former editors Arakel Aghayan (1997-1998) and Tamar Karkazian (2010-2013) also recounted the high points of their tenures as Hye Sharzhoom editors.

The Armenian Studies Program recognized the contribution of nine Hye Sharzhoom editors who were present at the banquet, presenting them each with a plaque and a book, published by the Armenian Series of The Press at Fresno State.

The Armenian Studies Program was honored to have Fresno State President Joseph Castro and First Lady Mary Castro in attendance. Dr. Castro is a first generation college student and a Valley native, and his position as the head of the university “gives a fresh look upon what a university is,” said Dr. Sergio La Porta in his introduction. “It’s not an institution...it’s an organic, dynamic place where people come alive in ways they never thought.”

ASP BANQUET, FROM PAGE 1

As the Armenian Genocide unfolded, the Ottoman government attempted to control the flow of information through censorship. It was the Americans that were able to get the information out to the Bible houses, embassies and the State Department.

Eventually, that provided enough information for the Americans to realize as early as June 1915 that organized massacres was taking place in the Ottoman Empire.

However Americans were not simple bystanders. The U.S. Embassy organized a relief program that raised funds to take care of refugees. What was eventually known as the Near East Relief went on to mount the largest humanitarian intervention program in American history and American dollars helped to save tens of thousands of Armenian lives.

Inside Constantinople, based on Dr. Sergio La Porta’s personal diary, is one of the earliest accounts of the Genocide from an American perspective, even predating Morgenthau’s work. Einstein was a career diplomat stationed in Constantinople during World War I and would serve as an important witness to events leading up to and following April 1915. He was appointed to serve in Constantinople as an intermediary for Allied interests in the region. Einstein began keeping a diary to document the Dardanelles campaign and in the process began recording daily events. His diary gives detailed accounts of the deportations in its earliest stages and the escalation of violence to eventually reach the earliest stages and the escalation of violence to eventually reach.

Einstein’s wishes. He knew the significance of what he documented and wanted to keep its original integrity. This is especially important today as deniers of the Genocide attempt to attack primary sources to cause doubt in calls for recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Just as Lewis Einstein’s account of the Genocide is unfamiliar to many, the American relief effort for the victims of the Genocide is also a little known part of American history. The United States played a unique role as a witness to the Genocide who chose to act. American missionaries in the Ottoman Empire played a crucial role in relaying the information of the atrocities taking place within the empire back to the United States.

Although he is in only his first year as Fresno State President, Dr. Castro is already familiar with and impressed by the Armenian Studies Program and its contribution to Fresno State and the community at large.

“I sense how important the Armenian Studies Program is for the campus, for the community, and for the nation. I would like to compliment everyone who has helped to build this incredible Program.”

President Castro also voiced his support for the Armenian Studies Program and the initiative to construct an Armenian Genocide Memorial on campus, which would make Fresno State the first university to have such a memorial.

“Where else should that be but here at Fresno State,” stated Dr. Castro. The audience was filled with excitement and anticipation as the President outlined his ideas and his vision of the bright future that awaits Fresno State. “In short, I want to work with all of you to make Fresno State the very best university in the world, and that is not only here in the nation,” said President Castro.

The Armenian Studies Program also welcomed Dr. Vida Samian, Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities, who addressed the audience.

The Armenian Studies Program does so much with two faculty members, Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Sergio La Porta, who are amazing, and do the work of ten faculty. Many of you in attendance are the product of our Program. We could not have accomplished what we have with the Program without you.”

ASP BANQUET, PAGE 7

What expectations do you have for the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide?

My expectations are for Armenians and Armenians both. I can only expect with hope for America to finally recognize the Genocide. We have all long awaited this step, being the only barrier for final justice. My expectations for Armenians are to never give up and stand firm regardless of what others say.

What expectations do you have for the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide?

I expect to see a lot of diversity, internet exposure, and personal touches. Genocide is a very sensitive topic that needs to be addressed and taught not only in an informational matter, but on a personal level, with examples that will touch the hearts of others, who in return will also fight for recognition. The internet plays a huge role in our lives today. It is a great tool for exposure and needs to be used tactically to make media about the Genocide go viral all over the news and for the nation. I would like to work with all of you to make Fresno State the first university to have such a Memorial.”

ASP Banquet, May 2014

ASP 26th Annual Banquet Celebrates 35th Anniversary of Hye Sharzhoom Newspaper

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Knarik Kazaryan
Major: Biology

Enench Ga Chga
Major: Psychology

The deaths of over 1.5 million Armenians is unrecognized in many countries around the world today. It is essential to me, for Armenians and non-Armenians alike, to continue disseminating facts of the Genocide, simply so the world may know our history—the struggles our ancestors endured and the sacrifices they made so that we may still call ourselves the first Christian nation, and may still call ourselves Armenians. My hope for the 100th anniversary is to see the Armenian Genocide accepted as a significant historical event.

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Hye Sharzhoom Editors Recall Their Experiences

MARINE YARDANIAN
EDITOR

Hye Sharzhoom celebrates its 35th Anniversary with a look back and interviews with previous editors.

Randy Balolian
Editor: Fall 1985-Spring 1986

How did you become interested in joining the staff of Hye Sharzhoom? Why did you decide to become editor?

I realize that this doesn’t sound very idealized, but the truth is that I became involved in the paper at the urging—or rather through the arm twisting—of my longtime friend Vahe Mesrielian. Because of a heavy course load, I really didn’t want to do it at first. Of course, in looking back, I’m glad that my old buddy did twist my arm a bit. Thanks Vahe.

How did you experience Hye Sharzhoom impact your life?

After graduating from Fresno State, I moved on to UC Davis, where I met some fellow students and I formed an Armenian Students Association there. More recently, my two daughters have attended the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School. Additionally, I’ve served on the school board and even edited some issues of the CKACS newspaper Arekag. Without a doubt, my interest and participation in the Armenian community stems directly from my previous involvement in the Hye Sharzhoom, ASO, and ASP.

What were some lessons you learned by being on the staff?

As with writing in general, I’ve learned to read my stuff over and over again, then have someone else proof it. It’s important to minimize your mistakes, although in the end you have to accept that you’re going to make them no matter what you do. Nobody bats a thousand.

What was your favorite part/best memory from writing for Hye Sharzhoom?

By far, the most memorable times were working with Vahe, Prof. Barlow, and all the other people that contributed to the paper. It was work, too, and yet even when I see our photographer Gary Kazanjian (who is arguably the Hye Sharzhoom’s all-time best photojournalist), he still makes me laugh the way he used to. There is something to be said for working shoulder to shoulder with your friends and comrades. This is what, community is all about. This is what moves Hye Tad forward.

In what ways has Hye Sharzhoom changed since your time as editor?

It’s been a longtime since I was the editor—almost 30 years. Yet I really don’t see that many substantial differences in the overall product—it’s still very much a student newspaper. I suppose that with the advances in computer technology, the paper’s graphics have improved in that time. I’d also imagine that the production of the paper is probably easier now than it was back then. In comparison with today’s computerized programs and templates for newspapers, the way we used to lay out the paper in that gritty Daily Collegian office back in the mid-1980s was akin to setting type for Gutenberg’s press. Present day standards, it was right out of the Middle Ages.

In your opinion, what does it take to be an effective editor?

Effort.

Tamar Karkazian
Editor: Fall 2010-Spring 2013

How did you become interested in joining the staff of Hye Sharzhoom?

When I decided to go to Fresno State, I knew I wanted to be part of the Hye Sharzhoom staff. Growing up, I saw my cousin’s articles, stories and pictures in Hye Sharzhoom and knew that I wanted to do it too.

Why did you decide to become editor?

I really enjoyed writing for the Hye Sharzhoom and when the opportunity came to do more with the newspaper I was glad to.

How did your experience with Hye Sharzhoom impact your life?

The way Hye Sharzhoom impacted my life was by showing me how connected we all are as a culture. Whenever a new issue of Hye Sharzhoom would come out it would be followed by someone’s positive comments. Realizing how far of a reach it had was amazing.

What was your favorite part/best memory from writing for Hye Sharzhoom?

One of my very favorite memories with Hye Sharzhoom was when a group of the writers and I were folding the papers to send internationally. I remember half of the staff had come and we were working as a team to send them out. As we were stuffing the newspapers into envelopes, we started looking at the addresses.

We were amazed at how far our stories traveled, and who our stories were sent to.

I remember our excitement and awe, as a group, as how far our voices traveled through Hye Sharzhoom.


dr. Kay Mouradian

an hour-long “Silent Protest” at noon, the students held informational posters and banners calling for justice and recognition of the Genocide.

The commemoration began at 1:00PM with welcoming remarks by Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program, followed by ASO President Vartush Mesropyan. Students of the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School sang two songs, “Hye Euk Menk” and “Mushetze Mor Enk.” The program also included an emotional and stirring reading of Siamantso’s poem “A Handful of Ash, Home of my Fatherland” by Haverj Stanboulian and Noel Lenard.

Menas Arisan and Tavec Vorhavansikyan then performed “Open Wounds” by R-Mean and their contemporary beat and rapping captivated the audience, particularly the younger students.

Ovsanna and Armen Simonyan bravely shared their family’s stories, recounting the experiences of their grandparents during the Genocide.

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preparedness, and wonderful performances of the students, along with our honorable guest speakers helped make this event appealing to the crowd," stated Vardanyan, "especially to students who prior to the event lacked a good understanding of the Genocide."

Indeed, all the events ran smoothly, in large part due to the efforts of the Committee members and led by ASO president, Vartush Mesropyan, who was prepared to solve any problem that came her way. For all the executives and Committee members it was exciting to see the product of their hard work and dedication.

"Our duty as ASO is to always educate our peers about the Armenian Genocide and make sure they understand the truth and facts about what occurred on April 24," stated Mesropyan.

The commemorative events certainly accomplished this, and for Mesropyan, the greatest part was “seeing all the faculty, students, and community members come together in one place.”

As we approach the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, ASO will continue its activism, educational activities, fight for justice, and commemoration in hopes that one day, the truth will heal our wounds and bring peace to our souls.

Hye Sharzhoom
May 2014

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Hye Sharzhoom is sent without charge to thousands of people throughout the world. Although there is no subscription fee, we urge readers to support our efforts with donations of any amount. This request has assumed a special importance because of increased mailing costs.

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The “Silent Protest” at noon on April 24 at Fresno State.

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claiming “The 24th Day of April 2014 as the 99th Commemoration of the Armenian Genocide, a day known as the Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.” Dr. Sergio La Porta, center front, accepted the Resolution. Left to right: Supervisors Debbie Poochigian, Henry Perea, Andreas Bor-

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