

HYE SHARZHOOM

Armenian Action

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41st Year

March 2020

Vol. 41, No. 3 (149)

Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

Dr. Şekeryan Teaches Course on Armenians in the Ottoman Empire



Dr. Ari Şekeryan

ARSHAK ABELYAN
STAFF WRITER

Shortly before the beginning of the Spring 2020 semester, the Armenian Studies Program announced that Dr. Ari Şekeryan was appointed as the 16th Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies for the Spring 2020 semester at Fresno State. As part of his assignment, Dr. Şekeryan is teaching a three-unit course entitled “Armenians

in the Ottoman Empire after the Genocide,” as well as giving three public lectures.

Dr. Şekeryan’s course examines the aftermath of the Genocide in the Ottoman Empire, analyzing the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey after the First World War. The course started with a survey of the history of the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire from the 19th to the early 20th century, and how changes within the policy of the Empire affected the Armenian population over time, including significant topics such as the Ottoman Tanzimat (Reforms) in the late 19th century, the massacres that took place during Abdul Hamid II’s rule, and the Adana massacres that took place in 1909.

SEE [ŞEKERYAN](#), PAGE 3

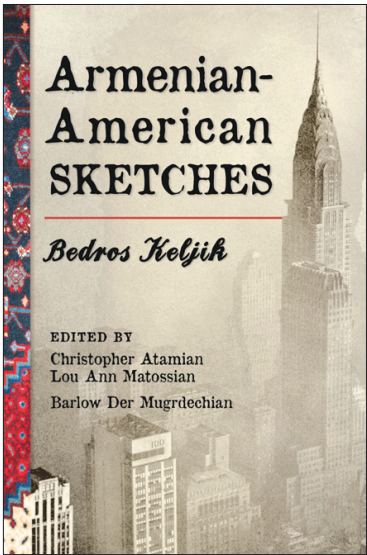
Armenian-American Sketches Published by Armenian Series

STAFF REPORT

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Berberian Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program, announced that Bedros Keljik’s Armenian-American Sketches has been published by the Armenian Series of The Press, at California State University, Fresno.

“Keljik’s stories offer us a glimpse into the soul of the Armenian people, whether in their historic homeland or finding their way in America.” Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

Co-editor Lou Ann Matossian familiarizes the reader to Keljik in her introduction. She discusses how author, activist, and entrepreneur Bedros Arakel Keljik (1874–1959) belongs to the founding generation of



Armenian-American authors, yet his “sketches” of early immigrant life are only now emerging. Keljik was a maternal uncle of Vahan Totovents (author of *Life*

SEE [SKETCHES](#) PAGE 7

House of Hope-Mer Hooys Benefit Concert Draws Large Audience on February 22 at Fresno State

CHRISTINE PAMBUKYAN
STAFF WRITER

House of Hope – Mer Hooys, Inc. is a non-profit organization formed in December 2008 with the purpose of aiding young, disadvantaged girls in Armenia by providing housing, a family environment, education, life and job skills training, family rehabilitation, and other forms of aid. Since it opened its doors to fifteen teenaged girls in October 2012, House of Hope has helped many girls graduate from public school; marry into loving, healthy families and start their own families; and attend university in the medical, graphic arts, computer, business, and STEM fields; instead of falling victim to a dangerous life on the streets, vulnerable to human trafficking and abuse. Today, the House of Hope is home to eighteen girls, ages nine to fifteen.

On Saturday, February 22, 2020, at 7:00PM, pianists Dr. Michael Krikorian; violinist, Armen Derkevorkian; cellist,



Left to right: Armen Derkevorkian, violin, Michael Krikorian at the piano, and Garik Terzian, cellist, performing at the House of Hope-Mer Hooys Benefit Concert.

Garik Terzian; and vocalists, Lauren Movsesian, Colette Compton, and Clarise Compton, with accompanist Derrick Lowe, performed at a Benefit Concert for the House of Hope – Mer Hooys Program of Yerevan, Armenia in the Concert Hall of Fresno State. The concert, co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program of

Fresno State, began with a short and humorous masterclass by Los Angeles-based pianist, composer, and music teacher, Dr. Michael Krikorian.

Dr. Krikorian described the cultural significance, meanings, themes, and similarities of Arno

SEE [HOUSE OF HOPE](#), PAGE 7

Leon S. Peters Foundation Continues Support of the Armenian Studies Program with \$30,000 Donation

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced that the Leon S. Peters Foundation has made a generous donation of \$30,000 to the Armenian Studies

Program at Fresno State for 2020. This continues the generosity of the Peters Foundation which has directly supported the Armenian Studies Program since 2013.

Leon S. Peters was born in Fowler, California, and graduated from Fowler High School as

valedictorian of his class in 1923. His family, of Armenian descent, started farming in the San Joaquin Valley. The eldest of five children, he experienced the loss of his mother when he was just 17 years old. He worked daily

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The “Three Ages of Saroyan” Return to Home Museum

STAFF REPORT

The Renaissance Cultural & Intellectual Foundation, a non-profit organization founded by Artur Janibekyan, is pleased to announce that the Saroyan House Museum, in cooperation with “The Interactive World” company, has recreated William Saroyan’s presence in the Museum. Visitors can now view an updated Saroyan Hologram, which includes the “Three Ages of Saroyan.”

Months of research were conducted to present the most accurate portrayal of Saroyan. A photograph taken by Dan Weiner in 1953 served as a basis for recreating the interior of the Hologram room. Archival photos and both personal and interview recordings were used for the recreation of the characters.

Archival recordings of Saroyan




Actor Avet Barseghyan, left, portraying the youthful Saroyan, while Shant Hovnanian is the older Saroyan, right.


were utilized to create a longer and more exciting Hologram content that also represents Saroyan at three different stages of life. The visitor will now have

the opportunity to see Saroyan first as a telegraph messenger who was wandering in the streets

SEE [SAROYAN](#) PAGE 2



Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.



cordially invites you to its

32nd Annual Banquet

honoring
the Leon S. Peters Foundation
and recognizing
Arnold & Dianne Gazarian
on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of
**the Haig & Isabel Berberian
Endowed Chair in Armenian Studies**
and recognizing graduating seniors receiving an
Armenian Studies Minor and ASP Scholarship Recipients

Sunday, March 22, 2020

Reception-5:00PM • Dinner-6:00PM
Fort Washington Country Club
10272 N. Millbrook • Fresno, California

\$50 per person • Table Sponsors \$2,000 • \$25 Fresno State students
Please respond by Thursday, March 12, 2020

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 Institute, London, United Kingdom, for a copy of *I Ask You, Ladies and Gentlemen*, by Leon Z. Surmelian (London: Armenian Institute, 2019), 271pp., in English. This is a new edition of Surmelian’s 1945 autobiography tracing his life from his birth in Trebizond to life in America. It includes the William Saroyan introduction from the first edition.

Dr. Azat Bozoyan, Yerevan, Armenia, for a copy of *Cilician Armenia in the Perceptions of Adjacent Entities* (Historical-Philological Essays), by A. A. Bozoyan (editor), V. A. Ter-Ghevondian, R. M. Shukurov, and G. G. Danielyan, and translated from Armenian by A. Martirosyan (Yerevan, “Gitutyun” Publishing House of the NAS RA, 2019), 282pp., in English.

Vatche Ghazarian, Monterey, California, for a gift of his book *Gregory of Tatev: Book of Questions* (Mayreni Publishing, 2019), 316pp., in English, translated by Dajad Davidian and Vatche Ghazarian, with an Introduction by Dr. Sergio La Porta. The book is a translation of the *Book of Questions* by the famous Armenian church figure of the 14th century, St. Gregory of Tatev.

Dr. Leo Keoshian, Palo Alto, for Armenian themed books.

Don and Agnes Kisner, Sanger, California, for Armenian books from the collection of John and Helen Jarahian.

Dr. Victoria A. Malko, Fresno, for a copy of *Women and the Holodomor Genocide: Victims, Survivors, Perpetrators* (Fresno, CA: The Press at California State University, Fresno, 2019), edited by Victoria Malko, 144pp., in English. The book is a collection of articles which explores victims as well as perpetrators, in Soviet Ukraine in 1939. While the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust have been well documented, the Holodomor has become a topic of study only recently.

Robert Sarkisian, Severn, MD, for a copy of *Legacy of an Author: Posthumous Poems*, by Helene Pilibosian (Watertown, MA: Ohan Press: 2019), 360pp., in English. A book of poems by the late Helene Pilibosian, including poems based on events in her life and on her travels.

Arno Yeretzian, Glendale, CA, for a copy of *Endless Crossings: Reflections on Armenian Art and Culture in Los Angeles*, by Arpi Sarafian (Los Angeles: Tekeyan Cultural Association, 2019), 235pp., in English. A set of essays spanning a more than thirty-year career of Dr. Arpi Sarafian, who explores the complexities of the immigrant experience.

SAROYAN, FROM PAGE 1

of Fresno—dreaming about becoming a writer. Twelve-year-old Karen Margarian plays this part. The young, successful, and ambitious playwright at the peak of his fame is portrayed by songwriter, TV host, and actor Avet Barseghyan.

Finally, Shant S. Hovnanian, with 45 years of experience in real-estate, development, and philanthropy, portrays Fresno’s favorite bicycle rider—the infamous writer with gentle eyes and walrus mustache.

The William Saroyan House

Museum would like to express its deepest gratitude to the actors for their hard work and dedication and to “The Interactive World” company for its wonderful cooperation.

The William Saroyan House Museum is open Thursday-Saturdays.

For hours of operation and to make a reservation, please check the website www.saroyanhouse.com.

For more information visit Facebook @saroyanhouse or Instagram @saroyanhouse.

PETERS, FROM PAGE 1

on his father’s ranch, helped raise the other children and also did custom tractor work in what little spare time he had.

Some years later after the loss of his parents, Peters went to work as a salesman for Valley Foundry in 1929. His industrious and enterprising nature soon caught the attention of the manager of Valley Foundry and Machine Works. He worked his way up to manager and eventually purchased the company.

Peters went on to lead the company through change and expansion until Valley Foundry and Machine Works became a world recognized supplier of equipment to the agricultural industry.

With business and financial success clearly in his grasp, Peters, along with his wife Alice,

devoted much time and money to various community activities. In fact, he was often heard to say, “The community has been good to me, and I want to give something back to it.”

Leon S. Peters was respected as a businessman, civic leader, and philanthropist who lived and worked according to the highest ethical standards. He cherished his community and considered its well-being his personal responsibility.

Since the early 1980s, the Peters family has provided numerous gifts to Fresno State including the Pete P. Peters Endowment in Armenian Studies, the President’s Fund, Ag One Foundation, the Henry Madden Library, the Bulldog Foundation, the Leon S. Peters Honors Scholars, and the Business Associates Program.

California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program

Fall 2020 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1A-Elementary Armenian (Class #72231)	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #72797)	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D3				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #73126)	3	9:00A-09:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastrpcs Arm Cult (Class #73211)	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	H. Ohanessian
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108A-Arm History I (Class #76021)	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
• ArmS 120T-Hist Ottom Emp (Class #76010)	3	2:00P-3:15P	TuTh	Kazan Visiting Prof.

Get a Minor in Armenian Studies.

For more information call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.

Check on requirements for the Minor in Armenian Studies in the current catalog. <http://www.fresnostate.edu/catalog/subjects/armenian-studies/armenia-mn.html>

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Give Your Way
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.

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

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Dr. Şekeryan on Post-World War I Armenian Community of Istanbul



Left to right: Dr. Hagop Ohanessian, Stephen Gonzalez, Dustin Vartanian, Matthew Mugerdechian, Dr. Ari Şekeryan, Ariana Garabedian, Farrah Vartanian, and David Safrastian.

SOSSE BALOIAN
STAFF WRITER

Photo: Andrew Hagopian

Fresno State’s Armenian Studies Program welcomed its 16th Henry Khanzadian Kazan Visiting Professor, Dr. Ari Şekeryan, to kick off his three-part lecture series with “An Untold Story of Survival: the Armenian Community in Istanbul During the Armistice Years (1918-1923),” on Tuesday, February 7, 2020. Dr. Şekeryan’s presentation enlightened the audience with insight on the political and social climate of this Ottoman Armenian community. Dr. Şekeryan sets himself apart from other Armenian historians by choosing to study a largely unexamined topic—how the Armenians in Istanbul preserved their identity under Ottoman rule.

Dr. Şekeryan is a graduate from universities in Turkey and England, where he received his PhD in the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Oxford. Most recently he was a research fellow at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr. Şekeryan is currently working on a book entitled, *An Untold Story of Survival: The Armenians and the Fall of Ottomans*, based on his dissertation about Armenians living in Istanbul and Anatolia after the Great War.

Dr. Şekeryan utilizes newspaper articles from collections of the Armenian and Ottoman Turkish press in Istanbul and Anatolia to interpret significant turning points in the political stance of this Ottoman Armenian community. His presentation highlighted documents that exemplified the transformation of the political position of the Armenian community during the Armistice years.

Dr. Şekeryan explained that in the beginning of 1918, “Ottomanism” was promoted as a tactic to unify all citizens in the Turkish Empire regardless of ethnicity or religion. He suggested that the Ottoman government used this unifying force in response to their major territorial losses from World War I. The government was trying to convince its Armenian and Greek communities not to seek independence. Not knowing that the fall of the Ottoman

Empire was looming overhead, newspapers from the Armenian community in Istanbul welcomed the call for Ottoman brotherhood. Dr. Şekeryan provided an excerpt from an Armenian publication titled *Vercheen Loor* (“Latest News”), which encouraged Armenians to “enthusiastically shake the brotherly hand” of the Ottomans, effectively reinforcing this idea of unification.

However, Ottomanism was not able to save the Empire from its downfall. By the end of October 1918, after the Armistice of Mudros signaled the defeat of the Ottomans, the political stance of the Armenian community dramatically shifted from pro-Ottoman brotherhood to support for Armenian Independence. Armenians in the Diaspora and in the Ottoman Empire rallied around Woodrow Wilson’s “Fourteen Points,” which promoted the principle of self-determination of political minorities who were oppressed by pre-World War I empires.

As participants of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, Ottoman Armenian and Armenian Republic representatives took the opportunity to attend the Conference and to announce the foundation of the Cabinet of United Armenia.

After witnessing the lack of aid from the Great Powers to atrocities occurring in the Armenian Republic and in Cilicia, the political stance of the Ottoman Armenian community once again shifted to protect their existence. They realized that the prospects for Armenia’s reestablishment after a Soviet takeover were very slight.

As Dr. Şekeryan argues, these Armenians lived in fortunate circumstances because they did not face deportation and were able to run businesses through the years after Armistice. In order to maintain peace in their community, they ceased all calls for independence.

The political realignment of these Ottoman Armenians brought forward the foundation of the Turkish-Armenian Ascent Association which aimed to reestablish the friendship between Armenia and Turkey.

Dr. Şekeryan provided a unique example from a speech by

Sato Moughalian Presents on “David Ohannessian and the Armenian Ceramics of Jerusalem”

CLAIRE KASAIAN
STAFF WRITER

On Tuesday, January 28, author Sato Moughalian gave a presentation titled, “David Ohannessian and the Armenian Ceramics of Jerusalem.” Moughalian, who lives in New York City and wrote the book *Feast of Ashes: The Life and Art of David Ohannessian*, is the principal flutist for the American Modern Ensemble and the Gotham Chamber Opera. David Ohannessian, who was Moughalian’s grandfather, specialized in the production of Kütahya style ceramics. Ohannessian’s ceramics became famous worldwide and can still be seen on buildings today in Jerusalem. Records about the Armenian Kütahya style ceramics can be found as early as the middle 15th century.

Ohannessian was born in 1884 in Mouradchai, and he learned through the oral stories his family members told that he was a descendent of men who traveled to Kütahya to learn and make Kütahya style ceramics. At age 17 he moved to Kütahya to apprentice in ceramic making.

In the 18th century, Kütahya ceramists started taking on the overflow orders from Iznik. They would make different ceramics items such as coffee pots and cups, plates, bowls, and more. In the 18th century, Kütahya Christian ceramics became popular too, for example, there would be plates created with different Christian decorations.

In the late 19th century, Ottoman leaders commissioned Armenian Kütahya ceramicists to repair mosques damaged by earthquakes, burning summers, and blizzards.

According to Moughalian,

Harutiu Mosdijian, president of the association, during the 1923 Lausanne Conference. Mosdijian called for a mending of the relationship between the two nations. Mosdijian claimed that all Armenians wished for tensions

The course continues with an explanation of the reasons why the Ottoman Empire entered World War I and what caused the Armenian Genocide. Toward the conclusion of the course, Dr. Şekeryan will discuss the postwar agreements and how the Armenian survivors continued to live in the newly established Turkish Republic.

“I think it is important to learn about the violence in the Ottoman Empire against the Armenians during the Genocide of 1915. But it is important to study the before and aftermath of the violence, particularly the causes and the consequences of the Genocide,” said Dr. Şekeryan.

“In our course we will focus particularly on the post-Genocide period, because the historiography of the Armenian Genocide tends to only focus on the war years of



Photo: Andrew Hagopian

Author Sato Moughalian, third from left, with students and faculty after her presentation on David Ohannessian.

at the turn of the century, Ohannessian became famous making such repairs. In 1913-1914, Ohannessian was one of the Armenian ceramicists commissioned to decorate the tomb of the Sultan who later died in 1918. Ohannessian became so popular during this time that Sir Mark Sykes commissioned him to decorate the living room in Sykes’ England mansion, Sledmore House, with his hand-made tiles.

During the Armenian Genocide, Ohannessian and his family were deported, and he almost died of typhus. However he and most of his family miraculously survived, reaching Aleppo in 1916. In 1918, Jerusalem was in search of tile makers to repair holy sites around the city. However, there was no local tile-making industry in Jerusalem. Sykes visited Jerusalem in 1918 and mentioned Ohannessian, who was currently living in Aleppo as a refugee. Ohannessian was brought immediately to Jerusalem and arrived at the end of 1918. In 1919 Ohanessian when back to Kütahya to get supplies and

to subside because the Turks were like their “big brothers.”

Dr. Şekeryan’s “Untold Story” left an impact on the audience because his examination provided an uncommon but noteworthy narrative of Armenian survival

1914-1918. One must also study the significance of the Armistice years of 1918-1923.”

The course also focuses on building a strong general understanding of the violence in the Ottoman Empire such as the Hamidian Massacres in the 19th century and the Adana Massacre of 1909. Dr. Şekeryan believes that it is beneficial for students to have a general background, because if students are to enter a graduate program within this field, it will be important for them to have knowledge of late Ottoman Armenian history.

The methods that Dr. Şekeryan uses in teaching his course are based on using power-point presentations, short documentary-style videos, in-class discussions based on assigned readings, and through supplemental course readings.

In response to a question about why he chose to do research on

brought other ceramicists and artists back to Jerusalem with him.

When Ohannessian and his fellow artists returned to Jerusalem, they opened a tile workshop called, “Dome of the Rock Tiles Studio.” Orphaned children were taught how to paint tiles and the tiles were used to fix Holy Sites as well as to be sold. Ohannessian also made tiles used for street signs in the Old City of Jerusalem.

Ohannessian became world famous once again, when in 1933, he traveled to Chicago to exhibit his work at the Chicago World’s Fair. He maintained the traditional techniques of making the tiles, including using a wood burning kiln and hand painting the tiles made from natural ingredients. Ohannessian’s tiles still decorate buildings today in Jerusalem. Armenian ceramicists such as the Balian and the Karakashians are still active in Jerusalem today.

Moughalian’s presentation provided a vivid glimpse into her grandfather’s extraordinary life and to the contributions he made to the Kütahya Armenian style of ceramics.

under Ottoman rule. He shared examples of how the Ottoman Armenians altered organizational tactics repeatedly as a way to adapt to the changing political climate, while still preserving and protecting their identity.

this topic, Dr. Şekeryan touched on his great-grandfather’s genocide story. Şekeryan’s great-grandfather’s wife and three children were all taken away during the Genocide, when he was returning to his home village. He never heard from them again, however, he was adopted by a Circassian family and given the name Kara Duran. He later escaped and returned to his village in Sepastia and married the only remaining Armenian woman, who was also a survivor.

“When I learned this story in 2010, I decided to do research on the survivors of the Genocide, because my great-grandfather and great-grandmother were also survivors” said Dr. Şekeryan. “What happened after 1915? Perhaps three-fourths of the Armenian population was killed, but there were also survivors. How

Students and Faculty Reflect on ASP Armenia Summer Study Trip 2019



Photo: Barlow Der Mugrdechian

Left to right: Kristina Melikyan, Amanda Esquivel, Mitchel Statler, Mari Danielyan, David Safrastian, Suzanna Ekmekchyan, Matthew Mugrdechian, Chandler Baladjanian, Andrew Hagopian, Liana Gasparyan, Stephen Gonzalez, Lucas Der Mugrdechian, Kara Statler, and Arthur Khatchtrian in front of the St. Gregory the Illuminator Cathedral in Yerevan, Armenia.

DUSTIN VARTANIAN STAFF WRITER

Students and faculty who participated in the Armenia Summer Study Trip 2019 presented their experience of traveling through Armenia on Thursday, November 19, 2019 in the Fresno State University Business Center.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, who led the Summer Study Trip, spoke about the past experiences of Fresno State students who had traveled to Armenia. He used a PowerPoint to highlight his past Armenia trips and explained how there had been many changes in Armenia since his first trip in 1988. This was the 9th Summer Study trip through Fresno State, and nearly ninety students have benefitted from the extraordinary program. Prof. Der Mugrdechian then went on to explain the

highlights of the 2019 Summer Study Trip.

After Prof. Der Mugrdechian spoke, Andrew Hagopian presented a video he had prepared about the trip. The video highlighted several places the group traveled to during their two-week adventure, including several different churches and museums. Armenian music played in the background of the video, reflecting the various moods of the trip. When the students were full of smiles, the music had an up-beat traditional style to it. When the video showed the insides of a church, hymns of the Armenian church was played. Likewise, when the video focused on the Armenian Genocide Monument, the music became somber. Altogether, the video gave great insight on what occurred during the trip.

Students participants on the trip had an opportunity to share

their personal experiences. Suzy Ekmekchyan stated that she had been waiting her entire life to make the trip to Armenia and shared what a wonderful time she had visiting the homeland. Stephen Gonzalez explained that he had been to Armenia three times and even spent a whole semester there studying at the American University of Armenia. Gonzalez said he plans on visiting Armenia again in the near future.

Even though the Summer Study 2019 Trip to Armenia is over, students who participated understand the importance of sharing their experiences with others in the community.

“I think it is important to speak about the trip, because it shows what the Program does for its students outside of a classroom setting,” said Kara Statler. “It encourages other students to get involved and to go on other trips and study-abroad opportunities Fresno State has to offer.”

“The significance of presenting our trip to Armenia is to encourage those who have never been to Armenia to see how it made us filled with joy and how we formed numerous positive memories,” said David Safrastian, another student participant. He also explained that it is important to inform others that when they travel to Armenia that it is not all about sightseeing but rather being “spiritually connected and taking part in the Armenian lifestyle.”

The presentation on the trip displayed the joy and importance of visiting the motherland. Traveling to Armenia created a connection between the students and put together everything they had been learning in Armenian Studies Program courses at Fresno State. The trip created memories that will last a lifetime.



Photo: Andrew Hagopian

Left to right: David Safrastian, Ariana Garabedian, Kara Statler, Dustin Vartanian, Andrew Hagopian, Matthew Mugrdechian, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Stephen Gonzalez, Suzanna Ekmekchyan, Tatiana Samouie, Rachel Kaptryan, and Amanda Esquivel.

KARA STATLER

Armenia was a life changing experience for me. I have been to Armenia twice, both times with the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

The first trip I went on in 2017 with Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Dr. Hagop Ohanessian was amazing. I was so grateful to be able to see the rich culture that our people have.

Entering the Cathedral of Holy Etchmiadzin, lighting a candle at every church, and climbing Amberd were just some of the amazing experiences I had with people who have become lifelong friends. I also celebrated my birthday and it was just an amazing time in my life, and I knew I wanted to go again.

After returning, I got even more involved in Armenian Studies. I became President of the Armenian Students Organization and started to fully pursue my Minor in Armenian Studies. When

Professor Der Mugrdechian and Dr. Sergio La Porta announced the 2019 Armenian Summer Study, I knew it would be the perfect opportunity to experience my favorite place in the world again.

This time I went with my younger brother, Mitchel, as well. We went all over the country together. It not only got us more familiar with our culture and heritage, it made us closer as well. I made more amazing friendships with a whole new group of people and saw Armenian in a different light.

The Armenia trips were just life changing and I truly thank the Armenian Studies Program for making trips like these possible.

A special thanks to my Uncle Walter Karabian, Trustee of the George Ignatius Foundation, for their continued donations to *Hye Sharzhoom* and to the Armenian Studies Program, which makes possible the trips to Armenia and makes them so memorable.

ASP Awarded Cal Humanities Grant on Armenian-American Musical Heritage

STAFF REPORT

The Armenian Studies Program was recently awarded a California Humanities grant of nearly \$5,000 for “Amplifying Community: Recording the History of the San Joaquin Valley Armenian Music Production,” which is dedicated to recovering the history of Armenian-American music production in the San Joaquin Valley during the first half of the 20th century. Drawing upon the reminiscences and expertise of local musicians, “Armenian-American Musical Heritage of the San Joaquin Valley” will provide a forum for the community to contribute their own recollections, contextualizing and bringing to life the little-studied early musicians, recording labels, and venues in California’s San Joaquin Valley.

The Armenian Studies Program will be holding the “Armenian-American Musical Heritage of the San Joaquin Valley,” event on February 29, 2020, in the University Business Center on the Fresno State campus.

The event will have two segments, the first, from 1:00-



Photo: Andrew Hagopian

Left to right: Dr. Yektan Türkyilmaz, a consultant on the grant, and oud-master Richard Hagopian.

3:00PM, where participants will bring historic photographs, sheet music, promotional materials, and ephemera relating to Armenian music production for scanning. The digitized files will be added to the Armenian Studies Program Music Archive which will eventually be available to the public.

From 3:30-5:00PM, oud master Richard Hagopian and Dr. Yektan Türkyilmaz will have a discussion about the Armenian Music of the San Joaquin Valley, which will include a performance

of traditional Armenian music by Hagopian.

This project was made possible with support from California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Visit www.calhum.org.

After a highly competitive process, California Humanities announced that \$397,496 in awards to 37 new projects through the final round of 2019 and Humanities for All Quick Grant and Humanities for All Project Grant programs. The

20 Humanities for All Quick Grants, totaling \$98,239, include a range of locally-initiated public humanities projects, from a teen-focused writing workshop series that will share speculative writing and reading techniques and help catalyze supportive and creative teen communities in the San Diego area, to a month-long presentation of multimedia arts celebrating Black empowerment and possibility in San Luis Obispo for Black History Month.

For more information about

the presentation please contact the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669, visit our website at www.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies, or visit our Facebook page at @ArmenianStudiesFresnoState.



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Lisbon, 1949: Mr. Saroyan Checks In, But Does He Check Out?



Photo: Courtesy Jonathan Conlin

Gulbenkian with one of his beloved cats, in his suite at the Hotel Aviz, Lisbon, c. 1952.

DR. JONATHAN CONLIN
SPECIAL TO HYE SHARZHOOM

Author of the definitive biography of Mr Five Per Cent, Dr. Jonathan Conlin reflects on a fabled meeting between the oil magnate and philanthropist Calouste Gulbenkian and William Saroyan.

I should begin with a confession: I did not read Saroyan's accounts of meeting Gulbenkian until April 2019, several months *after* my biography was published. This was not the result of ignorance. At several points during my five years of research into the Armenian maecenas-superman several people had referred me to that late collection of autobiographical essays: *Letters from 74 rue Taitbout or Don't Go But If You Must Say Hello to Everybody* (1968). In an essay in that volume entitled simply 'Calouste Gulbenkian' Saroyan describes getting to know the reclusive fellow Armenian during a stay in Lisbon in 1949. The essay refers in passing to an earlier novella, "The Assyrian," published in a 1950 collection of the same name, in which a thinly-disguised Gulbenkian also makes an appearance, albeit as an Arab/Assyrian named "Curti Urumiya." I read them belatedly and somewhat shamefully, during a visit to Fresno State's Armenian Studies Program.

The idea of Saroyan and Gulbenkian meeting in 1949 seemed unlikely. Saroyan certainly did pass through Lisbon in May 1949, a pivotal point in his personal life and career. As Harry Keyishian has observed, around this time Saroyan's writing "took on a darker hue...he faced up to the unhappy human facts of failure, betrayal, and irretrievable loss." Lisbon and the neighbouring resort of Estoril provided a fitting

setting for troubled reflection. Their reputation as glamorous bolt-holes for refugees, spies and exiles had been burnished to a shine by the Second World War, when Lisbon became popularly known as "Casablanca II." The ideal place for an Armenian-American bird to perch, therefore, hovering and hawing between the New World and the Old, past and future. Gulbenkian, the fabulously-wealthy Armenian recluse ensconced at the opulent Hotel Aviz offered the ideal father confessor. And Saroyan had much to confess: his marriage to Carol Marcus had broken down, and he was facing the prospect of separation from his two beloved children.

Did Saroyan check into the Aviz? Was he introduced to Gulbenkian by the hotel manager? Did the pair establish what Saroyan calls "a personal connection" over successive lunches and dinners in the hotel's restaurant, between long stints at the roulette tables of Estoril? The short answer is "almost certainly not." Gulbenkian had been resident at the Aviz since 1942. By 1949 his love of privacy would have been well-known to the hotel's staff, who were well paid to keep strangers away. Should they ever fail in their duties, the feared political police were on hand, equally incentivized to protect "Mr Five Per Cent" from unwanted attention. The Aviz was a fortress. The stories' contention that an Armenian visitor would be brought to Gulbenkian's attention, simply by dint of being Armenian, is implausible. If the many self-described "cousins" besieging Gulbenkian in these years did not breach the cordon, it is unlikely Saroyan did.

Nor would Saroyan's literary reputation have served as *laissez-passer*. Gulbenkian was uninterested in literature. Though he was corresponding with the renowned French poet Alexis Leger (known by his *nom de plume*

Saint-Jean Perse), Gulbenkian had got to know Leger back in the 1930s, in the latter's capacity as a senior diplomat at the French Foreign Ministry. As their correspondence (since published) demonstrates, Leger was careful not to bore Gulbenkian by referring to his literary activities. The 'Gulbenkian' of the two pieces displays several traits which we know Gulbenkian did not have: Gulbenkian did not hail from Bitlis, did not speak Arabic. Decades of stern letters to his son Nubar betray a deep-seated hatred of gambling. The idea of Gulbenkian offering to help Saroyan out with any gambling debts is fantastical.

Even the language Saroyan uses in describing his purported relationship with Gulbenkian ("a personal connection") smacks of a hail-fellow-well-met approach to interpersonal relations profoundly alien to Gulbenkian's manner. This was not a man to be taken by storm. As Sir Kenneth Clark observed in his own memoirs, Gulbenkian was stiff, formal, wont to speak "as one potentate to another." Records for this period of Gulbenkian's life are extensive, yet no correspondence from Saroyan survives in the Gulbenkian archives in Lisbon. All that I could find was a copy of a French translation of "The Assyrian" with the relevant passages highlighted in red pencil. Gulbenkian (or a member of his entourage) did read Saroyan's account of this meeting in translation, therefore. But there is no evidence to suggest that the meeting actually happened.

That is very far from saying that these pieces are without interest. On the contrary, they reveal a lot about Saroyan's Armenianness, as well as public perceptions of "Mr Five Per Cent" in Gulbenkian's final years, when he became celebrated as the world's richest man. Even if Saroyan's version of checking in to the Aviz doesn't check out, therefore, that does not lessen the

importance of "The Assyrian" and "Calouste Gulbenkian." What, then, can we learn about both men from Saroyan's account of a meeting that never happened?

Gulbenkian's fortune had been built by an eye for detail, profound suspicion of human motivations and relentless pursuit of profit. Challenging material for Saroyan. As Saroyan notes "I have always believed that money ought not to go to a few lucky people in the world as long as there is poverty of any kind among the majority of the people." Gulbenkian would have snorted at that "lucky"; his fortune had been built on hard work. Saroyan's 'Gulbenkian' takes a stoical view of his own fortune. When he raises the possibility that the Middle East will fall under the sway of the Communist bloc, leading to the confiscation of his famous share of Middle East oil production, 'Gulbenkian's' reaction is supine: "Oh no, if it happens, I shall not mind at all...I might find time to concern myself more with art." Gulbenkian certainly did display a softer side in his final years in Lisbon, and was fond of describing himself as "a philosopher." This side was only shown to a handful of intimates, however, and certainly did not extend to this degree of easy come-easy go.

'Gulbenkian' is thus a projection of Saroyan's own persona. Saroyan takes comfort from the conceit that big business is built on "luck," just another form of gambling. It serves to cut the richest man in the world down to size. So does the idea of Gulbenkian as fellow Armenian exile. "In a sense, we were both homeless, we had no geographical country of our own as we had once had and as we had ever since *wanted* to have, excepting the very small portion of what was once our country, which had become a part of Soviet Russia in 1921." Whether Saroyan actually viewed the Republic of Armenia as the true home of Armenians

is debatable: he often presents Armenia as a space Armenians carry with them, in diaspora.

Despite having ample means to assist the fledgling sovereign national home back in 1919, Gulbenkian had never shown much interest in a "geographical country of our own." Like Saroyan, he found much of "patriotic" discourse of Dashnak and Hnchak wearisome: it was best for Armenian refugees to make new lives for themselves abroad, rather than hanker for "return" to a "geographical country" of which few if any of them had

personal experience. Saroyan is therefore closer to the mark when addresses "Gulbenkian" and himself as people who "simply did not belong to a geographical and political country that was our own. We lived and worked here and there, but it was known that you were Armenian and that I was Armenian, and at lunch we acknowledged to each other instantly that we were. We spoke our language, and enjoyed doing so."

As Leger's letters to the real Gulbenkian show, Saroyan was not the only author to appreciate the opportunity Gulbenkian afforded to project their own sense of exile and then wallow in it. Leger was living in exile in Washington, where he had served during the war as unofficial ambassador for a France of the mind, a France very different from the puppet state of Pétain's Vichy. Living off his wits, Leger, like Saroyan, probably took comfort from the idea of having so much in common with a man of fabled wealth, a man who might become a patron. While Saroyan looked to Armenia as the lost home he and Gulbenkian held in common, for Leger it was Les Enclos, Gulbenkian's private estate in Normandy – an estate which Leger wrote about extensively, yet never visited.

The bulk of Saroyan's account, the tid-bits about "Gulbenkian's" diet and relations with hotel staff, were already the stuff of public record, and hence do not reveal much. One has only to read *Life* magazine's 1950 profile to find the same facts rehearsed, albeit in a less flattering manner. At the end of the day it was not Gulbenkian's diet which fascinated Saroyan, but a certain idea of Gulbenkian. Gulbenkian as father-confessor and provider, who succeeded where Saroyan's own father had failed, a glamorous Armenian with an international fame.

In the 1950s many Armenians looked at Gulbenkian and saw a "token Armenian": someone who had repeatedly failed to follow the philanthropic and political script, not only in 1919, but in his roles as Ottoman Turkish diplomat (1909-1914), as president of the AGBU (1930-1932), and, finally, as founder of the great Gulbenkian foundation, which many Armenians felt ought to have done more for Armenia. But when Saroyan looked at Gulbenkian he saw something rather different. He saw himself, the true Armenian.

Jonathan Conlin teaches history at the University of Southampton, UK. His biography of Gulbenkian, entitled Mr Five Per Cent: the Many Lives of Calouste Gulbenkian, World's Richest Man was published in English by Profile Books in January 2019. A Portuguese edition has also been published, and further editions in Turkish (Can Yayinlari) and Russian and Eastern Armenian (Edit Print) are in preparation. He can be reached at j.conlin@soton.ac.uk



Gulbenkian at his Normandy estate, Les Enclos, c. 1949.

American University of Armenia President Dr. Markides in Fresno



Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Provost Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval, Fresno State President Dr. Joseph Castro, Dr. Karin Markides, and Dr. Lawrence H. Pitts, Chair of the AUA Board of Directors, at Fresno State on January 17.

“All Things Armenian” Radio Hour on Multicultural 1600AM



Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian and Rev. Nerses Balabanian.

Photo: ASP Archive

DUSTIN VARTANIAN
STAFF REPORTER

Take the time to be informed about the Armenian Community every Sunday afternoon, from 2:00-3:00PM, with Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian on the radio show “All Things Armenian,” airing on Multicultural 1600AM. Learn about breaking news, music, and stories happening right now throughout the world. Feel the connection between yourself and Armenians throughout the world. “All Things Armenian” continues to air every Sunday afternoon since its first show in September of 2019. The Program has interviewed guests such as Dr. Bedross Der Matossian, President of the Society for Armenian Studies; Dr. Ari Şekeryan, Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies; Fresno State Provost Dr. Saúl Jiménez-Sandoval; author Sato Moughalian, and many other interesting guests.

“All Things Armenian” keeps its audience updated on news happening in the local community and around the world. For example, one of the major news stories in the last few months was the passage of House Resolution 296, relating to U. S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide. This was discussed during Episode 3 with local Congressman Jim Costa. The conversation included Costa’s insight into the political discussions leading up to passage

of the House Resolution.

Another interview, focusing on the growth of the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School with Principal Curtis Shamlin, was also insightful. Principal Shamlin described the accomplishments of the Community School and its bright future.

“All Things Armenian” has also covered the House of Hope-Mer Hooys program in Armenia with special guest Hon. Adrienne L. Krikorian, who discussed the history and success stories of the program.

Along with the news and stories of the Armenian community, Professor Der Mugrdechian incorporates Armenian music into the breaks of each show. Examples are music by the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra, Charles Aznavour, Djivan Gasparyan, and Richard Hagopian. In addition, one of the episodes featured live music and commentary from Andrew Hagopian, who performed on the oud and discussed the history of the instrument. “All Things Armenian” airs on Multicultural 1600AM Sunday afternoons from 2:00-3:00PM. The program is live-streamed and also archived on Multicultural Radio’s website: <https://www.multicultural1600am.com/> or can be found on SoundCloud, <https://soundcloud.com/discover>, by typing All Things Armenian in the search bar.

Number of Armenian Studies Minors Growing

SOSSE BALOIAN
STAFF WRITER

The Armenian Studies Program Minor at Fresno State requires students to complete six to seven courses in Armenian language, art, culture, literature, and history. In the Fall of 2019 more than 30 students, an all-time high, have registered to complete their Minor in Armenian Studies.



Matthew Mugrdechian
Kinesiology-Physical Education

Why have you chosen to pursue a Minor in Armenian Studies?

I am pursuing a Minor because I am an Armenian and would like to learn more about my heritage.

What Armenian Studies class or classes have you enjoyed most and why?

I have enjoyed taking all of the Armenian and Armenian Studies courses. They are all very informative and fun to learn about, but my favorite experience was traveling to Armenia in the summer of 2019. This trip was organized by the Armenian Studies Program and fulfilled my Armenian Studies 120T course requirement.

How do you hope to apply this Minor in your relations with the broader Armenian community?

I hope to speak better Armenian and gain better knowledge about Armenian relations so that I can partake in conversations about modern day issues and events.



Violeta Agabekyan
Recreational Administration -
Outdoor Recreation

Who or what influenced you to Minor in Armenian Studies? Why is it important to you?

I was interested in joining the Armenian Studies Program after finding the Armenian Students Organization on the Fresno State website. Prof. Der Mugrdechian had introduced the idea to me in Armenian 1A. I was very interested in learning more about my culture, so I decided to move forward and work on the Minor.

What has been your favorite Armenian Studies course?

My favorite course was the Armenian Studies 120T course with Kazan Visiting Professor Dr. Ümit Kurt. He taught me about

three genocides: the Armenian, Rwandan, the Holocaust, and the similarities/differences of how they all occurred. Because of this course, I have become better informed about the reasons that the Armenian Genocide occurred and where my ancestors may have come from.

In what ways can you apply a Minor in Armenian Studies in relation to the broader Armenian community?

I choose to use my Minor to help educate others, as I have already been doing in my Major and general classes. I will keep doing so in the future and plan on encouraging others to do the same. I may even come back to Fresno State and help out the Armenian Studies Program in planning events and informing others.

What would you say to a student interested in pursuing a Minor?

The Minor offers many great experiences, you become closer to others, and you will have so much knowledge packed into you. That knowledge will naturally come out and there will be so much to share with others about what you learn. It is definitely worth the time!



Ariana Garabedian
Speech Pathology

Why have you chosen to pursue a Minor in Armenian Studies?

I chose it in hopes that it will bring me closer to my culture and heritage. It has been helping me learn and understand a lot more about myself and my family.

What Armenian Studies class or classes have you enjoyed most and why?

I have been really enjoying the Armenian Studies course with Dr. Ari Şekeryan, who is teaching us about Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. I have a personal interest in this course because my father’s family left the Ottoman Empire during the massacres at the end of the 19th century and my mother’s family left during the Armenian Genocide. This course has helped me connect the dots as to when and why my family came to America.

How do you hope to apply this Minor in your relations with the broader Armenian community?

Minoring in Armenian Studies has encouraged my interaction with the broader Armenian community. I find myself feeling more comfortable speaking Armenian with my family, attending Armenian Studies events and lectures, and getting more involved in the Armenian church. In terms of my career goals, Speech Language Pathologists deal with people from various ethnic backgrounds.

My Minor would contribute to my understanding of cultural differences and further benefit my career in helping others.

Would you encourage others to Minor?

I would encourage students to pursue the Minor because it’s a valuable chance to learn about the Armenian heritage. Also, not many colleges offer an Armenian Studies Program—it is an opportunity of a lifetime!



Ashley Movsesian
Pre-Nursing

Why have you chosen to pursue a Minor in Armenian Studies?

I have chosen to take this opportunity to get closer to my Armenian heritage and community. Since most of my Armenian family lives in Los Angeles, I was mainly raised around my Mexican family on my mom’s side. Minoring in Armenian Studies is important to me because my grandparents have always wanted me to strengthen my ties to the culture and history. I also want to pass down my knowledge of Armenian culture to my children.

What Armenian Studies class or classes have you enjoyed most and why?

I’ve completed Armenian 1A, and I am currently enrolled in Armenian 1B and Armenian Studies 10. I’ve really enjoyed all of these courses because I’m learning so much. My Armenian language skills are noticeably improving, and I know more than I ever did about Armenian history.

How do you hope to apply this Minor in your relations with the broader Armenian community?

As a future RN, I’m going to encounter many cultural backgrounds. It is important for a nurse to be well trained when catering to people of different ethnicities because it bridges the gap in health disparities that come from not understanding peoples’ customs. By learning about my Armenian culture, I’m taking a step towards bridging this gap and adequately helping Armenian patients in the community as well as educating others.

Would you encourage others to Minor?

The Armenian culture is so rich and beautiful. Minoring in Armenian Studies offers a huge arena for people interested in expanding their knowledge of art, history, and language. You don’t have to be Armenian to Minor! I encourage non-Armenians to Minor because people who better understand cultures that aren’t their own create a more accepting society.

Photos: Andrew Hagopian

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Armenian Students Organization Activities

ANDREW HAGOPIAN

EDITOR

The Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State ended the Fall 2019 semester with a Neighborhood Christmas Lights Social in December, where students were able to bond over dinner, games, and a walk around Candy Cane Lane. Students also participated in an “Ugly Sweater” competition which was quite competitive to judge.

In the Spring ASO held various social events. In the month of February, ASO held its annual “Spring Bowling Night” and general meeting at the Fresno State Bowling Alley. Upcoming events for the month of April include: the noon-time

HOUSE OF HOPE, FROM PAGE 1



Photo: ASP Archive

Colette & Clarise Compton

Babajanian’s “Elegy in G Minor” and “Exprompt in B Minor,” as well as Sergei Rachmaninoff’s “Prelude in B Minor, Opus 32 Number 10” and “Etude in C-Sharp Minor, Opus 33 Number 8,” aiding the audience in truly understanding and feeling the message of each piece. As in his previous concerts at Fresno State, the Fresno native mesmerized the audience with each keystroke as he moved with each note and played with his eyes closed. Dr. Krikorian’s performance was followed by vocalists Clarise and Colette Compton, accompanied by Derrick Lowe on the piano.

Clarise Compton brought the spirit of a lonely Christmas to the Concert Hall with her solo performance of Joni Mitchell’s “River.” Her sister, Colette Compton then took the audience back to a 1940’s blues club with her rendition of Harry Warren and

Photo: ASP Archive



Photo: ASP Archive

ASO members enjoyed an evening of bowling.

April 24th Armenian Genocide Commemoration. Check out our Facebook Page for updates or

Mack Gordon’s “At Last.” The talented sisters then traveled to the land of OZ with their touching duet performance of Stephen Schwartz’s “Defying Gravity” from the Broadway production of *Wicked*. Their smiles, acting, and positive energy brought smiles to the faces of many audience members.

Lauren Movsesian, accompanied by Derrick Lowe on the piano, took the audience back in time to the French Revolution with her beautiful rendition of “Bring Him Home” from the French musical, *Les Misérables*. Although the song is written for a male vocalist, Movsesian was able to give the audience goosebumps with her vocal range and skill. She then brightened the mood with Frederick Loewe and Alan Jay Lerner’s “I Could Have Danced All Night” from the Broadway musical *My Fair Lady*. Her dancing and smiling throughout her performance were contagious, leaving the audience energized and happily waiting for her next song. For her last song, Movsesian traveled to Armenia with Komitas and Al Dolukhanian’s “Dzidzernag.” The Armenian folksong, about a swallow, brought many audience members to tears.

After Movsesian’s refreshing and emotional performance, Derkevorkian, Terzian, and Krikorian concluded the benefit concert. The violin, cello, and piano trio performed Arno Babajanian’s “Piano Trio in

reminders for events! Facebook: Fresno State ASO or Instagram: IG:@fresnostateaso.

F-Sharp Minor” with equal passion and intensity, occasionally nodding to ensure that they stay together. By the end of the third movement of the piece, they had the audience standing and asking for more. They agreed to perform one more song, and ended the night with a soothing, yet passionate, performance of Babajanian’s “Aria,” bringing the audience to their feet once again.

After the concert, audience members were able to meet the performers and to learn about how to donate to the House of Hope-Mer Hooys Program, while enjoying hors d’oeuvres and mineral water.

Overall the concert was nostalgic, touching, adventurous, and a great way to end a Saturday night.

For more information about the House of Hope, visit their website, www.merhoos.org or their Facebook page @ MerHoosy.



Photo: ASP Archive

Lauren Movsesian

SKETCHES, FROM PAGE 1

on the Old Roman Road and other works) and an elder brother of novelist and poet Krikor Keljik (“K. Devrish”).

A foreword by co-editor Christopher Atamian discusses the genesis of the book, and the significance of its publication. He places Keljik’s works in the early history of Armenian-American literature. Atamian also noted the role of translator Aris Sevag, whose meticulous work has brought Keljik’s work to life.

Armenian-American Sketches includes 29 short stories written originally in Armenian by Bedros Keljik. Twenty of the short stories were translated by noted Aris Sevag, one by Lou Ann Matossian, and eight of the stories originally published in *Hairenik*, were translated by

Vartan Matiossian.

The volume also includes an enlightening biography of Keljik, “An Armenian Odyssey: From the Euphrates to the Mississippi,” written by his grandchildren, Mark and Thomas Keljik. Roupen Zartarian’s “How Death Came to the Earth,” translated by Bedros Keljik, is also part of the volume.

Edited by Christopher Atamian, Lou Ann Matossian, and Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Armenian-American Sketches provides a wealth of interesting stories about the early Armenian community in America.

Armenians began arriving to America in large numbers at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. They established themselves in communities throughout the United States, maintaining

their Armenian culture, while also becoming acclimated to life in America. In Armenian-American Sketches, author Bedros Keljik brings to life this period in Armenian-American history. With keen observation Keljik provides the reader with an often-humorous insight into that life, with all of its sadness and joy, with the sense of community, and with the hard work and challenges faced by the immigrants. This is a book which will appeal to any reader who seeks to understand the immigrant experience in the United States.

Armenian-American Sketches is available through Amazon.

Contact the Press at California State University, Fresno, by calling 559-278-3056. Bulk publishing discounts are available for bookstore.

Thomas A. Kooyumjian Foundation Donates \$30,000 to Armenian Studies Program

STAFF REPORT

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian announced that the Thomas A. Kooyumjian Family Foundation has made a generous contribution of \$30,000 to the Program for specific projects such as concerts and conferences.

The Kooyumjian Foundation has also made an additional donation of \$60,000 in December of 2019 to the Kooyumjian Endowed Scholarship Fund at Fresno State. Together with previous donations from the Family Foundation, the Endowed Scholarship has reached over \$310,000. The Fund will provide scholarships for more than twelve students in 2020-2021 within the Armenian Studies Program, in the College of Arts

and Humanities at Fresno State. Per the endowment’s conditions, scholarship recipients shall have a) a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater; shall be b) enrolled in any course within the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State, and c) recipients shall have submitted a personal statement speaking to the applicant’s financial need.

Thomas A. Kooyumjian passed away in 1985 and his Foundation was established in 1987. The goals of the Foundation are to encourage education, with an emphasis on the appreciation of fine arts.

Kooyumjian was an employee and inventor at Belmor Manufacturing and excelled in his field, but also wanted to embrace the finer arts and encourage the same in others.

The current President of the Foundation is Tony Kooyumjian.

Over the past several years the Foundation has supported many projects of the Armenian Studies Program, including co-sponsoring piano concerts in conjunction with the Philip Lorenz Keyboard Concert Series at Fresno State. This year the “Young Armenian Talent” series featured three guest artists: Sofya Melikyan, Michael Krikorian, and Nara Avetisyan.

The Kooyumjian Foundation has a special interest in the appreciation of fine arts, especially music, in keeping with Thomas A. Kooyumjian’s interests.

One of the Foundation’s goals is to encourage all generations to experience and be educated in the effects of fine arts on society as a whole.

Garabedian Foundation Supports Armenian Studies

STAFF REPORT

The Bertha and John Garabedian Foundation has made a generous donation of \$18,000 to the Armenian Studies Program

for 2020.

The gift will be used for a variety of activities, including outreach activities and awarding scholarships. The Garabedian Foundation has been a long-

standing supporter of the Armenian Studies Program. Their grants have supported the development of the Armenian Studies Program website and the online “Arts of Armenia.”



2020 ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION
CENTRAL CALIFORNIA EVENTS
Recognition and Rebirth

Thursday, April 16, 2020 7pm 150TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF GOMIDAS VARTABED St. Paul Armenian Church, Haig & Isabel Berberian Hall Zangagadun Literary & Musical Group of the Armenian Museum of Fresno	Friday, April 24, 2020 10am FLAG RAISING: ANC-CENTRAL CALIFORNIA Fresno City Hall, 2600 Fresno Street
Sunday, April 19, 2020 1:30pm ECUMENICAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICES Ararat and Masis Ararat Armenian Cemeteries Service at the Unknown Holy Martyrs' Saints of the Armenian Genocide Gravesite followed by a march and service at the Soghomon Tehlirian Monument	12 noon FRESNO STATE ARMENIAN STUDENTS ORGANIZATION Armenian Genocide Monument, Fresno State ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE OF FRESNO Armenian Genocide Monument, Fresno State <i>[Free Parking in P1, P5 & P6]</i>
Monday, April 20, 2020 6:30pm POLITICAL SCIENCE PROGRAM Reedley College, SOC32 Speaker: Professor Sergio La Porta	6pm Laying of Flowers 6:45pm Presentation of Flags 7pm Religious Service 7:30pm Civic Program Keynote Speaker: Dr. Carla Garapedian K-12 Student Art Exhibit
Thursday, April 23, 2020 7pm ARMENIAN STUDENTS ORGANIZATION University Business Center, Fresno State Jerry Burger presents his book 'The Shadow of 1915'. Silent Vigil to follow at the Genocide Monument	 Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee-Fresno: The mission of the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Committee-Fresno is to honor the memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who perished at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish government beginning on April 24, 1915. The Committee is responsible for organizing commemorative programs and educating the community about the Armenian Genocide to prevent future genocides.

For a complete listing of events visit www.agcfresno.org  [agcfresno](https://www.facebook.com/agcfresno)  agcfresno@gmail.com  [agcfresno](https://www.instagram.com/agcfresno)

ŞEKERYAN, FROM PAGE 3
did they continue to live, what did they experience in Turkey, in Syria, and in Lebanon?”

While Dr. Şekeryan was attending Getronagan Armenian High School in Istanbul, teaching Armenian history was forbidden. All of the history teachers in the Armenian schools were appointed by the government. While taking courses in Ottoman history and language at Bogaziçi University for his MA degree, he also began volunteering at Aras Publishing. There he began to learn Armenian history, to speak Armenian with colleagues, and to read Ottoman and Armenian newspapers.

During the few months that Dr. Şekeryan has been in Fresno, he has become familiar with the Armenian community. “I really felt like I was at home when I met Armenians, visited the Saroyan House Museum, and churches. Even at a restaurant, I feel like I’m back home. It’s the same people, food, and language,” concludes Dr. Şekeryan.

“The Transformational Power of National Identity in International Politics: The Case of Armenia”

Featuring:

Ambassador Dr. Armen Baibourtian
Consul General of the Republic of Armenia in Los Angeles

Sunday, March 29, 2020 • 2PM

The Leon S. and Pete P. Peters Educational Center Auditorium, 5010 Woodrow Ave., Fresno State

Free admission and free parking.



The Armenian Studies Program

presents the Fresno premiere screening of

“What Will Become of Us”



with director Stephanie Ayanian
Director and Producer

Friday, April 17, 2020 • 5:30PM

The Leon S. and Pete P. Peters Educational Center Auditorium, 5010 Woodrow Ave., Fresno State

Free admission and free parking.

The Armenian Students Organization and Armenian Studies Program present

“The Shadows of 1915”

Featuring:

Dr. Jerry Burger

Thursday, April 23, 2020
7:00PM



“A Novel About the Armenian Genocide”

University Business Center, A. Peters Auditorium
5245 N. Backer Ave., Fresno State

Free admission and free parking (with code)

Co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program, Department of Psychology, Center for Creativity and the Arts, the Center for Ethics, Character, and Civic Education, and the College of Arts & Humanities

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