

HYE SHARZHOOM Armenian Action ՀԱՅ ՇԱՐՀՈՕՄ



42nd Year

October 2020

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Ethnic Supplement to The Collegian

Dr. Joseph I. Castro Chosen as Eighth Chancellor of the CSU



Dr. Joseph I. Castro

Photo: ASP Archive

CSU PUBLIC AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT AND NEWS SOURCES

The California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees has appointed Joseph I. Castro, Ph.D., to serve as the eight Chancellor of the California State University system. Castro has served as the eighth president of California State University, Fresno since 2013. He is the first California

native and first Mexican American to be appointed to oversee the 23-campus system. Castro will succeed Timothy P. White who is retiring after leading the university since late 2012.

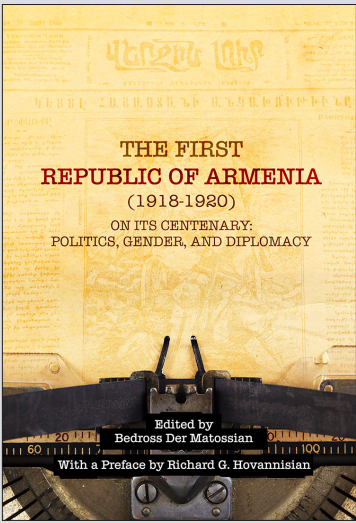
“The California State University provides unprecedented and transformational opportunities for students from all backgrounds to earn a high-quality college degree and to better their families, their communities and the industries in which they become leaders. There is no other institution that makes this great of an impact on the entire state – the CSU is key to a growing and thriving California,” said Castro. “I am truly grateful for and excited about this unique and wonderful opportunity, and I look forward to working with the talented faculty, staff and presidents of the 23 campuses

SEE [CASTRO](#), PAGE 3

The First Republic of Armenia Published by Armenian Series

STAFF REPORT

The Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno announces the publication of *The First Republic of Armenia (1918-1920) on its Centenary: Politics, Gender, and Diplomacy*, edited by Dr. Bedross Der Matossian and with a preface by Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian. The book is the second in the newly launched *Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) Publication Series* published as part of the Armenian



SEE [FIRST REPUBLIC](#) PAGE 8

Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı Named as 17th Kazan Visiting Professor



Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı
STAFF REPORT

Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı has been named as the 17th Kazan Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies for the Fall 2020 semester at Fresno State. Dr. Kılıçdağı is a 2014 graduate of Boğaziçi University

in Istanbul, where he completed a Ph.D. titled “Socio-Political Reflections and Expectations of the Ottoman Armenians after the 1908 Revolution: Between Hope and Despair.”

Dr. Kılıçdağı was born and raised in Istanbul as a member of the Armenian community. His parents were born in a village near the city of Sepastia and he is a graduate of Getronagan Armenian High School (*Azkayin Varjaran*), where he has continued to participate in cultural activities.

Dr. Kılıçdağı has been a columnist of *Agos* newspaper in Istanbul since 2011. *Agos* is a trilingual newspaper established by

SEE [KILIÇDAĞI](#) PAGE 8

Artsakh Attacked by Azerbaijan on Sept. 27 Azerbaijan Targets Civilians and Churches



The 19th century Holy Savior (Ghazanchetsots) Cathedral in Shushi was damaged in an Azeri attack on October 8. The Cathedral is the seat of the Armenian Diocese of Artsakh.

STAFF REPORT

The Republic of Artsakh was attacked on September 27 by regular forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The self-defense forces of Artsakh repelled the Azeri forces in a series of clashes which lasted from September 27-October 9. Armenians from throughout the world have assisted in the self-defense of the country. Many consider the Azeri aggression as a continuation of the Pan-Turkist policies of Ottoman Turkey which led to the Armenian Genocide of 1915. Turkey has assisted Azerbaijan in the current conflict by providing military aid and planning. They have also hired Syrian Arab mercenaries to fight in the war.



A view of the interior of the Holy Savior Cathedral after the October 8 attack.

Photo: ASP Archive

The Republic of Artsakh declared its independence on September 2, 1991, in the midst of the dissolution of the Soviet

Union. Artsakh is historically part of Armenia, constituting the

SEE [ARTSAKH](#) PAGE 7

AGBU Greater Fresno Chapter Establishes \$25,000 Endowed Scholarship Fund to Benefit Students

STAFF REPORT



Photo: ASP Archive

Left to right: AGBU Executive members Karoun Boyadjian, Zohrab Atarian, Sylva Guluzian, Charles Jamgotchian, and Zaroohi Der Mugrdechian.

The Greater Fresno Chapter of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) has donated \$25,000 to Fresno State to establish an endowed scholarship fund in the Armenian Studies Program. The scholarship will benefit students who enroll in Armenian and Armenian Studies courses at Fresno State.

The Chapter Executive Committee members are: Zaroohi Der Mugrdechian, Charles Jamgotchian, Sylva Guluzian, Karoun Boyadjian and Zohrab Atarian.

In 1985, there were two

SEE [AGBU](#) PAGE 2

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 International Women’s Association, Watertown, MA, for a copy of *Mayda: Echoes of Protest* (Watertown, MA: AIWA Press, 2020), 169pp., in English. This is an English translation of Srpuhi Dussap’s work, first published in Constantinople in 1883. This pioneering feminist novel represents one of the first books to promote gender equality and has been translated into English for the first time.

Sarky Mouradyan, Glendale, CA, for a copy of the book *Sarky Mouradyan’s Songs, Poetry, and Movies*, edited by Martin Shirinyan (Glendale, Ca: 2018), 196pp., in Armenian.

Priscilla L. Partridge, M.S., Watsonville, CA, for a copy of her book *The Humanitarian Gene 1891-1922: Letters and Diaries by Ernest C. Partridge, Winona G. Partridge, Mary L. Graffam, Edward G. Partridge* (Oak Hollow Press, 2017), 410pp., in English. The book follows the story of two New York and New England families, the Partridges and the Graffams, whose letters and diaries spanning the years 1891-1922 focus on their humanitarian efforts to help the Armenian people after World War I.

Robert Sarkissian, Severn, MD, for a copy of *Legacy of an Author: Posthumous Poems* by Helene Pilibosian (Watertown, MA: Ohan Press, 2019), 360pp., in English.

Dr. Vahram L. Shemmassian, California State University, Northridge, for a copy of his book, *The Musa Dagh Armenians: A Socioeconomic and Cultural History, 1919-1939* (Beirut: Haigazian University Press, 2015), 376pp., in English. A comprehensive history of the Musa Dagh Armenians after their heroic defense in 1915.

Makoto Ueda, Tokyo, Japan, for a copy of the occasional paper “Regional States and the Identities of Overseas People,” published by the Centre for Asian Area Studies of Rikkyo University (2019), which includes an article by Shinji Shigematsu on “An Armenian Maritime Merchant in Modern Japan: The Apar and Company and the Foreign Settlements in Kobe and Yokohama,” pp. 13-40, in English.

AGBU, FROM PAGE 1
scholarship funds available for Fresno State students, and over the last thirty-five years that number has now grown to thirty-four scholarship funds. Thanks to the donors, Fresno State students today annually receive more than \$75,000 in scholarships.
When the Western District of the AGBU was established in 1916, the headquarters was in Fresno where the largest population of Armenians resided in California. For decades, until the 1960’s, the Fresno AGBU was a focal point for Armenians in California. They organized picnics by the Kings River, cultural activities, and civic events. When the District Headquarters was eventually moved to Los Angeles, area members continued to organize and sponsor a myriad of activities.
The Greater Fresno Chapter cosponsors musical concerts, educational lectures and has organized Art Festivals highlighting the talents of Valley participants in painting, sculpture, poetry, and short stories. They have participated in the ClovisFest International Village representing Armenia. The Chapter brings drama presentations from Los Angeles to entertain community members, as well as producing their own drama productions. For many years, the Chapter has organized and offered Western and Eastern Armenian language classes for children and adults.
Established in 1906 the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) is the largest Armenian non-profit organization in the world, offering an array of programs designed to help Armenians excel in life, personally, professionally and as global citizens.
The mission of the AGBU is to preserve and promote the Armenian heritage through worldwide educational, cultural, and humanitarian programs.

California State University, Fresno

Armenian Studies Program

Spring 2021 Schedule of Courses

Course	Units	Time	Day	Instructor
General Education-Breadth, Humanities, Area C2				
• Arm 1B-Elementary Armenian (Class #32415) Virtual Synchronous	4	10:00A-11:50A	MW	B. Der Mugrdechian
• Arm 2A-Intermediate Armenian (Class #36670) Virtual Synchronous	3	3:30P-4:45P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Arts, Area C1				
• ArmS 20-Arts of Armenia (Class #33318) Virtual Synchronous	3	11:00A-12:15P	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian
General Education-Breadth, Area D3				
• ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies (Class #33595) Virtual Synchronous	3	9:00A-09:50A	MWF	H. Ohanessian
General Education-Integration, Area IC				
• Arm 148-Mastpcs Arm Cult (Class #33399) Virtual Synchronous	3	2:00P-3:15P	MW	H. Ohanessian
• Arm 148-Mastpcs Arm Cult (Class #33732) Virtual Synchronous	3	2:00P-3:15P	TuTh	H. Ohanessian
Upper Division Armenian Studies Course				
• ArmS 108B-Arm History II (Class #32414) Virtual Synchronous	3	9:30A-10:45A	TuTh	B. Der Mugrdechian

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>

HYE SHARZHOOM

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Who are You?

SOSSE ANN BALOIAN

Ո՞վ եք:
Who are you?

Հաճիս, ինձի լսեք:
Please listen to me.

Ի՞նչ է ձեր դերը այս աշխարհին մէջ:
What is your place in this world?

Այդ հարցումը ձեզի եւ Աստուծոյ համար է:
That question is for you and God.

Դուք միայնակ չեք:
You are not alone.

Փնտռէք անոնք որոնք ձեզի հետ պիտի քայլեն:
Seek those who will walk with you.

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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City Lamentation: A Unifying Tradition Among Ancient Cultures



Dr. Tamar Boyadjian presented a Zoom webinar on “The City Lament” on September 24.

CHRISTINE PAMBUKYAN
STAFF WRITER

Dr. Tamar M. Boyadjian, Associate Professor of Medieval Literature at Michigan State University, teaches poetry and translation courses. Along with her teaching, Dr. Boyadjian is also an active scholar and wrote an award-winning book titled, *The City of Lament: Jerusalem Across the Medieval Mediterranean* in 2018.

On Thursday, September 24, 2020, Dr. Boyadjian evaluated how different cultures across the Medieval Mediterranean lamented the loss of Jerusalem through a virtual Zoom presentation of her book, *The City Lament*.

Dr. Boyadjian began her presentation by reciting a creatively formatted poem she wrote in Modern Western Armenian titled, “Kentron.” She explained that during the time of the Crusades, Jerusalem was a city that fell under the control of many different cultures. As a result, members of various traditions, including Arabo-Islamic, Cilician-Armenian, and the Latin West, produced written lamentations to mourn the loss of Jerusalem.

“These lamentations modeled their compositions on ancient Mesopotamian city laments; specifically Akkadian, Sumero-Akkadian, and other Jewish concepts of mourning the loss of cities,” stated Dr. Boyadjian. Through their lamentations, each culture was able to further their reconquering of the Holy City by imagining how they desired Jerusalem to look geographically and feel spiritually.

Then, Dr. Boyadjian explained the origin and common attributes of city lamentation and why city lamentation rituals were conducted by female members of society. City laments originated in ancient Mesopotamia and within the Mediterranean world. An example of a city lament is the “Lament for Ur,” a Sumerian lament composed to mourn the loss of the city-state Ur to the Elamites in 2,000 BCE. Another example is the Akkadian epic poem, “Epic of Gilgamesh,” which includes references to the lamenting people of Uruk along with Gilgamesh. Also, in Euripides’ tragedy, “Troidus,” which was produced in 415 BCE, during the Peloponnesian

War. The play tells the story of the capture of Melos, an Aegean island, as four Trojan women lament the loss of Troy. Furthermore, Homer’s *Odyssey* also acts as a lamentation for the city of Troy.

“Lamentation was an unquestionable part of the ancient ritual culture, particularly in the sharing of community grief,” stated Dr. Boyadjian. Females who conducted the rituals acted as intercessors between the material and spiritual worlds. Their loud cries and self-lacerations were often performed at funerals and imbued emotions to those around them. These rituals were conducted by many cultures, including the Hittites and the Romans. Also, men of Sumeria and Athens would dress as females to perform lamentations as an outlet for expressing their emotions.

Dr. Boyadjian then explained how the view and treatment of city lamentation evolved in the Monotheistic world. Over time, lamentation began to be viewed as a threat to the patriarchal roles in society and began to be prohibited by ancient societies. The Latin Church and the Arabo-Islamic Tradition condemned lamentation. This is reflected by the lack of lamentations translated from the new and old testaments of the Bible. Lastly, the role of city lamentation for the Eastern Christian Church, specifically for the Armenians, evolved into a form of hymns and psalms sung by the church. The priests took on the role of mediums between the material and spiritual world and songs were sung to mourn the loss of cities, kingdoms, and people throughout Armenia’s long and tragic history.

Dr. Boyadjian concluded her lecture by reciting an English translation of her poem, “And if you reap it, you will create; you birth it, it guides you. Isn’t that the center? And if it moves or changes a ray of light, is it possible to know where the center is? And if you go, you will return. It’s lasting. Would you have wanted to know, is this the center? And if you forget, you’ll remember; it’s eternal. Would you have asked, ‘Are you the center?’”

A recording of this lecture, along with other lectures of this semester, can be found on the Armenian Studies YouTube channel: bit.ly/armenianstudiesyoutube.

Dr. Kılıçdağı Discusses Debate Over Conscription of Armenians into the Ottoman Army after 1908

ARSHAK ABELYAN
STAFF WRITER

The conscription of Christians and other non-Muslims in the Ottoman Empire had been a topic of consistent debate within the 19th and early 20th centuries. Following the restoration of the constitutional regime in July 1908, Armenians were optimistic of this new push for equality in Ottoman society. “One of the important requirements of this political equality was to be conscripted. In other words, extension of military service to all, not only Muslims, was a necessity and indicator of equality,” stated Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı.

As the 17th Kazan visiting professor in the Armenian Studies Program during the Fall 2020 semester, Dr. Kılıçdağı presented a lecture on the topic of “‘Living Together Requires Dying Together’: Conscription of Armenians into the Ottoman Army after the 1908 Revolution.” When describing his motives in studying this topic, Dr. Kılıçdağı stated, “My Ph.D. dissertation was about this second revolutionary period of the Ottoman Empire and to understand that period and the Armenians, I examined dozens of journals, and this issue frequently and continuously showed up in newspapers and in debates.” He added that military service was something he had to focus on to fully understand the failures that took place amid transformation, that is from a hierarchical society to an egalitarian society in the Ottoman Empire.

Dr. Kılıçdağı argues that prior to 1908-1909, Ottoman bureaucracy was divided into camps: one of which supported the conscription of Christians and other non-Muslims. On the other hand, opposition to conscription had dominated Ottoman politics in the period of the 19th century. It was evident that much would not change under the conservative camp until the early 20th century. In 1856, the traditional Islamic tax that was collected from non-Muslim subjects, called the *jizya*, was abolished. Dr. Kılıçdağı argued that the *Jizya* tax had not truly been abolished, rather it was transformed into a military

CASTRO, FROM PAGE 1
as well the Board of Trustees and executives and staff at the Chancellor’s Office to further increase achievement for our 482,000 students.”

Castro has had a close connection to the Armenian community in the San Joaquin Valley. Under his leadership an Armenian Genocide Monument, the only such Monument on a University campus in the United states, was constructed on campus in 2015. Castro appointed a President’s Armenian Advisory Council in 2017. He has attended each Armenian Studies Annual Banquet, and has been a strong supporter of the University’s Armenian Studies Program.

As president of Fresno State, Castro led the university



Kazan Visiting Professor Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı

exemption tax that Armenians and other non-Muslims were still liable for. “This military exemption tax had been paid not only by those at the age of active duty, but by all males until up to seventy years old,” said Dr. Kılıçdağı.

Dr. Kılıçdağı’s research focuses more on the details of Armenian attitudes toward conscription. He stated that the Armenian people and their political leaders had “emerged as the staunchest and strongest supporters” of the extension of military service to Christians. He presented two factors that supported these attitudes. The first had to do with ideological reasons and the second had to do with economic reasons. As an example of an ideological reason for their support for conscription, Armenians “contended that their exclusion from military service would mean the persistence of their secondary status or second-class citizenship,” said Dr. Kılıçdağı. As for economic reasons, the military service exemption tax had simply become a burden for the Armenian people.

The Armenian people displayed this displeasure by sending telegrams to their religious and political leaders. Thousands gathered in cities such as Kharpert and Sivas where they demanded their own conscription through demonstrations. Such news had even reached into the halls of the Ottoman parliament where opposition to the idea of Armenian conscription had diminished. A strong voice came

to become a national leader in recruiting, supporting and graduating students from diverse backgrounds.

Fresno State is routinely among the top public colleges in rankings issued by *Washington Monthly*, *U.S. News and World Report* and *Money Magazine* for its efforts to enhance student achievement as measured by graduation rates and social mobility.

Castro is a respected scholar in the fields of higher education leadership and public policy and has mentored many other university presidents and other senior officers across the nation over the course of his career.

Prior to joining Fresno State, Castro served for 23 years in the University of California system,

from parliament deputy, Krikor Zohrab, who empathized with the Armenian population and stated that, “Learning to live together requires dying together.”

On July 12, 1909, the Ottoman parliament decided to abrogate the military exemption tax, allowing Armenians to be conscripted. According to one of the sources that Dr. Kılıçdağı quoted in his lecture, “We are no longer *reaya*, we are not any more *gavours*, or [only] tax-payer either. We are also children of this land, it is also our fatherland, since we are ready to sacrifice our blood to the last drop for the goodness of the country.” While many Armenians celebrated, there were still a group of Armenians who had some fears and apprehensions of these newly founded changes, according to Dr. Kılıçdağı. Such examples are, and not limited to: unpredictable treatment of non-Muslims like themselves by their commanders and peers, the long years spent away from family and home life, and the possibility of being forced to convert to Islam.

“I think one of the obvious conclusions of this account is that Armenian political leadership, both civil and cleric political leadership, made their political investment in the Ottoman state after 1908,” says Dr. Kılıçdağı. With strong support for conscription, Armenians had unintentionally placed their own families, communities, and future in the hands of those, who would later lay the framework for the mass annihilation of their own compatriots.

holding a variety of leadership positions culminating in roles of Vice Chancellor of Student Academic Affairs and Professor of Family and Community Medicine at the UC, San Francisco.

Castro was born in Hanford, California. He is the grandson of immigrants from Mexico, son of a single mother, and the first in his family to graduate from a university.

He received his bachelor’s in political science and a master’s in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley and a Ph.D. in higher education policy and leadership from Stanford University.

Castro and his wife, Mary, have three children (Isaac, Lauren and Jess). He will begin his duties as Chancellor on January 4, 2021.

Armenian Students Organization Elects New Officers for the 2020-2021 Academic Year



DUSTIN VARTANIAN
PRESIDENT

What would you like to accomplish as an officer?

I want our members to feel how I did when I first got involved in ASO. When I first got involved, I established a great group of friends and I always looked forward to every event we had. My goal is to make everyone feel as welcomed as I was.

What impact has ASO had on your college career?

ASO gave me instant friends when I first came to Fresno State. I went to the first ASO event the year I transferred to Fresno State and I have had the same core group of friends ever since and I continue to meet new friends every semester. We have all gotten so close it feels like we are family. ASO has really been the heart of my college experience.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I have three nicknames Dust, Dusty, and *Poshee*. I love wearing a large red wig to Fresno State Basketball games. I played baseball at College of the Sequoias in Visalia before transferring to Fresno State. I really enjoy working on an almond farm in Fowler.



ARIANA GARABEDIAN
VICE-PRESIDENT

Why did you want to be an ASO Executive Officer?

I wanted to be an officer because it gives me the opportunity to meet new Armenians at Fresno State and coordinate events to keep everyone involved, especially during this time.

What impact has ASO had on your college career?

ASO has had a huge impact on my college career so far. The largest impact is through all of the new people I have met. Through the ASO I have made many new friends and gotten back in touch with old friends!

What kind of response do you hope to get from the members?

By planning new virtual events I hope that more students will want to get involved and will continue to help the organization grow.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I have played the piano for fourteen years! For me, it has become very fun and a neat way to preserve my culture by learning music by Armenian composers.



KARA STATLER
SECRETARY

Why did you want to be an ASO Executive Officer?

I have loved being a part of ASO and the Armenian Studies Program, and I wanted to be a part of it again. I have been an executive officer in prior years and it has been such a blessing to be a part of the executive.

What would you like to accomplish as an officer?

I would like to be able to bring Armenian students together, even if it is only virtual for the time being. ASO is such an amazing place to make friendships and I want to ensure that for the new and current members there will always be a place for them.

What impact has ASO had on your college career?

ASO has helped me in so many ways. I have met some of my best friends, been able to do things I would not normally have done, and it helped me become more in touch with my family's culture. It is such an amazing group of people and I think that everyone should come to an ASO event at least once.



TATIANA SAMOUIE
TREASURER

Why did you want to be an ASO Executive Officer?

As a part of the ASO executive committee, I have another

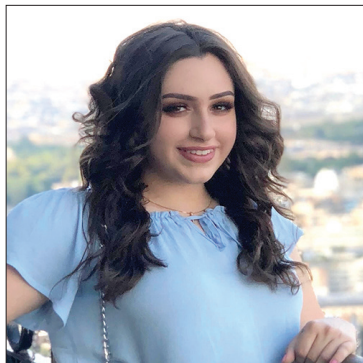
opportunity to get involved with the Armenian community. I wanted to be an ASO executive officer to get involved and meet new Armenians.

What would you like to accomplish as an officer?

It is fair to say that this past year has been a difficult adjustment for many. Therefore, as an officer I hope to bring a sense of normalcy to students through our virtual events. I also hope to bring awareness and aid to Armenia and Artsakh during these tough times.

What impact has ASO had on your college career?

ASO has allowed me to meet people who have become my closest friends and has given me the opportunity to connect with many other like-minded, driven Armenians. I hope to give the same opportunity to our new members this year.



SUZANNA EKMECHYAN
PUBLIC RELATIONS

What would you like to accomplish as an officer?

Even during these difficult times, I hope to stress the importance of making connections with my peers in order to make them feel like they are a part of something meaningful and that they are not alone during these isolating times.

What impact has ASO had on your college career?

ASO has given me so many amazing friends and provided me with the most memorable experiences that I could have ever wanted during my college experience. All the while emphasizing my love for Armenian culture, we were able to get together, plan amazing events, and share lots of laughs.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I am very involved with the Armenian culture. Aside from school, one of my favorite things to do is Armenian dance. I love teaching children traditional Armenian dances and the meanings behind them.

MFA Creative Writing Graduate Jack Chavoor Writes Thesis on *Ghosts of the Genocide*

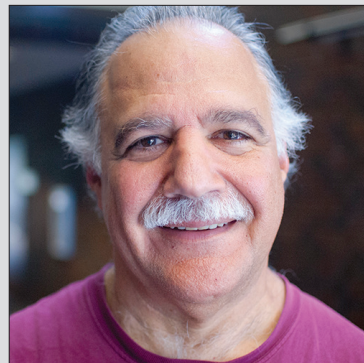


Photo: ASP Archive

Jack Chavoor
CARINA TOKATIAN
STAFF WRITER

“The ghosts, the people from our Armenian past, the things they endured, the unprecedented suffering and losses they bore, as well as their will to overcome—all of that shaped our outlook and our lives” stated Jack Chavoor, a May 2020 graduate of Fresno State’s MFA Creative Writing Program.

Since the very beginning of his thesis, Chavoor decided to compile all his essays under the title, *Ghosts of the Genocide*. He selected this name because he felt that the “ghosts,” Armenians’ ancestors and the trials and successes they faced, have impacted their descendants. However, the title does not necessarily mean that each of his essays pivot around the theme of the Genocide. Instead, Chavoor believes that “the thesis begins in the United States with the question, ‘What are you?’ and ends in Armenia with the words, ‘Hos em. I am here.’”

Prior to his enrollment in the MFA Program, Chavoor was an English teacher at Roosevelt High School for thirty years. He acknowledged his Assyrian-Armenian heritage as part of the reason he initially decided to study English. “My family and Armenians in general are storytellers,” said Chavoor. “So, what is an English major? Reading, writing, and talking about stories. This was very appealing to me.”

After retiring, Chavoor had thought of taking some writing or photography classes or trying another educational outlet. But his friend and former colleague from Roosevelt High School, Megan Bohigian, encouraged him to enroll in the MFA program at Fresno State. After meeting one of the program professors, John Hales, Chavoor grew confident in his own desire to join the program. Hales was not Chavoor’s only influential teacher, however, as he praised all his MFA instructors, emphasizing how “the professors that I had in the Program were not just highly skilled and knowledgeable, but personable and encouraging as well.” The MFA program was by no means a simple three-year process, however. Chavoor decided to take things slow and space out his classes over five years, so that he could also enjoy his retirement. In the beginning, Chavoor turned to his journals from high school, college, and

teaching as inspiration for his writing. Still, midway through the Program, Chavoor revealed how he was “tired and stuck.” It was during this period that he was reminded of the photo his daughter, Kathleen, captured on his first day of school. He thought to himself, “I can’t quit. She took that picture.” Therefore, he decided to begin experimenting over the summer with writing short vignettes about his Armenian experiences. After returning to school and receiving positive feedback from his classmates, he decided to travel down this new road.

Chavoor acknowledged writers such as Nerses Sarian, Abraham Hartunian, Peter Balakian and Mark Arax as some of the major Armenian authors he was influenced by. He also enjoyed reading the works of William Saroyan. “Reading Saroyan is like a favorite uncle sitting next to you, telling stories, stated Chavoor. “That was my model: a relaxed, conversational narrative.” On the other hand, there are some aspects of his writing that distinguish his style from Saroyan’s. For example, Chavoor’s stories are better labeled as essays and contain a variation of both short fragments and developed stories. Some of these essays maintain storylines: incidents from his childhood, his father’s sayings, or family stories that have been passed on for generations. Other essays of his are plotless. They may reference events in Armenian and Assyrian history such as Queen Semiramis of Assyria or the ancient Armenian city of Ani. “Who we are, after all,” surmised Chavoor, “is a collection of experiences, stories, things we believe and things we learn along the way.”

Chavoor grew up in a diverse mixture of cultures, all of which have influenced his writing. After once being told by his father that he is 75% Assyrian, 25% Armenian, and 100% American, Chavoor commented, “Now, Dad was good at math; he was an accountant. And these numbers don’t work, but they are accurate.” In many ways, Chavoor was quite immersed in the American culture—its language, food, music, sports, and literature. As for his Assyrian identity, Chavoor could look to his paternal family including his grandfather, Jacob Chavoor, one of the founding members of the Assyrian Benevolent Association of Los Angeles. And when it came being an Armenian, he had acquired a deeper cultural identity as he began surrounding himself with Armenian friends at church as a teenager.

Chavoor admitted that “My grandmothers and great-aunts and uncles did not talk to me and my siblings, and our cousins about the Turks or the Genocide very much.” While Chavoor had fortunately grown up knowing his great-

SEE CHAVOOR PAGE 6

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ARMENIAN STUDIES 31ST ANNUAL BANQUET
The Armenian Studies Program 31st Annual Banquet was held on Sunday, March 17, 2019. The special guest was Consul General of the Republic of Armenia, Ambassador Dr. Armen Balbourtarian.

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NEWS
TOP STORIES

Dr. Christina Maranci Discusses New Finds at the Cathedral of Ani



Dr. Christina Maranci spoke on her new research on the 11th century Cathedral of Ani.

SOSSE ANN BALOIAN
STAFF WRITER

The Armenian Studies Program kicked off its first Zoom lecture in the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series on Thursday, September 3, 2020 by welcoming Dr. Christina Maranci to discuss her artistic interpretations of the Cathedral of Ani, in a talk entitled “Ani Cathedral, Its Sculpture, and Its Inscriptions Revisited.” Dr. Maranci acknowledged that her research is ongoing and she encouraged students to “be curious because you never know what you are going to find.” She stressed the importance of gathering historical, contextual information before diving into the art of the church itself.

Dr. Maranci is the Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Professor of Armenian Art and Architecture and Chair of the Department of Art History at Tufts University.

Dr. Maranci has published myriad articles and essays on Armenian art including, *The Art of Armenia: A Critical Art History of Ancient and Medieval Armenia*, with a concluding chapter on cultural heritage (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 2018) and *Vigilant Powers: Three Churches of Early Medieval Armenia* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).

Dr. Maranci is currently writing a new book that will include Ani Cathedral in comparison with other early church architecture.

For Dr. Maranci, the Cathedral of Ani is a “carefully faceted geometric form.” The intricacy and attention to detail is quite remarkable to witness up close. Dr. Maranci stated that the blind arcades create a “visual rhythm” on the exterior. She also mentioned that the interior apse provides a sense of height unlike other church architecture during this period.

Dr. Maranci considers the Ani Cathedral an important, influential work of Armenian and medieval architecture set in the context of a larger architectural movement or tradition that arises during the reign of the Bagratid Empire (10th-11th centuries).

By examining the potential attitudes towards images and material things, Dr. Maranci analyzes the architecture almost like a book.

After all, architecture is

made up of more than just walls, piers, and vaults. Dr. Maranci highlighted the importance of inscriptions, sculpture, wall painting, written texts, and archaeology discovered at the Cathedral of Ani.

Inscriptions convey more than a record of dates and people. They are able to reveal social relations and theological positions during the time period.

According to Dr. Maranci, there are about six synchronistic dates that can be identified on the Ani Cathedral: Armenian era, Era of the Romans, Islamic era (Hijri date), Creation, Year of Incarnation of Christ, Year of Christianization of Armenia, Reigns of King Gagik and Catholicos Sargis. You can read the translated inscription below and interpret it for yourself:

“In the year 450 of the Armenians and 219 of the Romans [...], in the time of the divinely-honoured and spiritual Lord Sargis, Catholicos of the Armenians and the glorious kingship of Gagik Shahanshah of the Armenians and the Georgians, I, Katranidē, Queen of the Armenians, sister of Vasak, King of Siwnik’, took refuge in the mercy of God, upon the order of my husband, Gagik Shahansha, I built this holy Cathedral which was founded by the great Smbat, and we erected a house of God, a new and living spiritual offspring, and an everlasting monument. I adorned it also with precious ornaments, gifts from me to Christ and also [from] my clan and sons Smbat, Abas, and Ashot. I, Lord Sargis, have ordered the servants of the church, after the passing of the worshipful queen, to celebrate at the Fast of Transfiguration with forty masses unceasingly until the coming of Christ; And if anyone neglects this inscription let him be condemned by Christ. In 6: 1000: 500: 30: and 3 from Adam; 1000: 2 10: of the incarnation of God: and 718 since the conversion to Christ of the Armenians this memorial was written by the hands of Benē.”

Ani Cathedral is described as “a new and living spiritual offspring, an everlasting monument.” (Նորոգ էւ կենդանի ծնունդ հոգեւոր էւ արձան մշտնջենաւոր):

Although this monument has been in an area of potential risk, the intent of this church is to serve as a continuous symbol of new life.

Keljik’s Armenian-American Sketches: Stories of Armenians in the Early 20th c. Subject of Panel

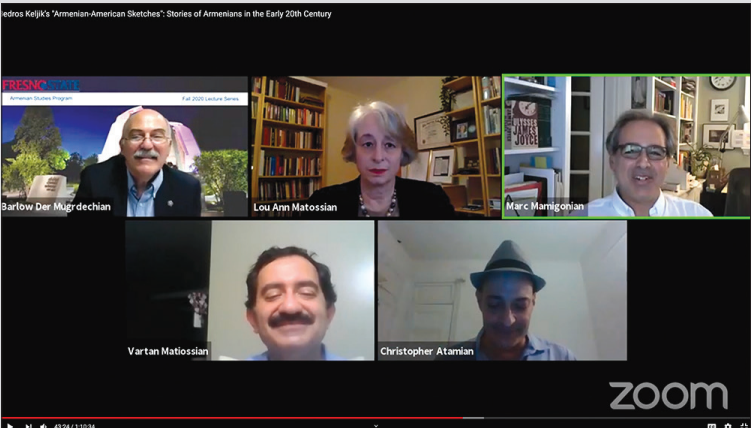


Photo: ASP Archive

Top row, left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian, Dr. Lou Ann Matossian, Marc Mamigonian. Bottom row, left to right: Dr. Vartan Matiossian and Christopher Atamian.

CARINA TOKATIAN
STAFF WRITER

“Observe your surroundings before looking afar” was the sagacious advice that Armenian-American writer Bedros Keljik recalled his schoolteacher, Hovhanness Tlgadinsti, imparting to his students. In his *Armenian-American Sketches* (Amerigahay Badgerner), Keljik’s writing stands as a manifestation of this maxim; he invites his readers to enter the vivid culture surrounding his experiences as an Armenian-American.

On Sunday, September 27 the Armenian Studies Program invited co-editors Christopher Atamian, Dr. Lou Ann Matossian, Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian, translator Vartan Matiossian, and moderator Marc Mamigonian to present Bedros Keljik’s book, *Armenian-American Sketches*, translated for the first time into English. Included in this volume are also Keljik’s biography prepared by his grandchildren, Mark and Thomas Keljik and Keljik’s translation of Roupen Zartarian’s “How Death Came to the Earth.”

The presentation, streamed on both YouTube and Zoom, was sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program and co-sponsored by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), the Armenian Cultural Organization of Minnesota (ACOM), and the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS).

Armenian-American Sketches is the eighth volume in the Armenian Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno. Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian of the Armenian Studies Program is the editor of the Armenian Series.

Matossian began the discussion with a biographical account of Keljik’s life. Bedros Arakel Keljik was born in the region of Kharpert, also known as Harput, in 1874. It was his school principal and teacher Hovhannes Tlgadinsti who paved the way for his future as a writer. When he was just sixteen years old, Keljik emigrated to the state of Massachusetts where he was a factory worker. He later moved to Boston where he began to take on a new role as a political activist for the Hnchakian Party.

In 1892 Keljik married Zabel Kertikian, and the two of them moved to Chicago, Illinois in 1896. It was here that Keljik began to emerge as an entrepreneur as he sold oriental rugs in a department store. Simultaneously, Keljik managed to graduate from the Kemp College of Law and campaign for the Democratic Party. In 1899 the Keljiks moved

to St. Paul, Minnesota where he established his own oriental rug business. This business was eventually passed down through one of Keljik’s three offspring, Emerson Keljik, and is currently owned by the third generation of Keljiks.

“His own story was at least as colorful as any of his fictional characters,” stated Matossian. In addition to all the other colorful titles that Keljik had acquired, translator and writer were added to his list. Keljik was not the only one, however, who had a passion for writing. His brother, Krikor Keljik, and nephew, Vahan Totovents, shared in this passion. Keljik was also involved with an Armenian literary society during his time in Boston. It is through this group that he became acquainted with woman’s suffragist Alice Stone Blackwell. Ohannes Chatschumian, a good friend of Blackwell’s, was responsible for introducing her to this society, and the two of them began translating some Armenian poetry into English. Unfortunately, Chatschumian passed away without finishing the project, so Keljik took Chatschumian’s place and helped Blackwell with the translations. Matossian noted how the translation process usually entailed Keljik providing the literal translations and Blackwell refining those into idiomatic English.

Keljik and Blackwell’s timing was impeccable. Matossian explained how amidst the Hamidian Massacres, “suddenly there was a need to introduce Americans at large to Armenian culture and literature in order to bring to their attention what was going on with Armenians in the Ottoman Empire at the time.” In addition to translations, Keljik contributed some of his own pieces to the stock of Armenian literature circulating

SEE KELJIK PAGE 7

Armenian Studies Program Awarded “California Revealed” Grant to Catalog Digital Collection

STAFF REPORT

We digitized, now what? To answer that question, the Armenian Studies Program (ASP) was recently awarded a grant from California Revealed, a California State Library initiative, which will facilitate making the Program’s digitized collection of local Armenian-American music available online to the public.

The grant supports processing and cataloging the materials collected during the public memory event, “Armenian-American Musical Heritage of the San Joaquin Valley” held this past February 29, 2020. The collection contains fascinating and valuable primary source documentation of the local production of Armenian-American music in the San Joaquin Valley during the 20th century. It covers musicians, local recording labels, musical venues, and area purveyors of records and phonographs. Included



Left to right: East Coast-based Armenian musicians Kemani Harry Hasekian (violin); udi Edwart Bashian (oud); and Karekin Proodian/ Prudian (dumbeg). This photograph was reproduced on the M.G. Parsekian record label (West Hoboken, NJ), c. 1920-1929. Photo courtesy of Richard A. Hagopian.

are historic photographs of Armenian-American musicians and performances; promotional materials and advertisements for musicians and concert venues; catalogs from locally-produced

SEE ASP GRANT PAGE 6

“The Third Way of Being Armenian: Armenians in Turkey”-An Opinion Piece by Dr. Kılıçdağı



Photo: ASP Archive

DR. OHANNES KILIÇDAĞI
SPECIAL TO *HYE SHARZHOOM*

Armenians who survived the Genocide and continued to live in Turkey have not attracted much attention from diaspora communities until recently. Only in the last decade or so have some young academics such as Hrag Papazian and Christopher Sheklian conducted some research on the Armenian community of Turkey. The reasons for this neglect are various. Genocide was perceived as the ultimate end after which nothing and no one could survive. Talking about the remaining portion of the Armenians may have created doubts about the genocidal characteristics of the Armenian Genocide, lessening its severity and ferocity. In a nutshell, it may have made it look “less genocide.”

The loss was so huge that it was not worth talking about what remained—it does not console anyone. On the contrary, a comparison between what once had been there and what survived may have deepened the agony and trauma by focusing on the insurmountably enormous loss. Moreover, those Armenians in Turkey were considered as being left in “enemy’s territory,” which made them already a “lost case.” Politically and culturally they were dead Armenians walking. Their statements and self-expressions were ignored because they were talking under “the Turkish yoke.” Therefore, what they say was not dependable as their sincere opinions.

None of these is completely incorrect. It is true that Armenians living in the Turkish nation-state have been left vulnerable and defenseless as much as they had never been before under the Ottoman rule. They were devoid of almost all possibilities and instruments of opposition and resistance. However, the

approach I described above has destructively homogenized the experience of Armenians in Turkey and erased their existence completely. Some Armenians indeed survived the Genocide, remained in Turkey and built up the third way of being Armenian, besides those living in the Republic of Armenia, Soviet or not, and living in the diaspora. (Undoubtedly, the diaspora experience of Armenians cannot be homogenized either. There is not just a single case or way of being diaspora. But this is a separate issue.)

In fact, when one talks about Armenians who survived the Genocide and remained in Turkey, it may and should refer to two groups. The first one is those who live with their Armenian identity publicly and at least as nominal Christians. In other words, they are “official Armenians.” Since the questions pertaining to the mother tongue and religious affiliations were removed from Turkish censuses in the mid-1980s, it is difficult to tell the exact number of these “official Armenians.” However, the most optimistic estimate does not exceed 60,000.

The second group is Islamized Armenians who converted to Islam during or after the Genocide. Descendants of those Islamized Armenians became Muslim too, most of the time without knowing their Armenianness. Their number is even beyond any educated guess although some mention hundreds of thousands. Their existence is a new issue even for the rest of the Armenian community in Turkey. Only in the last two decades or so have some of them emerged and made their presence known. A portion of them basically do not care about their Armenian ancestry, and even react angrily to their relatives who bring up this issue. Relatively few of them have preferred turning back to their “original/ancestral” identity and religion and taking action for its sake such as being baptized. There are some others who claim their Armenianness but continue to keep and practice their Islamic faith. In other words, they both accept Armenianness and the Muslim religion. This last case has created confusion in the mind of Armenians as their existence and claim challenge perennially

assumed bond between Armenianness and Christianity, according to which these two have been molded together inseparably. Could there be Muslim Armenians by definition? This debate still has a long way to go.

The Armenian community in Turkey should be approached as a distinct case of the Armenian nation-state and diaspora. Although, obviously, there are many common points there are some definitional and existential differences. For instance, as very well established, the Armenian identity in diasporan communities is based on remembrance of the past/genocide whereas Armenians in Turkey have developed a collective and strategic amnesia to be able to survive. This survival strategy has not made them less Armenian. Social and cultural deterioration and regression were undeniable. However, the Armenian heritage in that land is so deep and entrenched that it continues to resist and exist. There are still dozens of institutions that carry this heritage and raise it up. The Armenian community is still alive and despite all difficulties, continue to generate academics, intellectuals, artists, authors, journalists who are also influential in Turkish public opinion.

Since they are socio-politically alive, they have their internal divisions and fractions. Roughly, one group adopts a more conformist attitude with the policies of the government. Another group, on the other hand, tries to defend civil liberties of the community members more openly and courageously. They try to raise their voice against violations of these liberties as happened during the last election of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul. However, their job is not easy as they struggle with a coalition of state circles and their agents in the Armenian community.

The trajectory of the Armenian community of Turkey is a part of the global history of the Armenians. It is an excellent case to observe and study the complex, multi-faceted character of the Armenian identity. It is also an example of endurance and survival for generations in a hostile environment. Therefore, it deserves both academic and political interest.

memorabilia relating to local music production, providing details of people, places and events on written forms. Community members also loaned over-sized items that could not be digitized on site, including a collection of sheet music by Prof. Krikor Kalfayan (Prof. Kalfayan), to be digitized and returned.

Archivist Malina Zakian created a database catalog entry for each of the digital scans, and entered the descriptive information from the participants’ written forms. Most significantly for the collection, Zakian also incorporated relevant search terms to aid finding the images

CHAVOOR, FROM PAGE 4

grandmother and grandmother, he was not originally aware of their testimony. What Chavoor does recall from his childhood is sitting by the TV as a six or seven-year-old and watching a Western show with his great-grandmother, Hannah Sadoian. Upon seeing a caravan of wagons in the show, Chavoor observed how “she suddenly became very animated, but I didn’t speak Armenian and she spoke very little English.” His grandmother Ruth, Hannah’s daughter, came over and told him in English, “She wants you to know that in the time before cars she traveled in wagons like that.” “I had no way of knowing that she was referring to their escape from Turkey,” he stated, “and that was all I knew for the next 50 years.” In high school and college, Chavoor began learning about the Genocide. It was not until 2011, however, when he learned of his great-grandmother, Hannah, and his grandmother, Ruth’s story. Just as he and his wife were about to paint, Chavoor recalled tossing one of Ruth’s journals on the table. It ironically opened to the only passage in which his grandmother shares her Genocide story.

In 1895, Hannah and five-year-old Ruth were living with Hannah’s in-laws in Harput, Turkey. Meanwhile, Hannah’s husband was living in the United States. Only a few weeks before the Hamidian massacres occurred in Harput, a Turkish neighbor had convinced Hannah and Ruth to remain in his attic for a little while. When the attack occurred a few weeks later, Chavoor mentioned how Hannah had seen her sister’s house lit on fire from the attic window. She passed out. It took over a year for the proper paperwork to be arranged for her and Ruth to leave Harput. When the time of their departure arrived, Hannah was also to transport twenty orphans to an orphanage in Istanbul, a journey of over 600 miles by wagon. From Istanbul, the two took a boat to France and by 1897, they made their way to the United State where Hannah’s husband had been living.

“Hannah’s experience is

and documents online. These archival materials contextualize another of the Program’s resources, a collection of locally-produced 78-rpm recordings from the Armenian-American diaspora. Work to catalog the 78s was supported through a grant from the Grammy Foundation, and the Program is currently investigating ways of making these audio resources available online.

Now that the catalog is complete, the Armenian Studies Program is positioned to further collaborate with California Revealed and the State Library, to digitize the oversized materials and to host the ASP Armenian-American music collection online for public access. The role of collaboration with the State Library is particularly important in preserving the digital content and better assures that these materials will be available for

the cornerstone of the thesis,” Chavoor noted. “Who we are? How did we become who we are? Those are the questions I approach in the thesis, and the answers in some ways, start with Hannah 1895.” From what Chavoor learned, one conclusion he has come to accept is that “the Turks a hundred years ago did despicable, loathsome, evil things; on the other hand, a Turk hid my great-grandmother and her daughter in his house for two weeks and saved their lives.” Because of this, Chavoor recognized how “there are Turks today who believe that nothing ever happened, but there are also some who know the truth.” In October of 2019, Chavoor had the opportunity to travel to Turkey with his wife, Grace. There, he found more inspiration for his essays included in his thesis. He commented how the trip felt like completing something when he arrived in Harput 122 years after his great-grandmother had left. “Everything before that was stories,” he explained, “but standing where both sides of my family stood, seeing the one stubborn wall—all that was left of what was Euphrates College, which my great-grandfather helped build, well, that was like finding the origins or a kind of confirmation of the story.”

This past year, Chavoor’s thesis was nominated as “Outstanding Thesis” from Fresno State’s MFA program. He wishes to publish his thesis someday with the hope that “it will resonate with Armenian-Americans.”

For example, he mentioned how he believes his experiences “will have some parallel to their own experiences, like looking for Armenian names on the end credits of movies, or the wonderful smells of an Armenian deli, or singing the Hayr Mer.” At the same time, Chavoor would like to see his experiences influence non-Armenians. He hopes they may draw the conclusion “that awful things happen and we all may respond in different and complicated ways, and that miraculous, amazing things also happen that we call God, luck, or sheer will, and perhaps all three.”

years in the future. The digitized materials will be published for public access to Calisphere, a service of the University of California libraries and gateway to digital collections from California libraries, archives and museums.

About California Revealed:

California Revealed is a State Library initiative to help California’s public libraries, in partnership with other local heritage groups, digitize, preserve, and provide online access to archival materials—books, newspapers, photographs, audiovisual recordings, and more—that tell the incredible stories of the Golden State.

**“All Things Armenian”
Radio Hour on
Multicultural 1600AM
Sundays
2:00-3:00PM**

ASP GRANT, FROM PAGE 5

record labels and sheet music.

Cataloging work is not glamorous, but it is essential for the use and discoverability of collections. A catalog connects the individual items of a collection to the outside public. For example, providing pertinent descriptions of a photograph such as the one depicted accompanying this article, can elicit a variety of research uses. This is especially true for a collection such the ASP’s Armenian-American Musical Heritage of the San Joaquin Valley. A family historian might search by name to find a treasured image of a relative

who was a local *dumbeg* player; a social historian might be interested in the traditions of *kef* bands at Armenian weddings; a folk musician, the mixing of heritages illustrated by the range of instruments brought together for a performance. A good description will allow each of these researchers to find what they are looking for when they search the catalog.

The California Revealed grant allows the Armenian Studies Program to integrate materials gathered from the public event into a searchable database. Event participants contributed nearly 150 scans of photographs and

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KELJIK, FROM PAGE 5

in America. Matiossian remarked how Keljik relied on “a crisp and simple style of writing” to capture the Armenian-American’s experiences in the late 19th century through the early 20th century.

Marc Mamigonian equated Keljik’s style to that of Irish novelist James Joyce as both composed “a chapter on the moral history of their countries.” In contrast, Prof. Der Mugrdechian compared Keljik’s work to that of William Saroyan, mentioning how “they both bring to life characters long since gone.” On the other hand, Der Mugrdechian acknowledged that there are some clear differences between Saroyan and Keljik’s writing.

“Keljik portrays the often-difficult struggles and challenges that the early Armenian settlers went through,” Der Mugrdechian asserted. On a similar note, Mamigonian emphasized how “these are not romanticized portraits... many of the characters are cunning, maybe a little crooked. Some are honest and others are too naïve maybe for their own good.”

But where there may be flaws

or struggles, there is also humor contained in Keljik’s works. For instance, Atamian explained how Keljik’s short stories are hilarious in that “there is every possible stereotype you want inside these pieces about Armenians, Jews, Irish people, drunkards, women, men, clergymen.” At the same time, there is also an element of nostalgia. For instance, Mamigonian observed how these stories published in the 1940s look back on the Genocide. “There is a definite sense of what has been lost not just by the genocide but leaving the homeland,” he reflected. The wealth of themes found in the margins of his stories, places Keljik’s writing under several genres. For example, Atamian noted how Keljik’s descriptions of places in Boston which no longer exist categorize Keljik’s texts as American history. And yet, as Atamian observed, these short stories can also be identified as Armenian history, ethnic history, and other categories.

The translation project would have not been possible if it were not for a series of coincidences. These coincidences began when Mark Keljik, Bedros’ grandson, visited the Library of Congress.

“All Things Armenian” Completes First Year on the Air Recording Its Forty-Seventh Episode

DUSTIN VARTANIAN
STAFF WRITER

Listen up, the “All Things Armenian” radio program has been on the air for more than a year. Tune in to hear interviews with interesting members of the Armenian community and to hear about the upcoming events planned by the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State.

“All Things Armenian” has gained popularity and is now being re-broadcast Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 9:00pm on SoCalArmenian 95.5FM in Southern California.

The “All Things Armenian” radio show has now produced forty-seven episodes full of insightful interviews. Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian has hosted the show and he has interviewed professors, students, musicians, actors, and others who discuss topics relevant to the Armenian community.

There have been many insightful and interesting episodes produced recently. Episode forty-two featured special guest Dr. Hratch Tchilingirian, who was calling in from the United Kingdom. Dr. Tchilingirian is on the faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford University and is the director of the Armenian Diaspora Survey (ADS). The Armenia Diaspora Survey “conducts surveys of public opinion in Armenian diaspora communities to inform the public, scholars, policy-makers and community leaders about the issues, attitudes and trends shaping the Armenian world in the 21st century.”

Dr. Tchilingirian discussed some of the interesting results in the Survey, which was recently made available to the public.

In episode forty-four Dr. Tamar

He discovered his grandfather’s book when typing the family name into a card catalog. The family then hired Armenian translator and journalist Aris Sevag to translate seven of Keljik’s stories and Matossian also translated one story which all appeared in the *Ararat Quarterly*.

Coincidentally, Atamian who wrote for *Ararat* under Sevag’s leadership, was piqued in Keljik after coming across some of his translations. And by a third coincidence, Atamian happened to be having dinner with Matossian in a Georgian restaurant when he discovered Matossian’s knowledge of Keljik and interest in the project. Unfortunately, Sevag was unable to complete the translation process due to his untimely passing. However, Atamian and Matossian approached Der Mugrdechian three years ago, and the project sprouted from there.

Despite all the coincidences, Atamian commented how there also “has to be a consciousness amongst Armenians, first of all, that cultural work is work.” He explained how these sorts of projects are full-time jobs. Mamigonian highlighted the current “lack



Left to right: Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Suzanna Ekmekchyan, Andrew Hagopian, Dustin Vartanian, Matthew Mugrdechian, and Ariana Garabedian.

Boyadjian of Michigan State University was the featured guest. One of the topics she discussed was the concept of identity, and what makes an Armenian. She explained the complexity of defining a homeland for herself and for many Armenians. She also explained her passion for literature and her life-long journey to becoming a professor of literature. Dr. Boyadjian also discussed the making of her book *The City Lament: Jerusalem Across the Medieval Mediterranean*.

In episode forty-five, “All Things Armenian” host Prof. Der Mugrdechian interviewed Dr. Stephen Badalyan Riegg, assistant professor of History at Texas A&M, who discussed the complicated history between Armenia and Russia. He spoke about his research into the question of varying Russian-Armenian relations throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Dr. Riegg’s new book, *Russia’s Entangled Embrace: The Tsarist Empire and the Armenians*

1801-1914, was based on his doctoral dissertation.

One of the most interesting aspects of the program is learning about the life story of each guest. Before diving into the main discussion, Prof. Der Mugrdechian invites each guest to tell the audience about their life story and about their involvement in the Armenian community. It is fascinating to learn about a guest’s background, because each has a very different story to tell. Guests on the show are from all over the world and each of their childhoods and educational experiences are vastly different. However, they are all in some way involved in the Armenian community.

Tune in to see what new stories will be told this week. “All Things Armenian” airs on Multicultural 1600AM on Sunday afternoons from 2:00-3:00pm. Past episodes can be accessed on Multicultural Radio’s website or can be heard on SoundCloud, by typing “All Things Armenian” in the search bar.

ARTSAKH, FROM PAGE 1

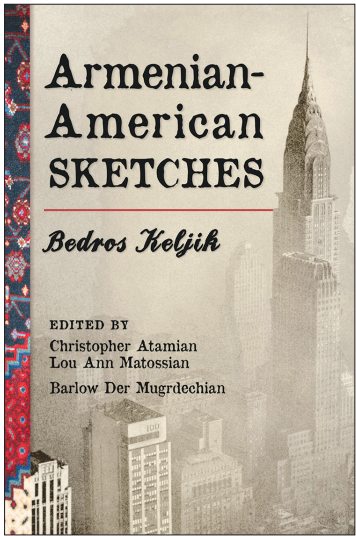
eastern region of Armenia. Many ancient Christian churches and monasteries dot the landscape of Artsakh, including the monasteries of Amaras and Tadivank. Artsakh has been continuously inhabited by Armenians until modern times. The city of Shushi was an important cultural center for Armenians.

At the time of publication, a humanitarian cease-fire between the sides was mediated by Russia as the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia met in Moscow. The ceasefire was to take effect on October 10.

Please contact your local representatives asking them to take action and to stop the violence against the people of Artsakh.

Additional information about the history of Artsakh can be found at:

Office of the Nagorno-Karabagh Republic in Washington, DC-<http://www.nkrusa.org/> and the Office of the President of Artsakh-<https://www.president.am/en/Artsakh-nkr/>.



The Armenian Studies Program
presents

“Portraits of Unbelonging: Photography,
the Ottoman State and Armenians
Leaving for America, 1896-1908”



Dr. Zeynep Devrim Gürsel
(Rutgers University)

Thursday, November 12, 2020
7:00PM

Virtual Lecture
Zoom registration:
bit.ly/armenianstudiesgursel

The Armenian Studies Program
presents

“The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul
Under the Light of the Last Crisis
of the Patriarchal Election”

Dr. Ohannes Kılıçdağı

Monday, November 16, 2020
7:00PM

Virtual Lecture
Zoom registration:
bit.ly/armenianstudieskilicdagı3



FIRST REPUBLIC, FROM PAGE 1

Series of The Press at California State University, Fresno.

“The Armenian Series is pleased to publish this important work, which brings new scholarship to the topic of the First Republic,” said Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian, general editor of the Armenian Series.

The volume is dedicated to Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian for his outstanding contribution to the field of Armenian Studies over the past half century.

This edited volume provides a multifaceted and interdisciplinary approach to studying the fascinating history of the Republic. Through an analysis of the politics, gender, and diplomacy of the period, the volume enriches our understanding of the short-lived Republic, which played a crucial role in guaranteeing the perseverance of Armenian identity, and ultimately laying the foundation for the modern Republic of Armenia.

The list of contributors in

the order of their contribution are: Dr. Bedross Der Matossian, “Introduction”; Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian, “The Republic of Armenia: A Contextual Overview”; Dr. Houri Berberian, “From Nationalist-Socialist to National Socialist? The Shifting Politics of Abraham Giulkhandanian”; Dr. Ari Şekeryan, “Rethinking the Establishment of the First Republic of Armenia: Reactions of the Ottoman-Turkish and Armenian Press in Istanbul (May-October 1918)”; Dr. Seda D. Ohanian, “The Role of Women in the Social and Political Life of the Republic of Armenia (1918-1920)”; Dr. Rubina Peroomian, “The Subversive Activities of Armenian Bolsheviks: A Critical Factor in Yerevan-Moscow Negotiations (1918-1920)”; Dr. Vartan Matiossian, “The Recognition of the First Republic of Armenia in South America (1918-1920)”; Dr. Jakub Osiecki, “The Visit of Rev. Antoine Delpuch to the South Caucasus in 1919: An Attempt to Establish

KILIÇDAĞI, FROM PAGE 1

Dr. Hrant Dink and his friends. Dr. Kılıçdağı follows the affairs of the Armenian community and its relations with Turkish state both as an academic and columnist. He has also participated as a speaker in many town hall meetings during the election crisis of the Patriarchate, between 2009 and 2019.

In Turkey, high school graduates enter universities through a central exam that is taken by everyone wishing to pursue a university degree. “I also took that exam and won admission to dental school,” said Dr. Kılıçdağı.

“However, I understood quite soon that my passion was for history and social science. So I took the exam for a second time and was admitted to the Sociology Department of Boğaziçi University, one of the top universities of Turkey and originally established as an American college in 1863.” Dr. Kılıçdağı later double-majored in political science.

Dr. Kılıçdağı has studied in the United States with a pre-doctoral fellowship (2011-2012) at the

Armenians Studies Program, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He was also accepted as a post-doctoral fellow by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University between 2017 and 2019.

Until the 2000s, young Armenians in Turkey avoided studying history, let alone the Armenian Genocide, as it was highly risky to talk and write contrary to the official history. However, it seems this pressure generated an opposite effect on Dr. Kılıçdağı, who turned to studying history and Armenian Studies as an act of rebellion.

Dr. Kılıçdağı has a broad research interest including Ottoman-Turkish history, beginning from the early 19th century. He studies the history of Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, especially the trajectory of military service of these groups in the Ottoman-Turkish army. He is also interested in questions of citizenship and minority studies.

Dr. Kılıçdağı has taught about the social and intellectual history of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic at Bilgi

University in Istanbul. Dr. Kılıçdağı was acquainted with Fresno, albeit more as an imaginary place, as he has translated dozens of William Saroyan stories into Turkish, first published almost 20 years ago.

He “knows” Fresno from those early stories. Indeed, one of the saddest results of the ongoing pandemic for Dr. Kılıçdağı is that “it will not allow me to visit Fresno physically and so I will not have the chance to see Saroyan’s hometown. Who knows, maybe in the future...”

Dr. Kılıçdağı will be teaching a three-unit course in the Fall semester on “Awakening, Death, and Survival: History of Ottoman Armenians in Modern Times.” He will also give three public lectures. He gave the first one on September 18 on the topic of ““Living Together Requires Dying Together”: Conscription of Armenians into the Ottoman Army after the 1908 Revolution.”

Dr. Kılıçdağı is looking forward to his semester at Fresno State, but it is unfortunate that the pandemic has overlapped with his Kazan professorship and he will not be in Fresno in person.

Statement by Dr. Joseph I. Castro
Regarding Conflict in the Armenian
Republic of Artsakh and anti-Armenian
Acts of Violence in California

Oct. 5 statement by Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro:

“As the President of Fresno State — home to a vibrant and world-renowned Armenian Studies Program and part of a large community of Armenian Americans in our region of California — I am deeply concerned about the conflict occurring in the Armenian Republic of Artsakh. I am hopeful that the pursuit of international mediation will provide a quick and peaceful resolution.

“Fresno State is the only public university in the United States with an Armenian Genocide Monument on its campus. The monument is dedicated to commemorating and educating the community about the Genocide and inspiring future generations about the resilience of the human spirit. The Peace Garden on our campus, likewise, mirrors our resolve to focus on dialogue and respect.

“I express my solidarity with and support for the Armenian community of the Central Valley and throughout California in condemning the acts of violence and hatred committed against Armenian Americans in San Francisco in July and September of this year. Violence and hatred stand counter to the values of Fresno State, which are meaningfully reflected in our monument and Peace Garden.”

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