



**California State University, Fresno
Armenian Studies Program
5245 N. Backer Ave. M/S PB 4
Fresno, California 93740-8001**

Armenian Studies Program News Service

**CSU Fresno Armenian Studies Program activities as reported in local,
national, and international media.**

Fall 2013

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ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier, Glendale, CA
SUBJECT: “David of Sassoun” Volume Launched

DATE: November 21, 2013
PAGE: 1 of 1

‘David of Sassoun’ Volume to be Formally Launched at Fresno State

FRESNO - Dr. Vida Samiian, dean of the College of Arts & Humanities will give the opening remarks at a formal book-launching of the new volume, David of Sassoun: Critical Essays on the Armenian Epic, at 7:30 PM on November 21, in the Industrial Technology Building Auditorium, Room 101 (SE corner of Barstow and Campus Drive), on the Fresno State campus.

David of Sassoun is volume 4 in the Armenian Series at California State University, Fresno, established by the Armenian Studies Program and generously funded by the M. Victoria Karagozian Kazan and Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan Endowment.

The publication of volume 4 was also made possible through a grant from the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund.

ASP Coordinator Barlow Der Mugrdechian, co-editor of David of Sassoun with Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, will discuss the history behind the epic and why the discovery of a new variant in California became so important.

Der Mugrdechian will outline how the book was conceived and the significance of the articles by the contributing scholars.

Dr. Sergio La Porta, Haig & Isabel Berberian Professor of Arme-

nian Studies at Fresno State, will give concluding remarks for the evening.

David of Sassoun is a collection of essays by the world's foremost scholars on the great oral epic of Armenia: by Charles Dowsett, Dickran Kouymjian, Aram Ter-Ghevondian, Earl R. Anderson, Chaké Der Melkonian-Minasian, Frédéric Feydit, Arpiné Khatchadourian, Aram Tolegian, Chaké Der Melkonian-Minasian, Vahé Oshagan, and includes an original poem on David by Ashough Hovnani.

The epic poem has survived until the 1970s orally, passed on, generation after generation, for more than a thousand years by anonymous village bards. Today it is recognized as the Armenian epic, with much to learn about Armenian culture encompassed in its pages.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

Parking is available after 7:00PM in Lots K, L or Q. Use parking code 273404 to receive a free parking pass.

Copies of David of Sassoun will be available after the book launch.

For more information on the lecture please contact the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, Watertown, MA
SUBJECT: “David of Sassoun” Volume Launched

DATE: November 16, 2013
PAGE: 1 of 1

David of Sassoun Volume To Launch at Fresno State

FRESNO — Dr. Vida Samiian, dean of the College of Arts & Humanities, will give the opening remarks at a formal book-launching of the new volume, *David of Sassoun: Critical Essays on the Armenian Epic*, at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 21 in the Industrial Technology Building Auditorium, Room 101, on the Fresno State campus.

David of Sassoun is the fourth volume in the Armenian Series of the press at California State University, Fresno, established by the Armenian Studies Program and funded by the M. Victoria Karagozian Kazan and Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan Endowment. The publication of this volume was also made possible through a grant from the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund.

Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Barlow Der Mugrdechian, co-editor of *David of Sassoun* with Dr. Dickran Kouymjian, will discuss the history behind the epic and why the discovery of a new variant in California became so important. Der Mugrdechian will outline how the book was conceived and the significance of the articles by the contributing scholars.

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The epic poem survived until the 1970s orally, passed on, generation after generation, for more than a thousand years by anonymous village bards. Today it is recognized as the Armenian epic with the Armenian culture encompassed in its pages.

The lecture is free and open to the public. Copies of the book will be on sale.

For more information on the lecture contact the Armenian Studies Program.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier, Glendale CA
 SUBJECT: Armenian Bar Association in Fresno

DATE: November 14, 2013
 PAGE: 1 of 2

Armenian Bar Association Returns to Fresno With Flourish

FRESNO - On the weekend of October 25-27, members of the Armenian Bar Association from across the country were united in Fresno, Calif., to recognize and honor California Court of Appeal Justice Charles "Chuck" Poochigian and several members of Fresno's judiciary for their outstanding dedication to public service and their Armenian heritage.

The Association's pilgrimage to Fresno, one of the oldest Armenian-American communities in the United States with its roots dating back to the late 1800's, started off with a Friday evening dinner at the century-old Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church.

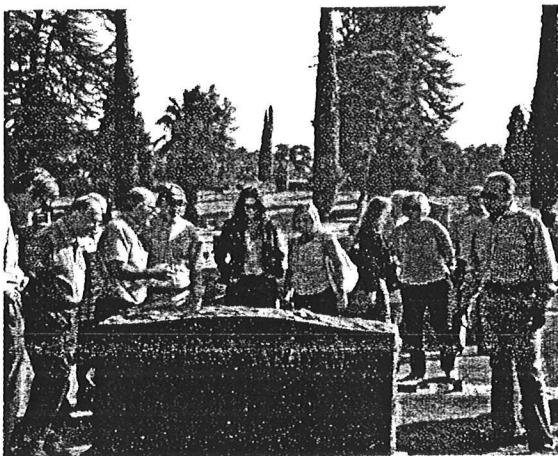
On October 26, distinguished Professor of Armenian Studies at California State University Fresno, Barlow Der Mugrdechian, guided Association members on a four-hour tour of the many historic sites of Fresno County. The tour included visits to the epic statue of David of Sassoun that adorns the Civic Center. This was followed by a soul-stirring expedition to the Ararat and Massis Armenian Cemeteries located on the west side of the city. Members paused to reflect on the immense contributions of notable figures, such as world literary giant William Saroyan and Armenian hero Soghomon Tehlirian.

The tour next took the attendees for a visit to century-old St. Gregory's Armenian Church in Fowler, where parish Father Yeghia Hairabedian greeted the delegation and traced the history of the farm community and congregation. From there, the group moved to the ever-popular Simonian Farms on the edge of Fresno's wide country roads, where the attendees had a chance to pick fruit in a tribute to Armenian farmers and families who brought with them the talents they developed in their hometowns of Kharpert, Moush, Bitlis, Van, Erzerum and Dickrangerd to make California one of the greatest food-producing areas in the world.



Above: Armenian Bar members visit the Soghomon Tehlirian monument in Fresno.

Below, visiting the William Saroyan marker.



The tour was capped with a visit to California State University Fresno's Armenian Studies Department. There the guests had a chance to observe first-hand the many outstanding programs the university has developed in educating students in the Armenian language, history and culture. Chairman Ghazarian stated that "We are thankful to Prof. Der Mugrdechian for taking his valuable time to educate us about the rich and vibrant history of Fresno."

Following the Fresno Armenian heritage tour, Armenian Bar members were invited to attend a private reception and meeting at the recently-constructed California Court of Appeal, Fifth Appellate District.

Located in Fresno's "Old Arme-

nian Town" section, the attendees had the unique opportunity to hear Justice Chuck Poochigian, along with Presiding Justice of the Fifth Appellate District, Justice Brad Hill, and the highest sitting Armenian-American jurist in California, Supreme Court Associate Justice Marvin Baxter, guide the guests to the court's library, conference room and pointed out the unique architectural features of the building.

On Saturday evening, the Association hosted its Judges' Night dinner gala in the grand hall of Holy Trinity Church. The event drew nearly 200 guests from Fresno's legal community.

Several prominent law firms, including Baker Manock, Baradat & Paboojian, Dowling Aaron, Coleman & Horowitz, Lozano Smith, McCormick Barstow and Tomassian, Pimentel & Shapazian served as sponsors for the festivities. Joining the law firms as sponsors were Fresno Armenian families that are very active in and have served the community for generations, including the Apkarian, Messerlian, Parnagian and Poochigian families.

Former Armenian Bar board member and Los Angeles attorney, Garo K. Hovannessian, served

as the evening's MC. Hovannessian welcomed the guests and invited Father Vahan Goshdarian to offer the evening's invocation. Hovannessian welcomed Armenian Bar Chairman Garo Ghazarian to the podium to deliver his remarks.

Ghazarian opened his presentation by asking that all those present rise for a moment of silence to reflect on the memories of those who are buried in the Armenian cemeteries of Fresno, and honor the sacrifices made by those earlier generations of Fresno Armenians who, out of the ashes of the Armenian Genocide, built a vibrant community.

Chairman Ghazarian asked: "Why are we here? Why did the Armenian Bar decide to come to Fresno? Is it because Fresno needs us? No, it's because we need Fresno."

Ghazarian urged the young and old lawyers of Fresno to renew their commitments to not only the legal canons of their profession, but also to the moral canons of being Armenians. He said that while speaking, reading and writing in Armenian are wonderful traits to possess, they are not exclusive, and not being proficient in these abilities does not preclude those from being Arme-



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier, Glendale CA
SUBJECT: Armenian Bar Association in Fresno

DATE: November 14, 2013
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nians through and through. To be an Armenian, Ghazarian continued, "one needs to feel the need and urgency in his or her soul, and be of service to the Armenian community and to the Armenian Cause – Hye Tad."

Finally, Ghazarian thanked Fresno for giving the Armenian Bar its founder, Raffi K. Hovannian, and concluded by pointing out that we, as Armenians, owe a debt of gratitude to the United States, our adopted homeland, for all the opportunities that are available to us, to excel as human beings, and to do so while maintaining our identities as Armenian-Americans.

The audience was treated to a musical interlude by talented Fresno tenor Berj Apkarian who lifted the spirits of the audience to even higher plateaus with his virtuoso performance of traditional Armenian songs.

Justice Baxter was then invited to the podium to address the guests and say a few words about the evening's honoree Justice Poochigian. A native of Fowler, Calif., Baxter eloquently described that while the first Armenians to the Central Valley were given refuge from the horrors of the Ottoman Empire, they were not exactly welcomed with

open arms. He recounted how the ancestors of Fresno's Armenian community had to endure the outright discrimination that came with restrictive land covenants and preclusion from many social and fraternal organizations. Baxter recalled how this differential treatment resulted in the phenomenon of Armenians living closely together and forming social organizations and fraternal

bonds that would help the community survive to the present day.

The evening's most compelling remarks were made by Armenian Bar former Chairman and current Vice-Chairman, Armen K. Hovannian. A founding member of the organization, Hovannian gave a rousing and deeply-meaningful tribute to Justice Poochigian highlighting his adherence to the values that his forefathers brought with them to Fresno from Armenia nearly 100 years ago. As an outstanding model of these values, Justice Poochigian, Hovannian explained, has rightfully earned a reputation of honesty, integrity, and decency.

Harkening back to the fundamentally positive core values of the early Armenian-American generations, Hovannian commented, "Chuck Poochigian is the most dominant and complete carrier of those genetics." Hovannian then acknowledged several Fresno County Superior Court Judges who were present to stand. Among that group were Superior Court Judges Brian Arax, David Kalemkarian, Debra Kazanjian, Edward Sarkisian, Houry Sanderson, John Vogt, and James Aaron (retired).

Justice Poochigian praised Hovannian and the Armenian

Bar Association for its worthy accomplishments over the years in service not only to the Armenian-American community, but also to Armenia. Justice Poochigian was then presented with a magnificent Armenian peacock painting by Glendale artist, Seroon Yeretsian, with an inscription recognizing Justice Poochigian for the extraordinary example he has been to his community.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The Fresno Bee; Fresno, CA

SUBJECT: Fresno State Offers Karabagh Lectures

DATE: November 11, 2013

PAGE: 1 of 1

**Fresno State offers
Karabagh lectures**

Fresno State professors will speak on Armenian Karabagh on Friday as part of an Armenian Studies lecture series.

The lectures by Dr. Arsen Saparov and Dr. Ara Sambian will address borders in the Caucasus in the early 1920s and the Armenian Diasporan Press on mountainous Karabagh.

The lecture is free and open to the public. It will be in the Alice Peters Auditorium in the University Business Center. The event begins at 7:30 p.m. Parking in Lots A and J will be free after 7 p.m. For more information, contact the Armenian Studies Program at 599-278-2669.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CADATE: November 7, 2013SUBJECT: Noted Scholars to Present Historical Perspective on Karabagh PAGE: 1 of 1

Noted Scholars to Present Historical Perspective on Karabagh, at CSUF

FRESNO - Dr. Arsen Saparov (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor) and Dr. Ara Sanjian (University of Michigan-Dearborn), will speak on Karabagh at 7:30 PM on November 15, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191, on the Fresno State campus.

Dr. Saparov will speak on "Drawing Borders in the Caucasus the Early 1920's" and Dr. Sanjian will speak on the topic of "Irredentism at the Crossroads of Nationalism, Communism and Diverging Interpretations of the Soviet Experience: The Armenian Diasporan Press on Mountainous Karabagh, 1923-1985"

The lecture is part of the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State and is supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

The Soviet leadership often stands accused of deliberately drawing internal frontiers in the Caucasus as to create leverage against union republics. Violent conflicts that broke out in the 1990s in Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabagh and South Ossetia seem to prove this perception. In his presentation, Dr. Saparov will discuss the logic of the Bolshevik boundary-making in the South Caucasus. Dr. Saparov was educated at Central European University in Budapest and received his Ph.D in International Relations from the London School of

Economics.

The formation of the Mountainous Karabagh Autonomous Region within the territory of Soviet Azerbaijan in 1923 coincided with the emergence of the post-genocide Armenian Diaspora. The vast majority of political organizations and political-minded activists in the Diaspora envisaged a future Armenian state, which would encompass within its borders not only Western Armenia but also the Armenian-inhabited regions of Nagorno-Karabakh, Nakhichevan, and Akhalkalak, which had become recently part of Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Georgia. In this latter case, the political realities exacted that the demand should be focused on their immediate annexation to Soviet Armenia.

However, because there was a sharp divergence among the Diasporans in the attitude toward Communism as an ideology and in evaluating the Soviet experience in Armenia, the demands for the annexation of Mountainous Karabagh to Soviet Armenia raised in different Diasporan periodicals were pursued at varying degrees of frequency and intensity, and the arguments put forward by these periodicals were at times different.

Dr. Sanjian, Director of the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, will discuss the differing approaches of the news media to the Karabagh issue.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

Free parking is available after 7:00PM in Lots A and J, near the University Business Center. For more information on the lecture please contact the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The Armenian Observer, Hollywood, CA
SUBJECT: Lecture on Karabagh by Saparov

DATE: November 6, 2013
PAGE: 1 of 1

“Karabagh: An Historical Perspective” Lectures in CSUF on Friday, Nov. 15

Dr. Arsen Saparov (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor) and Dr. Ara Sanjian (University of Michigan-Dearborn), will speak on Karabagh at 7:30 PM on Friday, November 15, 2013, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191, on the Fresno State campus. Dr. Saparov will speak on “Drawing Borders in the Caucasus the Early 1920’s” and Dr. Sanjian will speak on the topic of “Irredentism at the Crossroads of Nationalism, Communism and

Diverging Interpretations of the Soviet Experience: The Armenian Diasporan Press on Mountainous Karabagh, 1923-1985”

The lecture is part of the Armenian Studies Program Fall Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State and is supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

Free parking is available after 7:00PM in Lots A and J, near the University Business Center. For more information on the lecture please contact the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CASUBJECT: Fresno State Lecture Series Preserves Armenian CultureDATE: October 17, 2013

PAGE: 1 of 2

Fresno State Lecture Series Preserves Armenian Culture

FRESNO (Fresno Bee) - A Fresno State lecture series is putting Armenian culture front and center. The Armenian Studies Program's 2013 Fall Lecture Series kicked off Sept. 5 and already has covered the Armenians of Bitlis, the seizure of Armenian property in Aintab, the state of Armenia today, American Armenian contributions across the nation and the land mine-free Artsakh campaign.

The lecture series is presented by Fresno State's Armenian Studies Program and the Armenian Students Organization. The Armenian Studies Program began in 1977.

The lectures are designed to provide an opportunity for students and faculty members to interact with each other and the community over topics that promote Armenian cultural awareness.

"It's been a forum to bring people together," says Barlow Der Mugrdechian, coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program and director of the Center for Armenian Studies.

"There are a variety of topics — history, art, film festivals. We do so many things to draw people in. The topics are ways of approaching things that we can't always do in the classroom."

As part of the series, a new book, "David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic," is being released this month. Der Mugrdechian co-edited the book, which was printed through the Armenian Series of The Press at Fresno State. The Armenian Series is a cooperative effort between the Armenian Studies Program and the College of Arts and Humanities.

Der Mugrdechian created the book jacket, which comes from a photo of the David of Sassoun statue at Courthouse Park in downtown Fresno. He plans to talk about the book as part of the lecture series in late November. He is also working on a series talk in early November. On Sept. 27, he talked about a recent visit to Armenia.

The lecture series received a boost last year through a \$10,000 grant by the Leon S. Peters Foundation. The Armenian Studies Program has a fundraising drive planned in the fall, with this year's goal \$50,000.

The lectures and other activities have received strong community support over the years, Der Mugrdechian says. Between 50,000 and 60,000 Armenians live in the central San Joaquin Valley.

Arnold Gazarian, who supports Armenian programs at Fresno State as well as other university departments, says the lecture series has an important role.

"Historically, the Armenian community has played a great part in the greater Fresno com-



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CASUBJECT: Fresno State Lecture Series Preserves Armenian CultureDATE: October 17, 2013

PAGE: 2 of 2

munity, yet its culture is not really well-known by so many of the citizens of Fresno," he says. "We've had so many new people move into the area in the last couple of decades. So the culture has been diluted. This is one way of bringing it to the forefront again.

"It has been successful; it is flowing at the university. The success also has proven with non-Armenian students in the studies. This program would not have been successful had it not had the backing of the community and people putting in the time and effort and throwing money into it."

Armenian student leaders at Fresno State say they are gaining a better understanding of Armenian culture by attending the lectures.

Vartush Mesropyan, a senior who is majoring in psychology and serving as president of the Armenian Students Organization, says she felt a sense of pride at Stepan Partamian's lecture Oct. 3 on "American Armenian Contributions to Humanity After the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian World: A Photographic Journey."

Partamian, author of the book, "Yes, We Have," and a founder of the Armenian Art Fund in Los Angeles, included a photo presentation showing how American Armenians have left their marks in many regions of the United States.

"It can be a tree, a building, a church, anything, and a lot of people don't know that Armenians are there," Mesropyan says. "I was actually getting butterflies. I thought, 'This is wonderful.' It just felt great, wonderful to be there."

On Oct. 8, Galinda Danilova talked on "Landmine Free Artsakh Awareness Campaign," focusing on how the war in 1992-94 between the Armenians of Karabagh and Azerbaijan left behind hundreds of mine fields. Danilova works for the Halo Trust, the world's largest humanitarian land mine clearance organization.

Marine Vardanyan, a junior majoring in public health and serving as vice president of the Armenian Students Organization, says she was emotionally touched at the lecture as she learned how lives have been altered through the demining process in Karabagh.

"We saw images of those who have been injured — and it was emotional," Vardanyan says. "I love the lecture series so much because it involves not only the students, but also the community. Everyone comes out. We would not have an opportunity to hear these speakers if it weren't for the program. As long as it brings Armenians together, there will be Armenians there. We are very supportive of each other. We value our attempts to preserve the Armenian culture."



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The Mirror Spectator; Watertown, MA
SUBJECT: David of Sassoun Book Published

DATE: October 12, 2013
PAGE: 1 of 1

David of Sassoun Book Published

FRESNO — *David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic* (The Press at California State University, Fresno, 2013), 228 pages, is a collection of essays by the world's foremost scholars on the great oral epic of Armenia.

Edited by Dickran Kouymjian and Barlow Der Mugrdechian, *David of Sassoun* was published as the newest addition to the Armenian Series of Fresno State's Armenian Studies Program. *David of Sassoun* is the fourth title in the Armenian Series established through The Press at California State University, Fresno.

The essays, by Charles Dowsett, Kouymjian, Aram Ter-Ghevondian, Earl R. Anderson, Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, Frédéric Feydit, Arpiné Khatchadourian, Aram Tolegian, Chaké Der Melkonian-Minassian, Vahé Oshagan, as well as an original poem on David by Ashough Hovnani, were presented at a symposium organized by Kouymjian the year after he was invited to the campus to establish a new program devoted to Armenian Studies. Kouymjian has described it as Fresno's contribution to the commemoration of the centennial celebration of the discovery and publication of the epic poem, which had survived until the 1970s orally, passed on, generation after generation, for more than a thousand years by anonymous village bards.

Many scholars from Armenia, France, England, Canada and the US who had published on the Armenian epic were invited to

participate in the International Symposium entitled "David of Sassoun: The Armenian Folk Epic after a Century."

In addition to the papers of the conference, the current volume contains an introduction outlining the history of the epic as well as a concise summary of all the episodes of the official version established by a team of scholars in Erevan in 1939.

Also included at the beginning of the volume is a new variant, the only known version of the epic recorded anywhere in the diaspora. Because of the publicity generated by the symposium, Lilyan Chooljian of Fresno, who was present at the conference, had recorded a recitation of the variant some years earlier and brought it to the attention of Kouymjian.

Thanks to a grant from the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Fund and the M. Victoria Karagozian Kazan and Henry S. Khanzadian Kazan Fund, and the efforts of Der Mugrdechian to include the volume in the Armenian Series of monographs the program sponsors, the book is now available to the general public.

According to its editors, these critical essays, which at times challenging traditional views held on the epic and how it should be presented and understood, will provide much source material for scholars.

David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic is available from The Press at California State University, Fresno through its website <http://shop.thepressatcsufresno.com>.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CA

SUBJECT: CSUF Publishes Critical Studies on David Sassoun

DATE: October 10, 2013

PAGE: 1 of 1

CSUF Publishes Critical Studies on David of Sassoun

FRESNO – “David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic” (The Press at California State University, Fresno, 2013), 228 pages, a collection of essays by the world’s foremost scholars on the great oral epic of Armenia, edited by Dickran Kouymjian and Barlow Der Mugrdechian, has just been published as the newest addition to the Armenian Series of Fresno State’s Armenian Studies Program. David of Sassoun is the fourth title in the Armenian Series established through The Press at California State University, Fresno.

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The critical brilliance of many of the essays, at times challeng-

ing traditional views held on the epic and how it should be presented and understood, will provide much source material for scholars.

The book is available from The Press at CSUF through its website - press@csufresno.edu; telephone 559-278-3056, or by post at The Press at CSUF, 2380 East Keats Avenue M/S MB 99, Fresno, CA 93740-8024; or Armenian Studies Program: email barlowd@csufresno.edu.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The Armenia Observer; Hollywood, CADATE: October 9, 2013SUBJECT: David of Sassoun Published by CSUF

PAGE: 1 of 1

“David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic” Published by CSUF

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“David of Sassoun: Critical Studies on the Armenian Epic” is available from: The Press at Fresno State: email: press@csufresno.edu; telephone 559-278-3056, Armenian Studies Program: email barlowd@csufresno.edu; telephone 559-278-2669



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CA
SUBJECT: From Africa to Armenian Studies

DATE: October 3, 2013
PAGE: 1 of 1

From Africa to Armenian Studies

By Mounah Saksouk

FRESNO - I would have never imagined that one day, being born in Liberia and raised in the USA, I was going to end up as a student in the class of Dr. Sona Haroutyunian who came from Italy, from the Ca'Foscari University of Venice as a visiting professor to teach a semester in the Armenian Studies Program at California State University in Fresno.

My interest in the Armenian Studies Program stemmed from my love for cultures. My philosophy is that although we all have different traditions, languages and mannerisms, we are all more similar than different. However, we will only know this by educating ourselves about each other. Through the Armenian Studies program I have been able to accomplish this.

When I learned about this new professor coming a long way from Europe I could not miss her class. The class that Dr. Haroutyunian taught was a topics course on the Armenian Genocide. I was thrilled to take this class. What I found was a life changing experience.

Dr. Haroutyunian's class introduced us to the concepts of history, memory, literature and translation. Her wealth of knowledge was refreshing.

Dr. Haroutyunian brought life to what we learned. She accomplished this by having us apply it to our own personal experiences. She encouraged us to incorporate our class readings and discussions into the writing of our papers. Her knack of bringing out each student's unique writing ability is

commendable and attests to the fact that she is a wonderfully inspiring professor.

In the last few months of the course, we read various Genocide narratives including **Skylark Farm** by Antonia Arslan and **My Grandmother** by Fethiye Cetin. Also, we compared these narratives to the **Skylark Farm** movie. By using these contrasting techniques, Dr. Haroutyunian dealt with the Armenian Genocide from quite a new perspective. Her techniques helped us to better understand the role of literature, translation and movie in raising awareness of the Armenian Genocide. Most importantly they relayed the idea of the unity of the Armenian people through adversity and how they have become a successful diaspora. This notion uplifted my spirit. The reason for this is because like the Armenians, the Liberian people have gone through adversity. The Armenians are a model of hope that Liberians and many other nations can successfully prosper after experiencing a traumatic event.

Dr. Haroutyunian's class was a remarkable course. Through her fervent passion and dedication to students, she transmitted her love for not only the Armenian Studies but also the country of Armenia.

As a non-Armenian, I would encourage both Armenians and non-Armenians to learn about Armenian culture and history. The Armenian Studies Program, present in the best universities all over the world, has so much to offer.

It is a great Program to educate oneself about a specific nation and discover who you are.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CA

SUBJECT: ASP Director Barlow Der Murgdechian to Lecture

DATE: September 19, 2013

PAGE: 1 of 1

ASP Director Barlow Der Mugrdechian To Lecture Sept. 27 at Fresno State

FRESNO - Armenian Studies Program Director Barlow Der Mugrdechian, will give an illustrated presentation on "Historic Armenia II-Armenian Cilicia" at 7:30 PM on September 27, in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191, on the Fresno State campus.

The lecture is part of the Armenian Studies Program Spring Lecture Series and is co-sponsored by the Armenian Students Organization at Fresno State and is supported by the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Der Mugrdechian traveled to historic Armenia for the first time in the summer of 2012. This summer he visited Armenian Cilicia, and will present his impressions on the Armenian churches and sites in the area. He also visited the two functioning churches in Vakif (Musa Dagh) and in Iskenderun and will discuss the Armenian communities there.

Der Mugrdechian will also present information about some of the

remaining Armenian fortresses of Armenian Cilicia, such as at Sis and at Anavarza, as well as the monastic complex at Hromkla.

Der Mugrdechian has been teaching for 29 years in the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State. He has been a frequent traveler to Armenia, leading student study groups. He teaches Armenian language, history, art, and culture courses at Fresno State.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

Free parking is available after 6:30PM in Lots A and J, near the University Business Center. For more information on the lecture please contact the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, Glendale, CA
SUBJECT: Ara Sarafian to Speak on the Armenians of Bitlis

DATE: August 31, 2013
PAGE: 1 of 1

Ara Sarafian to Speak on the Armenians of Bitlis

FRESNO — Historian Ara Sarafian of the London Gomidas Institute will present an illustrated lecture “A Hundred Years Ago: The Armenians of Bitlis” at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 5, in the Industrial Technology Building, Room 101, at the South-East corner of Barstow and Campus Drive, on the Fresno State campus.

The lecture is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program, the Armenian Students Organization of Fresno State and the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Bitlis was one of the great centers of Armenian civilization, with a unique identity of its own. Armenians lived in this mountainous region, in towns and villages with schools, churches, and monasteries. Today, very little

Thomas Mugerditchian’s *The Diyarbekir Massacres and Kurdish Atrocities*, (Gomidas Institute, 2013).

Sarafian is an archival historian specializing in late Ottoman history. He is the director of the Gomidas Institute, which is a leading research and publication center related to mod-

remains of the Armenian past. Most of it was destroyed in the Armenian Genocide and the anti-Armenian policies of the Turkish republic.

In this talk, “The Armenians of Bitlis,” Sarafian will present both a historical and a contemporary view of the Armenian presence in Bitlis before 1915. His power-point presentation will draw on a critical set of Ottoman, Armenian and Russian sources from 1880 to 1915, as well as his latest trip to the region.

“The Armenians of Bitlis” is part of a broader bridge-building project which the Gomidas Institute launched in Bitlis this year. The project has already benefited from the support of many Kurds and Turks and will lead to a public exhibition in Bitlis next year.

The lecture will end with the release of a new Armenian history.

The lecture is free and open to the public. Parking will be available in Lots Q, K and L the night of the lecture. Use parking code 273401 to receive a free parking pass. For more information on the lecture, contact the Armenian Studies Program.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: The California Courier; Glendale, CASUBJECT: Sarafian to Speak Sept. 5 at CSUF on Armenians of BitlisDATE: August 29, 2013

PAGE: 1 of 1

Sarafian to Speak Sept. 5 at CSUF on 'Armenians of Bitlis'

FRESNO - Ara Sarafian of the Gomidas Institute (London) will present an illustrated lecture "A Hundred Years Ago... The Armenians of Bitlis" at 7:30 PM on September 5, in the Industrial Technology Building, Room 101 on the Fresno State campus.

The lecture is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program, the Armenian Students Organization of Fresno State, and the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Sarafian will present a historical-and a contemporary-view of the Armenian presence in Bitlis before 1915.

"The Armenians of Bitlis" is part of a broader bridge building project which the Gomidas Institute launched in Bitlis this year. The project has already benefited from the support of many Kurds and Turks and will lead to a public exhibition in Bitlis next year.

The lecture will end with the release of Thomas Mugerditchian's, *The Diyarbekir Massacres and Kurdish Atrocities*, (Gomidas Institute, 2013).

Sarafian is the director of the Gomidas Institute, which is a leading research and publication center related to modern Armenian history.

The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information on the lecture please contact the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.



ARCHIVE

SOURCE: Armenian Voice, CAA, London, England

SUBJECT: Der Mugrdechian on Fresno Armenians in London

DATE: Autumn 2013, No. 62

PAGE: 1 of 1



On Sunday 7th July 2013, Professor Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program and Director of the *Centre for Armenian Studies at Fresno State* gave an illustrated public lecture in *Hayashen* entitled "From Armenia to California: The Odyssey of the Fresno Armenians (1881-2013)"

Professor Der Mugrdechian, a native of Fresno, initially gave an overview of Armenian emigration to the USA and later focused on the Armenians who settled in the *San Joaquin* valley where from humble beginnings during which time were discriminated, they gradually integrated and prospered.

The first Armenians to move to *Fresno* were the brothers Hagop and Garabed Seropian, who arrived in 1881. Their letters to their home village of *Marsovan* in the Ottoman Empire brought more immigrants to the *San Joaquin* Valley, which reminded them so much of home. By 1894 the Armenian population in Fresno was 360, a number that grew rapidly with the onset of the *Hamidian Massacres* in 1895-96. Many of the immigrants were Protestant converts; the result of heavy missionary activity in Armenia by American Christians seeking converts from the Armenian Church. During and after the genocide even more Armenians came until the restrictions on immigration in 1921 and 1924 brought this to a virtual end. The early immigrants were primarily involved with farming and agriculture, with the ultimate goal almost always that of land ownership. By 1930 Armenians owned 40% of the raisin acreage in Fresno County. Hence the Nickname of the city is "Raisin Capital of the World". Armenians were also pioneers in the melon and fig production in the region as well.

From the very beginning, bigotry against Armenians was common, and led many to Anglicize their names. In the 1890s Armenian Protestants were stripped of membership in local churches. Fear of Armenian land ownership caused the passage of laws restricting their rights to freely buy land. This attitude towards the tight knit Armenian community led some to try to assimilate, while having the opposite effect on others. The problem lasted for many decades, finally abating in the 1950s. Sadly the old *Armenia Town* of Fresno no longer exists instead its been replaced with *Downtown Fresno*!

Some of the most famous American Armenians originated from the region including writer William Saroyan, singer/actress Cher, businessman Kirk Kerkorian, freedom fighter Monte Melkonian and many others. In 1908, *Asbarez* (meaning *Arena*) Armenian newspaper was first published in *Fresno*. The lecture was organised jointly by CAIA and the *Gomidas Institute*. ■

For the latest information about CAIA's forthcoming events and activities please visit www.facebook.com/Hayashen