

HYE SHARZHOOM

Armenian Action

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Supplement to The Collegian

Celebration Of Armenian Folk Arts

By Dickran Kouymjian

Haig and Isabel Berberian
Professor of Armenian Studies

An overflow crowd swarmed through the Fresno Metropolitan Museum on Sunday March 12 for a reception and program in honor of the exhibit "In Silver and Threads: Patterns of Armenian Tradition." The exhibit which opened on February 17 and will run until June 30, 1995 is located on the second and third floors of the museum. Featured are the Marash style embroidered textiles of Lily Vorperian of Los Angeles and the metal craftsmanship of Karlen Kosaian of Yerevan, Armenia and his son Vardan, now settled in Fresno.

The special reception for the artists was organized by the Armenian Studies Program of Fresno State and the Fresno Arts Council, which mounted the exhibit under the supervision of Amy Kitchener, Folk Arts Coordinator. The Arme-

nian National Committee of Fresno also sponsored the event with additional support from the Knights of Vartan, Fresno Lodge and Rev. Bernard Guekguezian. From 4 to 5 PM a reception with hors d'oeuvres, California wines, and Armenian sweets allowed 300 hundred guests to view the joint exhibits in a convivial setting. Many were introduced to the vast Fresno Metropolitan Museum for the first time. At 5 PM everyone was invited to the Lyle Auditorium for a program, though many were simply unable to get after all seats and standing room was filled. After a short greeting from Dr. Ed Sobey, Director of the Museum, Amy Kitchener interviewed each of the artists.

Lily Vorperian of Los Angeles is a master embroiderer, especially of the polychrome appliqué—stitch known as Marash work. She was born in Aleppo, Syria in 1919, three years after her parents fled the Armenian city of Marash, dur-

ing the genocidal atrocities committed by the Young Turks. When she was 12 she began learning embroidery from the elderly women who came to her house, a center for refugee aid and distribution. She is familiar with 19 regional styles of Armenian embroidery, but she prefers that of Marash, her parents' home town. In 1994 she earned the rare honor of receiving the National Endowment of the Arts' National Heritage Award. She was invited to Washington, D.C. along with ten other honorees who were given their awards by Hillary Clinton in person.

Marash embroidery is known for its tasteful color combinations, intricate designs, and complex demanding stichery. While most women practitioners use ready-made patterns or repeat a few simple designs, Mrs. Vorperian has taken the form to new levels by creating

See FOLK ARTS, Page 6



L. to R.: Vartan & Karlen Kosaian, Lily Vorperian, and Richard Hagopian who were recognized at a reception held at the Fresno Metropolitan Museum.

"Armenia: Portraits of Survival"

Opening of photo exhibit in conjunction with ASP 9th Annual Banquet

On Saturday, April 1, the Armenian Studies Program and the Sarkis & Meliné Kalfayan Center for Armenian Studies, in conjunction with the Henry Madden Library, will host a special opening reception in the Library for the ex-

hibit "Armenia: Portraits of Survival." The reception will be followed by the Ninth Annual Banquet of the Armenian Studies Program. The exhibit will be in the Library from April 1 until May 19.

Special guest and keynote

speaker will be Professor Donald Miller, of the School of Religion, University of Southern California, whose topic will be "The Witness of the Survivors."

"Armenia: Portraits of Survival" is an exhibit of powerful

photographs by Jerry Berndt documenting everyday life in the smallest republic of the former Soviet Union. It focuses on the experiences of survivors of the 1988 earthquake, the refugees and victims of the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, and the hopes and anxieties of citizens who continue to endure numerous hardships. Mr. Berndt has photographs in the permanent collections of many prestigious galleries, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Professor Miller headed the research team that visited Armenia to interview the survivors. He provided the introduction for the cata-

logue of the exhibit and is planning a book that will draw on the interview transcripts. He is also the author of *Survivors: An Oral History of the Armenian Genocide* (University of California Press, 1993).

The reception and exhibit opening in the Library will be at 6 p.m., followed by the banquet in the University Restaurant at 7 p.m. Tickets for the reception and banquet are \$40 per person, \$25 for faculty and staff, and \$15 for students. Proceeds will benefit the Library's Armenian Resources Fund.

For additional information and reservations, call the Armenian Studies Program at 278-2669.



Photograph by Jerry Berndt

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Katch Vartan II, No. 2

by Garo Nakashian

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Hye Sharzhoom

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Dear Dr. Kouymjian:

When I was a student at Fresno State College during the height of the Great Depression, we were not fortunate enough to have a Center for Armenian Studies. As you've heard, at that time there was much discrimination against Armenians in the city of Fresno. However, call it luck or whatever you will, my family and I were not a target of that discrimination and rose above it. In 1931, When I graduated from Fresno State, I was among the five chosen by the faculty for recommendations to teaching positions in the cities of Oakland, and Fresno. When Superintendent, O.S. Hubbard, hired me to teach in the Fresno City Schools at the Lowell School, which at that time was THE elementary school in Fresno, I was the first Armenian-American

teacher ever to be hired by the Fresno City Schools, to teach full time. There were a few who were on the teaching list as substitutes, but none were hired as full time teachers. I was one happy and proud young lady, and hoped I would do so well in my teaching, that they Fresno City Schools would later hire more Armenian-Americans as teachers, and that did happen later. It was a good feeling to be able to pave the way for those Armenian-Americans who came after me.

It must make every Armenian-American student on the Fresno State University campus proud that today there is a fine Center for Armenian Studies there and there is no longer the discrimination against Armenian students. We all owe you much for making the Armenian Studies Program such an

outstanding one. Please accept my gratitude for all that you have done. Your dedication and devotion highly commendable and exemplary. (Because I have taught the entire gamut of the teaching field: kindergarten through elementary school, junior and senior high school, college students and post-graduate students at Teachers College, Columbia University, I know fully, and understand well, all that you are doing.) May you be successful in all your endeavors.

Sincerely,
Dr. Martha Googooian
Ensher
Fresno, CA

What you skipped in Armenia the first time

Armine Koundakjian
Special to *Hye Sharzhoom*

Most visitors to Armenia treat it like a theme park. How unforgiveable for the most part, they follow a touristic formula, making a whirlwind run of Lake Sevan, Etchmiadzin, Garni, Geghart, Sardarabad—time permitting—Khor Virab and Dilijan. They take a few snap shots of Mt. Ararat with nostalgic, tearful eyes behind their auto-focus Minoltas or Nikons, then they attend Anoush Opera one night or maybe a ballet or another event squeezed in between their busy schedule. And most inevitable of them all, they are invited to a relative's home for a lavish feast of kebab with all the trimmings magically produced from their tiny kitchens. The food is washed down with numerous interruptions of toasts with fine Armenian cognac (very little good wine in this historically wine producing land). Strict ceremony calls for every drink to be accompanied by a toast which are bombastic, artful, poetic and often times of epic proportion.

At the end, the visitor is whisked off to Zavartnotz airport with an armful of carnations and an army of well-wishing relatives and friends. Then the visitor returns home victorious and content that he/she has been to the Motherland,

Hayastan.

If knowing one's homeland, no matter how small, was this simple then I'd have no quarrel. But really knowing the homeland involves venturing to the no-man's land where the displaced and homeless scratch out a living from barren land by hand carrying the water, who will invite you into their shack to share a "meal." It involves living and seeing how the common people struggle with their daily lives full of depravation and misery. It means bringing a smile to the face of an orphan or lending a helping hand to a refugee. It means listening to the heroic story of a freedom fighter lying in a dilapidated hospital bed. It means, instead of paying lip service to those who give their life for the survival of our homeland, providing a real, substantial assistance to their impoverished families left behind.

If you want an unusual taste of the real history and culture of this land, visit a far out corner of the Araratian valley called Metzamor, where a 27 year old archaeological excavation by a woman scientist has revealed an entire ancient Armenian civilization dating back three to five thousand years.

If you want a real taste of human stamina, perserverance and devotion of heroic proportions, visit Gumri (Leninakan) School No. 5 where a tiny charming woman, who

has witnessed the horrors of the 1988 earthquake, has single-handedly rebuilt the school where she was the principal and all her students perished, save a few. See how she has inspired and mobilized a score of people around her to convert several barracks into comfortable classrooms complete with an art center, a music center and a library. This library is a 3 by 6 (meter) trailer box where two energetic *Gumretzi* ladies have furnished it with salvaged books and homemade cardboard shelves, desks and a handwritten card catalogue. They are constantly asking for donations of books, pencils and confidently announcing that they'll expand or replace it with a permanent building.

A few blocks away, visit a 75 year old man who used to be a member of the town council and the most effective statesman in charge of city planning. See how he has single-handedly rebuilt entire street dwellings out of makeshift box trailers. He has even managed to erect street lights. Why is he so amazing? Because he lost eleven members of his family save a daughter and son-in-law who happened to be in Yerevan during the earthquake. He almost died of depression, but somehow his spirit did not break. He healed. Go with him on one of his daily visits to the cemetery where he places the most

beautiful flowers he can find on the grave sites. In spite of the enormous weight of grief he has endured, he is hopeful and optimistic that his beloved city will once again flourish.

Visit the many institutions, orphanages, hospitals, soup kitchens, and clinics that have become the pet projects of many Diaspora Armenians from all walks of life. Find out how their benefactors, for the most part the unsung heroes amongst us are quietly and tirelessly soliciting, cajoling, and collecting much needed materials or purchasing them to send or carry one suitcase at a time year in year out—to their intended destinations.

Listen to a multitude of teachers who worry and suffer about the poor nutrition of the students in their care, while their own families aren't any better off or less hungry. They are constantly prodding any charity organization for supplemental food stuffs.

If you don't mind giving your precious nerves a bit of discomfort, visit Karabakh and then you will really learn the lesson of your lifetime. You will be so shocked by the resilience of the people that you will not be the same Armenian for as long as you live. You will witness streets cleared of rubble and trash. The population is active and hopeful. Daily life is run like an efficient military camp at all-time

readiness and alert. Drive to a remote village in the Marduni district and watch a dedicated medical doctor who has abandoned his comfortable practice in Yerevan and has set up a moobile emergency hospital unit to care for the wounded and the sick since the heavy fighting of 1992. He speaks of his dream hospital on that site one day. He is so determined and convincing that you see yourself in the building already. He shows you the fertile land, the purple mountains in the horizon and says, "This is God's country which belongs to us, how could we have forsaken it for so long. It shall never be given back."

After seeing such saintly people and witnessing their saintlier deeds, one becomes convinced that after all is said and done, one thing is surely indisputable, and that is, any nation that possesses such indomitable, strong-willed individuals who do make a difference in the face of so much adversity and despair, shall not die. These are the unbreakable souls who know exactly what it is they are doing and why they are doing it. These are the chosen few who laugh at and dismiss the rest of us to wallow in our petty quarrels, jealousies and backstabbing.

Bubble gum and Armenia-at the airport

Lara Simonian
Hye Sharzhoom

"It's only 65 pounds. They said the limit was 75."

The chaperone huffed loudly as he dragged the suitcase across the floor. He took a deep breath and grunted loudly as he dropped the bag onto the airport check-in counter. People stopped walking to stare at his struggle.

"Yeah, but it's still too heavy!" he replied.

"It's only 65 pounds..." I murmured back.

"What?" he asked as he wiped his brow.

"I said yes Mr. Samuelian." I smiled up widely at him. Innocence poured out of my face. His crooked grin reluctantly expressing acquiescence to my gaze.

I looked at the blank walls surrounding us. They were empty, void of all colors and pictures. Not even any advertisements adorned these Soviet run airports. The room felt chilly without any central heating. I stared at the fog which escaped out of my warm nostrils. I blew harder in order to see it float higher. I was shivering from the cold, wondering how the people could live in such weather.

The people looked poor, dressed in ragged clothing, one layer wilting away as it draped over another layer. I felt a pang of guilt. I tugged my parka closer to my body. It was not really that cold. I noticed that no one in our group had a tear or a patch holding their warmth together. The people were cold, but they were not life-

less. I peered into their faces, but made sure I did not meet their eyes.

Mr. Samuelian's voice suddenly broke through my thoughts. I turned around and found him arguing with a soldier in Russian. My suitcase laid open on the check-in table. The soldier had his hands buried in my possessions. I felt the terror of private violation. I dashed forward towards Mr. Samuelian, who kept arguing while the soldier continued digging through my contents, calmly ignoring the ranting man.

Anger burned into my cheeks. I was going to scream and pierce the soldier's eardrums. How dare he! He will shake when he hears me boil my voice over his whimpering, pitiful tone. I took my last step with a dramatic stomping of my Reeboks. When I stood behind Mr. Samuelian, I just decided to wait for him finish. The soldier moved slowly. He was very large, over seven feet tall! I decided that Mr. Samuelian had everything well under control. There was no need for me to interfere. I stared at the soldier's kaki uniform, searching for the machine gun that he had hid somewhere beneath his coat. No, there certainly was no need for me to interfere at all.

The soldier's eyes suddenly popped open. He grabbed a handful of items from my bag. Bubble gum packs, dozens of them in various flavors, peeked out from under his grasp. He had collected every pack of gum that I had hidden in all the corners of my suitcase. There was a pile collecting in the center of my bag. I gasp and felt a burn.

"PUT THOSE DOWN!" I screamed as I pushed my way past Mr. Samuelian. The soldier's eyebrows spread wide above his eyes as he stared at me in astonishment. Mr. Samuelian moved back and glared at me in shock. The Russian kept staring at me while he directed his comments to Mr. Samuelian.

"He wants to know why you have so much gum," Mr. Samuelian translated.

My heart pounded fiercely, "BECAUSE I like chewing gum." My voice was still high pitched, but my hands were trembling from the terror I felt.

Mr. Samuelian translated for me, but the soldier apparently was not convinced that one little girl could chew so much. If my mother was there, she could tell him I had the mouth to chew it all if I wanted. I stood there, with my neck stretched up high, wishing I was taller. At least tall people did not have to stand on their tippy toes when they yelled at a Russian soldier.

Mr. Samuelian began quickly talking to the soldier. He placed his hand on top of my head, apparently to highlight my youth and innocence. That almost infuriated me—I could handle my own battles. The soldier only shook his head back in disagreement. He shoved his fist full of bubble gum in Mr. Samuelian's face and scowled back something.

I felt the panic. I could get violent, but everyone knew about the firing squads in Russia. I was not going to let him take that gum. It was much to important to me. I did not bring several pounds of

gum from Fresno to Armenia just so that this animal could take them. The gum was for the children in the International Camp. I knew about them. They had nothing fun in the impoverished country. The gum would make them happy!

I knew he wanted the gum. His mouth was drooling. He could almost taste them. His hands trembled because he wanted them so bad.

"He says you're going to sell the gum for — for profit!" Mr. Samuelian exasperatedly said.

That was my last chance. If he labeled me a capitalist, the fight would be over. I would lose all the gum. The panic hit me so hard that I lost control of my hands. I was going to give him a hell of a fight. I grit my teeth and prepared for battle. My fist was clenched. I took in a deep breath. The energy continued to build. The power burned through my veins. It was going to happen soon. I forced myself not to think of the Siberian concentration camps.

I looked up at the soldier's face. I paused. Then, I snapped.

"AHHHHHHHHH!" I screamed. I screamed loud enough to startle everyone around me. They all turned to stare at us. I did not think that the shock on Mr. Samuelian's face could grow any larger. I was wrong. His mouth dropped into a large 'O'. He tried to take a hold of my shoulders. There was panic in his eyes.

I unlocked my knees and suddenly flopped to the floor. I pushed the pain out, forcing the tears to come rapidly. The wailing had to

be loud, with gasping sobs and choking moans. I threw my hands up around my temples, squeezing them until I left fingerprint dents.

My moans were as loud as my screams. I could not see Mr. Samuelian, but I could hear him saying, "Oh, my God! Oh, my God!" The people who were dragging their luggage across the floor stopped to stare at the soldier. They whispered their disapproval of his behavior.

I wanted to look up and see the soldier's confusion, but I was only in mid-performance. Through the corner of my eye, I glanced at his uncertainty. Other soldiers began yelling something at him. He responded with silence. I concentrated on not giggling or breaking my sobs.

After several minutes, the soldier slammed the suitcase shut. Pushing it towards Mr. Samuelian, he attempted to gruffly issue a command. Mr. Samuelian quickly responded in a lighter tone of voice. He was smiling as he picked up the suitcase off the counter.

A pair of hands picked me up by the shoulders and lifted me off the ground. I kept my face buried in my hands. I could not force any more tears to come, so I had to hide my face from everyone else's view. I was guided towards the exit doors. I stayed humble and quiet, with my face hidden, until our group was loaded into the transportation vans. Only then did I finally look up and smile.

The next day, I saw why my

See BUBBLE GUM , Page 7

Shifting the Sun

When your father dies, say the Irish,
you lose your umbrella against bad weather.
May his sun be your light, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the Welsh,
you sink a foot deeper into the earth.
May you inherit his light, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the Canadians,
you run out of excuses. May you inherit
his sun, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the French,
you become your own father.
May you stand up in his light, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the Indians,
he comes back as the thunder.
May you inherit his light, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the Russians,
he takes your childhood with him.
May you inherit his light, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the English,
you join his club you vowed you wouldn't.
May you inherit his sun, say the Armenians.

When your father dies, say the Armenians,
your sun shifts forever.
And you walk in his light.

This poem by DIANA DER HOVANESSIAN was read by Garrison Keillor on the Poetry Almanac program broadcast over various National Public Radio stations this past month. It is from Der Hovanessian's SELECTED POEMS, Sheep Meadow Press.

“Pilgrimage to Armenia”

Katy Becker

Hye Sharzhoom

*“For ages Lords and conquerors,
trampling over their ancient
ground, killed, defaced, destroyed,
disgraced yet never was their spirit
bound.”*

This excerpt from Ara Movsesian's poem, as read by Movsesian as an introduction to the program “Pilgrimage to Historic Armenia,” was a suitable beginning for an evening sponsored by the St. Paul Armenian Church. Fresno Armenians and students were given the opportunity to see historic Armenia, Thursday, February 16th, through slides and videos taken by Armen Aroyan. Aroyan who has traveled to historic Armenia fifteen times, taking with him attorneys, journalists, students, professors, Armenians, and non-Armenians alike, left his former occupation to serve as a travel guide for all those interested in the Armenian homeland.

During his early travels which began in July of 1987, Aroyan made contact with local newspaper people in Turkey, became a speaker at a rotary club in one of her cities, and was even featured in Turkish newspapers, which gave him the opportunity to tell the Armenian side of the story to the Turks, without compromising the Armenian position, or losing his identity as an Armenian. His familiarity with Turkey and her people opened avenues for

Aroyan to travel in Historic Armenia freely.

As a result, Aroyan has not only met his goal of helping Armenians to discover their roots through travel, but has also made the “occupied territories” accessible through his film presentations to those who are unable to travel. Thursday night his footage included scenes from Ani, “the city of 1,001 churches,” with its Cathedral at Ani, the fortress of Lamron, and other Cilician fortresses from the Cilician Armenia period, the Holy Cross Cathedral, commissioned by Gagik Artsruni in the 10th c. A.D. at Aghtamar, and the caves near Tigranakert where Armenians were murdered during the 20th century Armenian genocide. Also included were scenes from the cities of Ankara, Van, Kars, Erzerum, Zeitun, Sis, Istanbul, and many more.

More important than seeing the Armenian homeland, however, was experiencing the response of the Armenian pilgrims documented in the films. Treading upon the land that historically has belonged to them for thousands of years, Aroyan's travelers were finally home. The tears of joy for lost memories recovered, the jubilant gathering of Armenian soil into plastic bags to sprinkle on the graves of loved ones, and the elation of those able to celebrate Armenian religious ceremonies in ancient cathedrals, whose lonely halls finally echoed with the sound

INTERVIEW

In 1959 Professor Dickran Kouymjian, then a young man of 25, went to India to interview the Dalai Lama who had just been driven out of Tibet by the Chinese.

Hye Sharzhoom: Why did you go in search of the Dalai Lama?

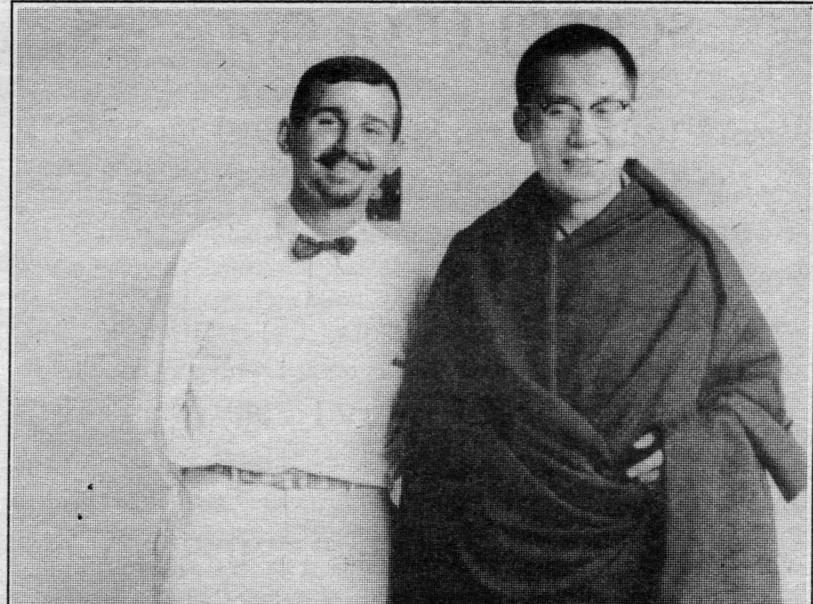
Dickran Kouymjian: The communist Chinese repression in Tibet was widely reported in that year, when the Tibetans revolted for independence. The Chinese violence was unprecedented. The young Dalai Lama escaped overland to northern India and I wanted to interview him. At the time I was working for the International Press Service in Beirut and it seemed possible.

H.S.: How did you go and were you alone?

D.K.: The trip is another and very long story. Accompanying me was André Dirlak, of Cairo and Beirut, who served as cameraman. André is now a professor and expert on Middle East affairs in Montreal, Canada.

H.S.: Did you have problems getting to see the Dalai Lama?

D.K.: Yes and no. In Delhi, at the Minister of Foreign Affairs, we were told that the Dalai Lama had just accepted to have a general press conference for Time-Life, Newsweek, Agence France Press, and other press services from India and abroad and there was little likelihood that he would see other re-



Prof. Dickran Kouymjian with the Dalai Lama near the India-Tibet border, June 1959

porters. He was staying up in the mountains on the south side of Himalayas in the northern India. We decided to catch the next train north. We arrived the next morning at the foot of this mountainous town totally covered in clouds and where it rains nearly every day of the year. It was raining and raining hard. To our surprise we found that motor vehicles were not allowed in the city.

H.S.: What did you do next?

D.K.: We had heard in Delhi that

the Dalai Lama was staying at a mansion owned by Birla, one of India's richest industrialists. We had gotten the number in Delhi from the press officer of the Ministry. I called and explained that we were journalists with IPS and that I knew an old friend of the Dalai Lama. Before leaving Beirut, my friend Carl Pernell from Pennsylvania, who was doing graduate

See DALAI LAMA, Page 6

“They have had to forge for themselves an art of living through times of catastrophe, in order to be reborn, and then to fight openly against the death-instinct which is at work in our time.” Camus, (1957 Nobel Prize for Literature Speech)

The Effect of Genocide on Twentieth Century Thought

The death instinct is at work again today—

Yet, I've come to celebrate it now that I am churlish enough to crave

days of living in and out of fog
I can assume a new repose
and languish in this refrain—

Oh, what a beautiful day
to die

as I charge
like a mad Indian
bent on revenge of her lost tribe

as I charge
fleeing against the wind

as I charge
holier than thou can
even guess

and deliberately make my
heart joyful to the thought of
the grave's imposing draw.

Brenda Najimian-Magarity

“The effect of Genocide” was previously published in the Winter 1994 issue of Ararat.

ARMENIAN STUDIES PROGRAM
FALL 1995
SCHEDULE OF COURSES

ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies 1010-1100 MWF
ArmS 10-Intro Arm Studies 0945-1100 TTh
Arm S 10-Intro ArmStudies 1245-1400 TTh

Armenian 1A- Elem Arm 1110-1200 MTWF
Arm S 45- W Saroyan 1245-1400 TTh
Arm S 108A- Arm History I 0900-1000 MWF
Arm S 120T- Arm Film 1810-2200 T

Arm S 120T- Arm Cooking 1710-2200 F
0910-1700 S

Course meets the weekend of Sept. 29, 30

Arm S 120T- Arm Church 1710-2200 F
0910-1700 S

Course meets the weekend of Oct. 13, 14

A.G.B.U. Luncheon
followed by the presentation of
"The Way We Lived"

a comedy by Zareh Melkonian

Sunday, March 26, 1995

1:00 pm

AGBU Center-1720 Fulton Street

Donation- Reserved \$10 per person • At the door \$12 per person

For further information please call (day) 261-2128 (after 5 p.m.) 431-0171

A History of the Armenian People
Vol. II
1550 to the Present

A History of the Armenian People
Volume II: 1500 A.D. to the
Present- 237 pages, 25 maps, 6
time lines, 16 plates, bibliography,
index. Costa Mesa, CA: Mazda
Publishers, 1994 \$15.00 (paper)
by George A. Bournoutian

Reviewed
by Barlow Der Mugrdechian

For teachers and students alike this second volume of a two volume work has been long awaited. The lack of a textbook of Armenian history has long been one of the most serious deficiencies in the teaching of Armenian history.

Armenian history is best studied in the context of the history of the myriad empires and nations which have been a part of Armenian history. The task of transmitting a grasp of the scope of that history is an immense one. Dr. George Bournoutian however, has mastered the difficult art of both transmission of information and the ability to tell a story.

The modern history of the Armenians, from 1500 AD to the present, is captivatingly recounted. Bournoutian demonstrates a firm

knowledge of Armenian history, especially the dramatic events or important moments which are essential for comprehension of the material. Bournoutian is also well versed in the history of the region, bringing special knowledge about Persian history and the relationship between the Persians and the Armenians.

Extensive attention is devoted to the Armenian Diaspora and the formative stages of Armenian emigration from the historic homeland as a consequence of invasion, oppression, economic destitution, and ultimately the Genocide. The role of the Diaspora in the intellectual and political revival of Armenia is also explored. The Armenians have left their mark in their adopted lands, wherever they have lived, from the far reaches of Asia to the westernmost shores of Europe, and finally to America. It is this relationship between Diaspora and homeland which defines the modern Armenian today.

The liberal inclusion of 25 maps made especially for this work, adds visual impact to the volume. These reader friendly maps accompany each chapter and provide a

Tom Bozian & Armenian Dance

Noted Armenian dance instructor Tom Bozian of Los Angeles has been in Fresno for an eight weekend course in Armenian folk dancing. The course, co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program of CSUF and the Armenian Relief Society Sophia Chapter, attracted more than forty enthusiastic students for eight consecutive Friday nights of dance fun.

The course began on February 3 and will end in April.

For those interested in signing up for a new dance session (for beginners and advance) which is being planned, please call Elena, 439-9060 or Rosine, 438-8223 for more information.



Tom Bozian with enthusiastic dancers.

Books and Gifts to ASP

Gifts to the Armenian Studies
Program Sahatdjian Library and
Avedian Archives

Robert A. Koesheyian, Mary Ann
Lee and Amy Griffith have donated
a collection of Armenian books,
including Bibles, religious books
and periodicals in memory
of their beloved sister Dorothy
Keosheyian (1924-1993).

Dr. Arra Avakian has donated a
collection of maps, newspapers,
and posters documenting the independence
of Armenia (1988-1990).

Rev. Harry M. Missirlian has
donated a large collection of important
books and periodicals on
Armenian studies in Armenian and

English from his private library
including a complete set of the Armenian
Review (1948-1993).

Carl H. Mahakian of Palm
Springs for a number of articles on
Armenian American artists.

Professor Dickran Kouymjian
and the Sahatdjian Library of
the Armenian Studies Program
would like to thank the authors
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books and periodicals.

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FOLK ARTS, from p.1

innovative designs, but ones which remain grounded in the centuries old tradition of Armenian needlework.

For the reception, Ms. Vorperian brought for display some very large recent pieces with bold

The interviews with Kosaian father and son was done with the help of Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, who served as translator. Vardan Kosaian is a fourth generation Armenian silversmith who immigrated to Fresno two years ago. His father, Karlen, lives in Yerevan, Armenia where he

clientele beyond the Armenian and Armenian-American communities. Besides his father's influence, Vardan has been inspired by renowned jewelers such as Faberge, whose impeccable craftsmanship and elegance of form won the family the position of court jewelers to the Russian Czars. Both Vardan's and Karlen's pieces are primarily in silver, with enamel, filigree, and semi-precious stones. They do work in gold too. When Ms. Kitchener asked Karlen Kosaian whether he and his son worked together during his short stay here, he produced an enormous Armenian cross in gold plated silver set with large amethysts, which sent a ripple of admiration through the audience. They worked together on this American-Armenian creation. Both also fashion special liturgical objects such as priest's staves, lanterns for church, vessels for holy water, and others.

Dickran Kouymjian, Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies, was invited to speak on the subject "Armenian Folk Art in Its Historical Context." He remarked "how ironic it is that here we are here in Fresno in 1995 celebrating Marash Armenian textiles and metal work made by a descendant of metalworkers from Mush when today neither in Marash nor Mush are there any Armenian left." Dr. Kouymjian also discussed the tension that folk artists experienced between preserving an acquired tradition but continuing to be creative and especially innovative within the techniques of an individual craft. He also included in his talk remarks about musician Richard Hagopian, also honored in 1989 by the National Endowment for the Arts as a folk artist, which served as an introduction to Mr. Hagopian.

Richard Hagopian demonstrated his musical interest and immense talents at an early age. As many will remember, he too has been honored with the National

Photo by Barlow Der Mugrdechian

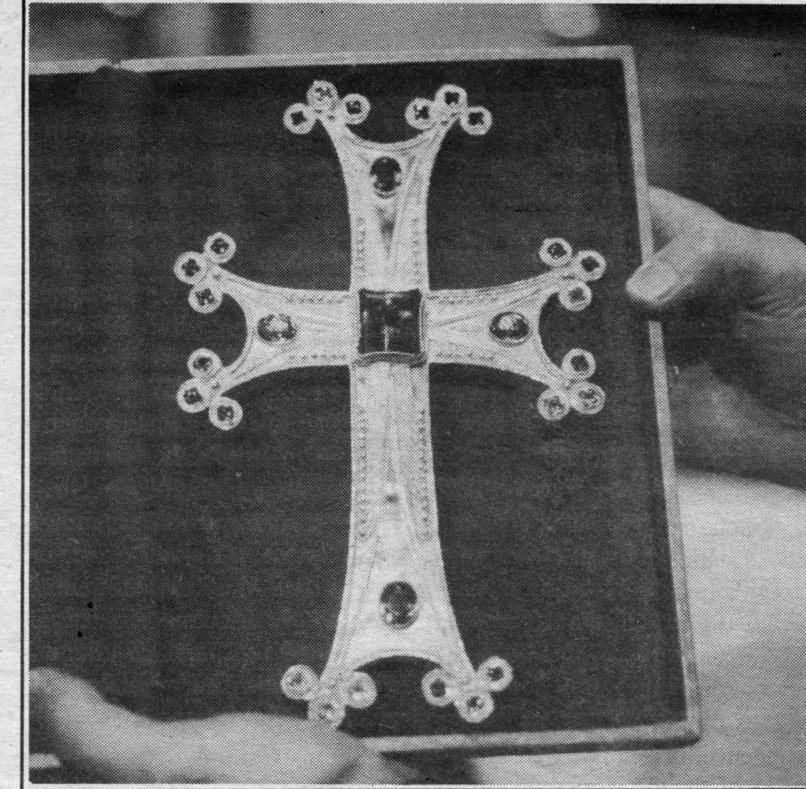


L. to R.: Folk artist Lily Vorperian with daughter Rita Vorperian

designs which were mounted in the large reception room. They were a joy to behold. During the interview she discussed the details of her craft. When asked if she had passed on her skills to others, she replied she was ready to teach anyone willing to spend the hours and days necessary to master some of the basic stitches. At 77 she said she still felt young and full of energy and wanted to continue her art. She was visibly moved when she recounted how as a child in the desert at Der Zor, barely alive from the torments of the Turkish genocide, her mother taught her how to write Armenian in the sand and made her learned by heart how to write *Ayp, pen, kim, Hye em*, over and over. If she got separated from her mother, she was instructed to write those words. In this way Mrs. Vorperian said she was instilled with a life long love for the Armenian language.

continues both to create traditional and innovative designs in silver and to teach his art to the next generation. Karlen Kosaian is recognized as one of the finest silversmiths in Armenia today. His work is in museums in Moscow, Latvia, Armenia and France. Vardan, his son, has been making jewelry and learning about it since he was a child. The younger Kosaian describes his work and style as both "traditional" and innovative. On the one hand, it is unique and "looks to the future" while remaining grounded in the long standing tradition of Armenian jewelry and decorative metalwork.

His grandfather worked mostly in silver with "black" inlay, the niello technique for which Armenians were famous in the Ottoman Empire. His father started experimenting with enamel on silverwork. Vardan's goals are to expand his



Large gold plated silver cross inlaid with amethysts

Endowment of the Arts' National Heritage Award. At the age of nine he began to study the violin, at ten the clarinet, and at eleven he took up the oud, the instrument on which he was to become a nationally recognized performer. He is today widely acclaimed as a master artist and brilliant technician. Hagopian was given the title of "oudi" in 1969 by the internationally famous blind Armenian virtuoso Oudi Hrant. He has performed throughout the U.S., taught the oud and the history of Armenian music at CSUF, and recorded seven albums of Armenian music.

Accompanied on the *dumbeg* by Alan Jendian, Richard Hagopian

played a series of traditional Armenian works explaining each one before playing. The highlight of the evening was a masterful solo improvisation or *taksim*, which brought cheers from the audience.

At the end of the program Prof. Kouymjian invited all the artists to come forward for a last round of applause and gave them and Amy Kitchener, the driving force behind the exhibit, special thanks.

Reluctantly a very happy crowd left a museum that had closed two hours earlier into a warm spring Fresno night refreshed by interaction with the arts bearing thousands of years of collective Armenian culture.

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DALAI LAMA, From p. 4

work in Arab studies at the American University of Beirut told me about a German that he knew well who was stranded in Tibet during the second World War. For a couple of years he taught the Dalai Lama English and became a good friend. I decided I would use the German's name as an introduction.

H.S.: Did it work?

D.K.: Apparently, because again to our surprise, the English speaking voice on the other end of the telephone said he would send a car to the station to get us. The Dalai Lama's entourage was the only one allowed a car and sure enough an American station wagon picked us up and drove us through the steep streets of town to an impressive residence. In Delhi we were told all sorts of "wild" stories about the Dalai Lama and how he was literally worshipped as living god by his followers. We were also told that he was always surrounded by enormous, nearly grunting, unfriendly bodyguards.

It was late morning and we were greeted by what appeared to be the Dalai Lama's spokesman. We were told that the Dalai Lama was at his prayers and would see us only after he had finished them.

H.S.: Did you wait long?

D.K.: About an hour later, from a passage probably connected to a shrine appeared a man of about our age dressed in his thick and deep burgundy colored robes. We recognized him immediately from the many photos we had seen and greeted him with the usual Buddhist bowing and hands held together. His English was understandable. He was very friendly and seemed pleased to see us. There was a intelligence and shyness about him, and great spirituality as the supreme head of Tibetan Buddhism. I asked questions about Tibet and optimism toward building a new

future, slowly patiently and with love and understanding.

H.S.: And the photo?

D.K.: There were many photos of course. I talked to him about his old German friend that taught him English and he was pleased to get news of him. He asked my age and it turned out we were both born in 1934 just three days apart; he liked that. He was very interested in my camera and took a photo of André and myself and we took in turns photos of the Dalai Lama with each of us.

H.S.: have you seen the Dalai Lama since them?

D.K.: No. But three or four years ago he was awarded a special prize for peace by the French government along with Sen Arevshatian, Director of the Matenadaran, the Museum-Institute of Armenian Manuscripts, but alas I was in Fresno and could not attend the ceremony. Every time I read about the Dalai Lama and I think of my interview and his courage.

H.S.: Do you talk about this experience to your students?

D.K.: No, never. I have asked students if they knew about the Dalai Lama, and most of them reply that they never heard of him or the title and are amazed to learn that he is considered one of the greatest spiritual leaders of our time. One of the problems with students today is how little information they have about anything historical or cultural or about events even in recent history that take place outside of America. In class if you express surprise that the majority in attendance have never heard of this person or that event, students get offended and think the professor is trying to put them down, as they say. Most of them are now wired or plugged in to the Internet, but most computer information is lifeless and it seems not to help either with intelligence or improving general knowledge.

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A Theatre J'Nerique Production



L. to R. Armenian Artists Hagop Hagopian, Varaz Samuelian, and Rafael Atoyan join Shahen Kachaturian, Curator of the National Gallery of Art in Yerevan. Kachaturian presented an illustrated lecture "Armenian Artists of the 19th and 20th Centuries" on Wednesday, February 22, 1995. The lecture was co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program and St. Paul Armenian Church.

Armenia Update

Two Hours Power Supply Schedule To The Population

YEREVAN ("Respublica Armenia" daily, 03/11/95) — It has already been reported that the gas pipe line to Armenia has been restored. The population was receiving electric power based on the one hour per day schedule for a week. Starting from yesterday, two hours schedule was restored.

Currency Rates In Yerevan

YEREVAN ("Lragir", "Hayastani Hanrapetutyun" dailies), 03/11/95 —

A regular auction of the Yerevan Stock Exchange was held on March 10. Press center of RA Central Bank reported that the value of 1 US dollar grew by 72 lumas, and reached 403.92 drams. The value of 1,000 Russian rubles also grew and made 83.60 drams, which is 46 lumas higher than the rate defined during previous auction. 23 banks participated in the auction, where \$298 thousands and 196mln. Russian rubles were sold.

Sepouh Tashchian Assigned As Head Councilor Of Prime Minister

YEREVAN ("Hayastani Hanrapetutyun", "Azg" dailies), 03/10/95 — We have already reported that State Minister Sepouh Tashchian was released to accept a new job. "Hayastani Hanrapetutyun" reports that, based on a decision of the Government, Sepouh Tashchian was assigned as the Head Councilor of RA Prime Minister, and as plenipotentiary representative of RA Government in energy and resources. "Azg" adds, quoting sources close to the government, that Tashchian will mainly operate in the USA. His Yerevan office will be disbanded. From now on, all problems related with energy, nuclear power plant, resources and seismic protection will be resolved by State Minister Gagik Martirosian.

Crash In The Yerevan Power Network

YEREVAN ("Lragir" daily - Past), 03/10/95 — Several districts of the Armenian capital have not received their limit for electric power as a result of a crash in the Yerevan power network. According to the Yerevan City

Council, crash has been eliminated within a short period of time, and operation of the power network resumed. The same sources report that one hour per day schedule persists.

A Visit To The Medzamor Nuclear Power Plant

YEREVAN ("Hayastani Hanrapetutyun" daily), 03/09/95 — Deputy Chairman of RA Supreme Council Artashes Toumanian visited Medzamor on March 8, to get acquainted with the current state of reconstruction operations at the power plant. Supreme Council press service reported that he visited first and second power blocks of the plant.

Leadership of the plant presented information about reconstruction operations, installation of new equipment, seismic and technological security and other measures carried out at the plant. Security was stressed to be of primary importance. Schedule of reconstruction operations at the power plant and other details have also been presented.

HASANOV SAYS AZERIS

WILLING TO TALK

BAKU (Turan) — "Azerbaijan is ready to negotiate with Armenia to settle the Karabakh conflict," according to statements attributed to Azeri foreign minister Hasan Hasanov while commenting on a US proposal to conduct direct talks between Baku and Yerevan. Hasanov announced that until now the basic obstacle to such dialogue was Yerevan's intention to achieve equal negotiating status for the "Armenian community of Nagorno Karabakh."

Karekin II of Cilicia Best Candidate says Ter-Petrosyan

(H A Y A S T A N I HANRAPETUTYUN-3/8/95)

Q: Mr. President, the elections for the 131st Catholicos of All Armenians are scheduled for April 3. Does the government have a position on this

?A: In accordance with the law "On Freedom of Conscience" the Church is separated from the state, therefore the latter has no right to interfere in church affairs, includ-

BUBBLE GUM, from p. 3

acting was so important. The children gathered around us, eagerly chatting away like old friends. When I told them I brought something for them from America, they smiled brighter than the morning sun after sunrise. My face was flushed from my embarrassment.

I held the packs of gum in my hand, feeling guilty, as if the trifles were not even worth handing out. But when I saw every child beam his smile up at me, I felt like Santa Claus. Their eyes, which had never grown dull from their poor lifestyles, glowed even brighter than before.

I remembered what I had said to my sixth grade teacher at the Armenian school, "It's only gum. It's probably not even worth the trouble of dragging it to Armenia."

I handed out a pack of gum. They smiled.

April 24 Activities

1915 80 1995

in commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide
and in memory of the 1.5 million Armenians who perished in
the Ottoman Turkish Empire in 1915-1923

All activities to take place on Monday, April 24

Armenian Students Organization

Rally on CSU Fresno campus
10:00 a.m.

Exhibit

"Armenia: Portraits of Survival"
in the Madden Library
April 1-May 19

Commemorative March

and

Public Rally

Meet at 11:00 am at
David of Sassoon Statue

March to Fresno City Hall

12:00 noon

Speaker- County Supervisor Deron Koligian
Requiem Service

Civic Commemoration

6:00 p.m.-7:15 p.m.

Reception

"Armenian Churches of
Western Armenia"

An exhibition of Color Photographs

by Richard and Barbara Elbrecht

and an

Exhibition of art by local
Armenian artists

Program begins at 7:30 p.m.

- Yerevan String Quartet
- Soprano Rima Garabedian
- Tenor Kevork Hounanian

William Saroyan Theatre
Fresno, California

Organized by the Armenian Community Council
of the San Joaquin Valley

Armenia, from p. 7

ing the election of the Catholicos.
Q: However, could you specify
what you think, not as the President
but as a citizen, about the electoral
process and possible candidates for
this post

A: I believe it is my duty, since
historically the elections of the
Armenian Catholicos have grown
to a national issue of paramount
importance. Parallel to its spiritual
activities the Armenian Apostolic
Church was obliged to act as a
secular authority in the absence of

statehood. As a natural result, a
certain number of secular delegates
were granted the right to participate
in the elections, which sets the
Armenian Church apart from others.

Q: Does the restoration of Armenian
statehood imply that the national
activities of the Armenian Apostolic
Church will end

A: Not at all, though this answer
may sound contradictory in light of
what I said previously. It is true
that along with the restoration of
Armenian statehood, the church was
relieved of its secular obliga-

tions. However, as long as a considerable number of Armenians live abroad, the church will preserve its role of uniting the Armenian people. The activities of the church in the nation's spiritual and moral education should not be underestimated. Q: What do you think about the upcoming elections? Who is the most likely candidate for the post of the Armenian Catholicos. Who would you prefer to see in that post? A: During its 1700-year history, the Armenian church has almost always had very capable individuals in that post. If any contradictions have emerged during the elections, they were due to external interference rather than internal disagreements.

Nowadays, the See of Echmiadzin has many esteemed candidates for Catholicos, such as Jerusalem Patriarch Torkom Manoogian, Constantinople Patriarch Garegin Archbishop Gazanjian, the Ararat diocese leader Archbishop Garegin Nersisian and others. However, because of his Armenian theologi-

cal and historical knowledge, diplomatic abilities and administration skills, the Catholicos of Cilicia, Karekin II is the undeniable authority for believers in Echmiadzin, in Armenia and in the Diaspora. I believe that these elections are crucial for the consolidation of the Armenian Apostolic Church, or in a wider sense, for the nation-wide undertaking of regulating the Armenia-diaspora relations. My confidence is based on the joint efforts of the late Catholicos of All-Armenians, Vazgen and Catholicos Karekin toward the restoration of the Church's integrity and the organization of the Pan-Armenia "Hayastan" Fund.

Q: How do you feel about the unification of the Armenian Church? A: I do not believe that it will take place soon. The Cilician See, as an historical institution, will maintain its existence for a long time, while unreservedly recognizing Echmiadzin's primacy and gradually confining itself to its former religious boundaries of

Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus. Catholicos Karekin II is the most capable person to begin this process.

Special Status To Armenians Born In Turkey Before 1915

YEREVAN ("Hayastani Hanrapetutyun" daily), 03/07/95 — On March 6 RA President Levon Ter-Petrossian signed a decree about state support to Armenians who suffered as a result of Genocide in Turkey. According to the decree, a special status is assigned to those Armenians in the diaspora, who were born in Western Armenia and other parts of Osman Turkey before 1915. Upon presenting corresponding documents, these people will receive special passports of the Republic of Armenia, without charging a corresponding fee. The decree also stipulates measures about registration of residents of Armenia, who suffered the genocide, providing material and social support to them.

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