

# Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies



February 21, 2003  
UCLA  
Royce Hall 314

*On behalf of UCLA's graduate community, I welcome you to this ground-breaking event: the first graduate student colloquium in Armenian studies. From across the nation and around the world, you have come to spend the day discussing research in this fascinating field, listening and talking to others who share your passion.*

*Over the course of your careers, you will probably attend many international gatherings of this sort, the marketplaces of new ideas and common interests. Armenian Studies is an excellent illustration of the contributions ethnicity-based programs have made over the years to the flourishing of multi-disciplinary scholarship. You bring to your subject area the perspectives of disciplines ranging from archeology and art history to linguistics and political science.*

*We find it significant that graduate students themselves participated in organizing this event. We thank them and Professor Peter Cowe, who holds the Narekatsi Chair, the oldest endowed chair at UCLA, for his leadership. Have a thought-provoking and enriching day.*

*Regards,*

*Claudia Mitchell-Kernan*

Claudia Mitchell-Kernan  
Vice Chancellor Graduate Studies  
Dean, Graduate Division



**G** The organizing committee of the Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies (GSCiAS) is pleased to welcome you to today's program. The GSCiAS is the first event of its kind and we are especially proud that UCLA, a premier institution for the growing field of Armenology and a leader in interdisciplinary studies, is hosting this event. Such support will help foster the development of Armenian Studies, facilitate interaction between graduate students and faculty from various institutions, provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, as well as contribute to the professional and academic development of graduate students.

**i** It is hoped that the current colloquium will become an annual event providing graduate students in the diverse disciplines encompassing Armenian Studies with a regular forum in which to present the results of their research.

**A** We hope that the presentations today challenge and inspire you.

**S** Sincerely,

The 2003 GSCiAS Committee

## THE UCLA PROGRAM IN ARMENIAN STUDIES

Armenian Studies at UCLA began in 1960 with the appointment of some temporary instructors, including Louise Nalbandian, Kevork Sarafian, and Rev. Sempad Lapajian. Teaching was supported by the bequest of the library of Dr. K. M. Khantamour, which formed the nucleus of the university's rich current holdings in the field. The discipline was augmented in 1962 with the appointment of Professor Richard G. Hovannisian, first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History established in 1987. Teaching in language and literature was established on a permanent footing with the coming of Professor Avedis K. Sanjian in 1965, who guided the development and expansion of this area over the next three decades. In July 2000 Dr. S. Peter Cowe was appointed as his successor.

Thanks to the fundraising campaign spearheaded by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, the Narekatsi Chair in Armenian Studies was founded in 1969 and, as such, has the distinction of being the oldest endowed chair at UCLA. This important milestone inaugurated the graduate program, preparing candidates for the degrees of M.A. and Ph.D. The accession of the Minasian collection of manuscripts and printed books in the following year greatly enhanced the program's research capabilities. Classes were supplemented by a series of lectures, symposia, and exhibitions exposing Armenian culture to a broad public.

Since 1997 regular instruction in East Armenian has complemented teaching in West Armenian: currently Dr. Anahid Keshishian is lecturer in the former and Dr. Gayane Hagopian in the latter. This was followed by the introduction of a popular undergraduate minor in Armenian Studies. The next year marked the graduation of the first student to select an Individual Major in Armenian Studies and the inauguration of the annual Moutk featuring articles, reviews, and fiction by students in the program. Currently proposals are underway to institute an undergraduate major in Armenian Studies.

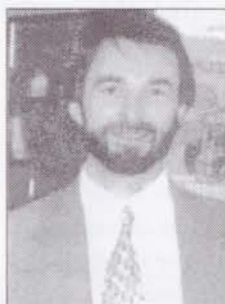


## Armenian Studies Faculty



### Richard G. Hovannisian

*Richard G. Hovannisian is Professor of Armenian and Near Eastern History at the University of California, Los Angeles. A member of the UCLA faculty since 1962, he has organized the undergraduate and graduate programs in Armenian and Caucasian history. In 1987, Professor Hovannisian was appointed the first holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Endowed Chair in Modern Armenian History. From 1978 to 1995, he also served as the Associate Director of the G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern Studies. The author of six scholarly studies and editor of several collected papers and conference proceedings, Hovannisian is a Guggenheim Fellow, and serves on the editorial boards of five journals and on the board of directors of ten civic and scholarly organizations. The recipient of numerous honors in recognition of his academic achievements, he was elected a member of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences in 1990.*



### S. Peter Cowe

*Dr. S. Peter Cowe is Narekatsi professor of Armenian Studies at UCLA. Previously he has held positions in Armenian Studies at Columbia University, New York, and the University of Chicago. His research interests include medieval Armenian intellectual history, modern Armenian nationalism, the Armenian lyric tradition, and Armenian film and theater. The author of five books in the field, he was recently commissioned to translate Perch Zeytuntsyan's play *Jesus of Nazareth and His Number Two Disciple* (2001) by a mainstream American theater which plans to stage the work. A regular contributor to Armenological journals, he is currently co-editor of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*.*



### Anahid Aramouni Keshishian

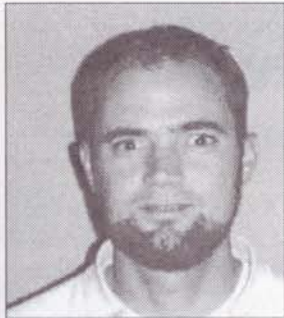
*Dr. Anahid Aramouni Keshishian is lecturer in Eastern Armenian at UCLA and instructor in Armenian language and literature at Glendale Community College. She received her Ph.D. from the Erevan Institute of Literature for her thesis *Hakob Karapents: His Worldview and Art* (Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1999). Dr. Keshishian has had a varied career as a researcher first in the Museum of the Ararat Valley of Ejmiatsin and later in the archives of the *Armenian Review* in Boston. In addition, she has been involved in publishing both as assistant manager of the "Armenian Observer", and later as editor of "The Eighties", a social and literary magazine (1986-88). A member of the Society for Armenian Studies, the Middle East Studies Association, and the Arvest Art and Literary Association, Keshishian has written several articles on Armenian literary themes.*



### Gayane Hagopian

*Dr. Gayane Hagopyan is lecturer in Western Armenian and instructor in linguistics at UCLA. After receiving her Ph.D. in historical semantics from the Erevan Institute of Linguistics in 1987, Dr. Hagopian held appointments at the Open University, Khrimian Hayrik Armenological College, and Davit Anghaght University, before assuming the post of senior scientific researcher at the Institute of Linguistics. Before moving to UCLA, Hagopian served as Visiting Professor of Armenian at UC Berkeley. A member of the Linguistic Society of America, Dr. Hagopian has authored and translated numerous articles on the development of the Armenian language. Currently, she is preparing her dissertation and a grammar of Western Armenian for publication.*





**Ian Lindsay**  
Anthropology, UC Santa Barbara

*Ian Lindsay is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Anthropology at UC Santa Barbara. Since completing his Bachelors Degree in anthropology at the University of Colorado in 1992, Ian has pursued his interest in archaeology throughout much of the western United States and countries such as Belize, Germany, and, most recently,*

*Armenia. Since entering the Ph.D. program in archaeology at UCSB in 1998, Ian has been to Armenia twice as a member of Project ArAGATS (Archaeology and Geography of Ancient Transcaucasian States), the only joint Armenian-American archaeological expedition currently operating in the country. He is currently awaiting funding to begin work on his doctoral research this summer on Late Bronze Age (c. 1550-1150 B.C.) strategies of elite power on the Tsakahovit Plain in northwestern Armenia.*

### **Current Archaeological Research on the Rise of Political Complexity in the Southern Caucasus: A View from the Tsaghkahovit Plain, Northwest Armenia**

The modern serenity of Armenia's rural highlands belies a period 3500 years ago when the clash of bronze weapons forged the regions earliest long- lasting political institutions. At stake was a wide-scale reformulation of the economic and political landscape driven by claims to territorial legitimacy, control over raw material sources, trade routes, grazing rights, or simply to prove whose faction was strongest, issues that resonate throughout the history of the southern Caucasus to the present day. Currently, the only witnesses to this period of dramatic social transformations are the silent remains of Late Bronze Age fortress complexes. This paper will review the current state of research into the roots of early complex societies on the Tsaghkahovit Plain in northwestern Armenia by Project ArAGATS. The sociopolitical implications of the transition in Transcaucasia from mobile, socially stratified herding societies in the Middle Bronze Age (c. 2200-1500 B.C.) to sedentary, agricultural, fortress-building polities in the Late Bronze Age (c.1550-1150 B.C.) are of particular interest. The development of enduring political institutions can be hindered by the decentralizing effect of settlement mobility, such as was evident during the Middle Bronze Age in Transcaucasia. What advantages then did the geographically bounded landscape of the Tsaghkahovit Plain offer settled populations during the Late Bronze Age? Why did the manifestation of institutional authority between the two periods shift from sacred to secular (i.e., from richly furnished monumental burials to hilltop fortresses)? How did elites and non-elites renegotiate their respective social networks in the face of these profound changes? While definitive answers to these questions await further investigation, project research goals, strategies, and preliminary results will be highlighted.



**Gevork Nazaryan**  
Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA

*Gevork Nazaryan received his B.A. degree in History from the University of California, Los Angeles (2002) with high honors and election to the Golden Key*

*International Honor Society. He is currently working on his M.A. in Armenian Studies with Dr. S. Peter Cowe, Holder of the Grigor Narekatsi Chair in Armenian Language and Culture at UCLA. He is a member of the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS). In 1997 Gevork Nazaryan established a website (armenianhighland.com) dedicated to Armenian Studies which received the first prize in the UN Sponsored SARD Best Website competition (1999).*

*In 2000, under the mentorship of Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian, Holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Endowed Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA, he created the official website of Armenian Studies at UCLA (uclaarmenian.org) In 2002 he began working on a project (PHOENIX 15) dedicated to preserving the hundreds of interviews of survivors of the Armenian Genocide.*

### **INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND COMMERCE IN CILICIAN ARMENIA**

The paper examines the broad international trade ties that existed during the Cilician period of Armenian History (between the XIth and XVth century) prior, during and after the establishment of the Cilician Kingdom of Armenia (1199-1375). The work particularly focuses on the extensive global mercantilism and the close commercial ties during this period including the far-reaching ties that developed between Armenian and European (Genoese, Pisan, Venetian, Spanish, Dutch etc.) merchants and tradesmen.

The renowned international Mediterranean city-port of Ayas in this epoch was a primary gateway of the global East - West matrix. The policies and diplomacy developed during this era by the Rubenid and Hetumid royal houses were geared at encouraging international business, large investments and securing the flow of finance and revenues into the kingdom, most significantly mutually assured through numerous treaties and the granting of a number of privileges to the European merchant communities. The paper also concentrates on the fall of Ayas to the Egyptian Mamluks (early XIVth century) as crucial loss that led to the eventual fall of the Cilician Kingdom. With the cession of Ayas to the Mamluks, Cilicia lost its most vital outlet port to the rest of the world and with that its very important role as the portal of the East-West mercantilism.

The study also sketches later mercantile developments (XVth to the XVIIIth centuries) of the Armenian merchant class after the fall of the Cilician Kingdom (1375) and the Lusignan Dynasty. The continuation of ties established during the Rubenid rule between Armenian and European merchants is highlighted in the study as an important factor that continued into our own era.





### **Bedros Der Matossian**

Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University

*Bedross Der Matossian was born in the Old City of Jerusalem and attended the St. Tarkmanchats Armenian School there. Subsequently, he pursued a dual major in Political Science and Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, concentrating on the Ottoman Empire. He graduated from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where he also started graduate school. Currently he is a doctoral student at Columbia University, New York, researching the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century from an interdisciplinary perspective. His prime areas of interest are the minorities in the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman reform politics in the 19th century and their impact on the politicization of ethnic boundaries, Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian Genocide and the history of the Turkish Republic.*

### **The Impact of the Tanzimat Reforms on the Armenian Constitutional Movement in the Ottoman Empire.**

The Armenian National Constitution (1863) represents the culmination of a movement whose roots lay deep in the life of the Armenian community of the Ottoman Empire but whose realization also owed much to such external events as the declaration of Tanzimat reforms (1839), the Treaty of Paris (1856), Hatti-Humayun of 1856, and the activities of the Renaissance Generation.

This paper aims to provide a sociological analysis of the impact of the Tanzimat reforms on this movement. As is well known, from the 18th till the second half of the 19th century, the Armenian community was governed by a Patriarch-Amira class coalition. The transformation of the Armenian Millet from its clerico-feudal role to a constitutional democracy illustrates the complex relations between the community's religio-aristocratic forces represented by the clergy and the sarraf amiras and the middle class forces of the Armenian intelligentsia, esnafs, and technocrat amiras. The catalyst for this gradual transformation was clearly pressure from an organized middle class.

Only with the emergence of the middle class did the dynamics of power within the Armenian Millet begin to change, facilitating progress toward a constitutional form of government. Of the various internal and external factors that impacted this development three warrant special attention; the economic advancement of the Armenian community, emblematic of the political and socio-economic changes taking place in the Empire as a whole, the importation of European ideas, and Ottoman bureaucratic reform, which led to the emergence of a new civil administration throughout the state.



### **Nicola Migliorino**

University of Exeter, Arab & Islamic Studies

*Nicola Migliorino is a PhD student at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies of the University of Exeter (UK), where he works on a thesis on the relations between the Armenian communities and the state in Lebanon and Syria. An Italian national, he was born in 1970 in Genoa, Italy. He holds a degree in Political Science/International Politics (Università degli Studi di Genova, Italy, 1995) and a Master of Arts in Middle East Politics (University of Durham, UK, 1998). He lived and worked in the Middle East for more than three years: in Egypt (1996-97) where he worked at the Italian Institute of Culture, and in Syria (1998-2000), where he was country representative of the Italian NGO Movimondo.*

### **Armenian Education and the State in Lebanon and Syria**

The paper offers a brief, comparative overview of the evolution of Armenian education in Lebanon and Syria in the post-Genocide era. The perspective is that of political science: the relation between Armenian educational institutions and the state is used as an aspect of the more general approach of the two states towards the question of the accommodation and co-ordination of ethno-religious diversity. The paper will argue that the evolution of Armenian education followed a similar path in the two countries during the Mandate and until the early 1950s, on the basis of a principle of autonomy of communal education rooted in the Ottoman tradition. The union of Syria with Egypt and the events of the 1960s marked an acceleration in the process of construction of Syrian Arab national institutions and identity: as a result, the autonomy of Armenian education in Syria was severely restricted. The events of the last thirty years seem to show, however, some degree of convergence between the two models: on one hand Armenian education in Lebanon has increasingly geared up to become more compatible with the Lebanese public education system; on the other, Armenian educational institutions in Syria have been allowed to develop larger spaces of autonomy. The paper will also succinctly present the current situation of crisis of the Armenian school system in Lebanon, raising some questions on the role of the state in preserving cultural diversity.





**Robert Owen Krikorian**  
Russian & Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

*Robert Owen Krikorian is currently a doctoral candidate in History and Eurasian Studies, and an Associate of the Davis Center at Harvard University, where he is specializing in the modern history of the South Caucasus. He is the co-author of Armenia: At*

*the Crossroads*, and author of articles and reviews, which have appeared in journals such as the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *Association for the Study of Caucasica Annual*, *JSAS*, and the *Journal of Armenian Studies*.

*Krikorian has worked as an escort-interpreter for the U. S. Department of State, and studied political science at Clark University and George Washington University, and foreign languages at Erevan State University. He has done extensive fieldwork in the Caucasus and southern Russia.*

## **The Reappropriation of the Past: History and Politics in Soviet Armenia, 1988-1991**

This paper explores how historical memory contributed to a transformation of political thinking in Armenia during the final years of the Soviet Union, which led to a gradual "divorce from Sovietism" and ultimately secession. Throughout the Soviet bloc, history was contested terrain in the battle for the "hearts and minds of the nation." In the Armenian case, history was a tool to mobilize the nation against Soviet central authorities and in its armed conflict against Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh.

My research also examines the political mobilization of history by the Soviets to subordinate history to the ideological needs of the Communist Party. It then analyzes the impact of historical memory on political events in Armenia after decades of Soviet falsification. The core research ties discrete historical events, such as the 19th century liberation movement, the Armenian Genocide, the 1918-1920 independent republic to specific political developments in the 1988-1991 period, most notably the Karabagh conflict, anti-Armenian pogroms in Azerbaijan, debates regarding Armenia's place in the Union and the possibilities of re-establishing an independent state.

The topic aims to contribute to the debate over the collapse of Soviet power in the periphery of the empire. By focusing on the connection between history and politics, a more nuanced explanation is advanced for the sudden collapse of the system. The project hopes to contribute to an understanding of the failure of Communism as it confronted nationalism. Finally, this research project seeks to elucidate the important role of historical narratives in national identity.



**Ramela Grigorian**  
Art History, UCLA

*"A flight into the past as well as a flight into that even more startling region of the present - although which past I would find, and whose present, it was hard to tell." (Passage to Ararat, Michael Arlen)*

*After receiving a BA in Art History and Psychology, Ramela Grigorian continued her studies at UCLA. At the Master's level, she majored in Modern Art, as well as Museum Studies, bringing to the second major her extensive experience in various museum departments. Her thesis examined the myth-making of the artist Arshile Gorky, specifically through his translated letters. Ramela is currently studying Modern Art and Armenian Studies. Her dissertation project is a comparative analysis of Armenian visual art within the diasporic paradigm; it addresses the construction of national and cultural identity as it is expressed in relation to a homeland - either as a real or imagined site of historic origin. In addition to her role as a Teaching Associate for the department, she has also enjoyed teaching in various other capacities, including as an instructor for interdisciplinary high school and adult programs and as a docent in local museums.*

## **Forging the Armenian Past: Questionable Translations of Abstract Expressionist Arshile Gorky's Missing Letters**

Primary sources are valued documents and used extensively by art historians to support interpretive readings of works of art. Yet critical questions are raised when the authenticity of these sources is threatened by the claim that they might instead be fabrications. The translations of Abstract Expressionist Arshile Gorky's Armenian letters, appearing in the self-published biographies written by his nephew Karlen Mooradian, titled *Arshile Gorky Adoian* (1978) and *The Many Worlds of Arshile Gorky* (1980), changed the course of Gorky scholarship. However, these letters have recently been called into question by Gorky biographers Nouritza Matossian and Matthew Spender. Yet no study has identified the discrepancies between the genuine and questionable letters.

In this paper, I consider the authenticity of the letters through an in-depth analysis. By identifying discrepancies between the genuine and possibly forged documents, I argue that Mooradian deliberately fabricated letters from Gorky to further his own multi-layered agenda: establishing his uncle's artistic status and Armenian roots, constructing a myth of himself as an original scholar, and promoting his Armenian nationalism.



**GRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM IN ARMENIAN STUDIES**  
**FEBRUARY 21, 2003 UCLA ROYCE HALL 314**

8:30-9:00 Breakfast  
9:00-9:30 Opening Remarks:

**Haig Hovsepian**, Executive Officer, ARMENIAN GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION  
**Dr. Peter Cowe**, NAREKATSI PROFESSOR OF ARMENIAN STUDIES AT UCLA

SESSION 1: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURES IN PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC ARMENIA  
 Chair: **Liana Vardanyan** (NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES & CULTURES, UCLA)

- 1) 9:30-9:55 **Ian Lindsay**  
 (ARCHAEOLOGY, UC SANTA BARBARA)  
*CURRENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH ON THE RISE OF POLITICAL COMPLEXITY IN THE SOUTHERN CAUCASUS: A VIEW FROM THE TSAGHKAHOVIT PLAIN, NORTHWEST ARMENIA*

- 2) 9:55-10:20 **Gevork Nazaryan**  
 (NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES & CULTURES, UCLA)  
*INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND COMMERCE IN CILICIAN ARMENIA*

10:20-10:30 GENERAL DISCUSSION  
10:30-10:50 COFFEE BREAK

SESSION 2: ARMENIAN EXPERIENCE UNDER THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND ITS AFTERMATH  
 Chair: **Tamar Boyadjian** (NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES & CULTURES, UCLA)

- 3) 10:50-11:15 **Bedross Der Matossian**  
 (MIDDLE EAST & ASIAN LANGUAGES, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY)  
*THE IMPACT OF THE TANZIMAT REFORMS ON THE ARMENIAN CONSTITUTIONAL MOVEMENT IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE*

- 4) 11:15-11:40 **Hovann Simonian**  
 (POLITICAL SCIENCE, USC)  
*A CASE STUDY IN MULTIPLE IDENTITY: THE HEMSHIN OF NORTH EAST TURKEY*

- 5) 11:40-12:05 **Jean Murachanian**  
 (ART HISTORY, UCLA)  
*LEVON TUTUNDJIAN: THE ARMENIAN ARTIST/EXILE IN PARIS*

12:05-12:30 GENERAL DISCUSSION  
12:30-1:30 LUNCH

SESSION 3: ARMENIAN CULTURE IN THE DIASPORA  
 Chair: **Talar Chahinian** (COMPARATIVE LITERATURE, UCLA)

- 6) 1:30-1:55 **Ramela Grigorian**  
 (ART HISTORY, UCLA)  
*FORGING THE ARMENIAN PAST: QUESTIONABLE TRANSLATIONS OF ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST ARSHILE GORKY'S MISSING LETTERS*

- 7) 1:55-2:20 **Kari Neely**  
 (NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES & CULTURES, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR)  
*WEST ARMENIAN LITERATURE: A STUDY IN INSIDER SPEECH*

- 8) 2:20-2:45 **Nicola Migliorino**  
 (ARAB & ISLAMIC STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EXETER)  
*ARMENIAN EDUCATION AND THE STATE IN LEBANON AND SYRIA*

2:45-3:05 GENERAL DISCUSSION  
3:05-3:25 TEA BREAK

SESSION 4: CONTEMPORARY PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE ARMENIAN REPUBLIC  
 Chair: **Galust Mardirosian** (LINGUISTICS, UCLA)

- 9) 3:25-3:50 **Robert O. Krikorian**  
 (RUSSIAN & EURASIAN STUDIES, HARVARD UNIVERSITY)  
*THE REAPPROPRIATION OF THE PAST: HISTORY AND POLITICS IN SOVIET ARMENIA, 1988-1991*

- 10) 3:50-4:15 **Ani Sarkissian**  
 (POLITICAL SCIENCE, UCLA)  
*RELIGIOUS POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND THE SUCCESS OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION: THE ROLE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH*

- 11) 4:15-4:40 **Talin Der-Grigorian**  
 (HISTORY AND THEORY OF ARCHITECTURE, MIT)  
*REINVENTING 1700 YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY: (MIS/RE)USE OF PUBLIC MONUMENTS IN REPUBLICAN ARMENIA*

- 12) 4:40-5:05 **Dr. Victoria Rowe**  
 (NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES & CULTURES, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)  
*WOMEN'S NGOS IN THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA: CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS*

5:05-5:30 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION  
5:30-6:15 RECEPTION (ROYCE 306)  
6:15-7:15 LARK MUSICAL SOCIETY RECITAL (SCHOENBERG 1325)





**Kari Neely**

Near Eastern Languages & Cultures,  
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

*Neely received her first Masters degree in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Arkansas where her area of specialization was the Middle East and Arabic literature. She continued her studies in Arabic literature at the University of Michigan where she received her second Masters in Near Eastern Studies and where she is currently working on her PhD. Her dissertation topic explores how Levantine minorities have constructed images of themselves and others in literature during the past century. It was at Michigan that she began studying Western Armenian in order to include Levantine Armenian texts in her research. Since that time, she has traveled to Armenia for a summer program in Western Armenian and has conducted preliminary research in Syria and Lebanon.*

### **Western Armenian Literature: A Study in Insider Speech**

My research focuses on Levantine minorities and their identity construction in fictional writings since the rise of nation states. Through minority discourse, we learn about the minorities' self-perception as well as their depiction/representation by the dominant culture. In my work, Armenians provide a comprehensive example (ethnically, religiously, linguistically) of a minority within this region. While most in the field of minority studies would believe that this situation would create an isolated community, the fictional texts written also demonstrate that Armenians have been involved in their host communities and have interacted with their neighbors. After their absorption by host countries, social issues related to a dispersed community arose and are reflected in their writings. While the community has maintained a presence in the region for at least three generations, it has not produced a body of fictional works in Arabic. Therefore, the texts that will be discussed are "closed", only accessible to the linguistic community. The "closed" nature of the original texts provides a level of protection and can result in "insider" speech. The themes of alienation, integration and assimilation, homeland, and host country figure prominently in Western Armenian fiction. These themes are conveyed directly and indirectly. This paper will discuss alienation, generational issues of integration and assimilation, relationships with the host communities and a return to the homeland as presented in a number of texts. Authors to be discussed include Boyajian, Dzarugian, Seza, Simonian, and Tekian.



**Hovann Simonian**

Political Science, USC

*Hovann Simonian is a Ph.D. candidate researching theories of secession in the Department of Political Science at the University of Southern California. He was born in Beirut and spent his early years in*

*Lebanon and later in Switzerland. He holds an MA in International Relations from the Department of Political Science at the University of Southern California (1996) and another MA in Central Asian Studies from the Center for Near and Middle Eastern Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, the University of London (1997). He is the co-author, with Prof. R. Hrair Dekmejian, of Troubled Waters: The Geopolitics of the Caspian Region (London: I.B. Tauris and New York: St. Martin/Palgrave, 2001) and the editor of the forthcoming The Hemshin, which will be published by Curzon-Routledge in London as part of its Peoples of the Caucasus Series.*

### **A Case Study in Multiple Identity: The Hemshin of North East Turkey**

The Armenians of the Hemshin district, located in the eastern section of the Pontos, were profoundly affected by forced Islamization from the mid-seventeenth century on. As with the Pontic Greeks and some Albanian communities, conversion was often only external at the outset, so that crypto-Christians (Kes-Kes, Arm. half and half) constituted a majority of the Hemshin population in the following centuries. A French traveler, Vital Cuinet, reported in 1890 that the Hemshins still baptized their children. To this day, the Hemshins celebrate Vartevan, the feast of the transfiguration of Christ, with a festival held every summer in their mountain pastures-although the original religious significance of the event seems to have been lost. Moreover, the Hemshins have retained the Armenian language, thus becoming the only community of Armenian-speaking Muslims. After a short introduction to the historical circumstances surrounding the conversion of the Hemshins to Islam and the subsequent retention of crypto-Christian practices within the converted community, the paper will focus on the emergence of a Hemshin ethnic identity organized around the somewhat contradictory poles of allegiance to Islam and use of the Armenian language.





**Jean Murachanian**  
Art History, UCLA

*Jean Murachanian received her M.A. in Art History from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2001, where she focused on Museum Studies, Modern Art History and Armenian Art History. Her M.A. thesis considered the representation of Armenian identity at the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) in Boston, Massachusetts. She has served on the board of the Ararat-Eskijian Museum in Los Angeles and co-curated an exhibition last year titled In Celebration of Life: Armenian Identity in the Diaspora. She is currently preparing for her doctoral exams and conducting preliminary research on her dissertation topic, French-Armenian surrealist painter, Levon Tutundjian, which she is excited to share with you today. She looks forward to your comments.*

### **Levon Tutundjian: Armenian Artist/Exile in Paris**

This paper considers the work of a French-Armenian surrealist, Levon Tutundjian, who, as a young child, survived the Armenian Genocide of 1915. He lived and worked in Paris from 1923 until his death in 1968. He was a talented and prolific artist, but because of various factors he did not receive due recognition during his lifetime. In more recent years, however, his contributions have begun to be recognized by the academic community and the public. In 1994, French scholar, Gladys Fabre, published a monograph on Tutundjian which established his place within the modern movements of the 20th century and outlined his artistic influences. In Europe, the popularity of his work has increased enough to warrant forgeries.

My work on Tutundjian is not only an attempt to further establish his place in history, but to consider his contributions as an ethnic artist living in the Diaspora and the trauma of his Genocide experience. Like many Genocide survivors, Tutundjian did not speak about his horrific experience because it was too painful. He also remained silent about his paintings because he believed his work spoke for itself. This paper represents a preliminary analysis of Tutundjian's imagery from the perspective of his ethnicity and Genocide experience, an interpretation I hope to substantiate once I conduct critical research in France.

To acquaint the audience with Tutundjian's oeuvre, this paper will provide a brief survey of his early works and an in-depth analysis of his surrealist paintings.



**Ani Sarkissian**  
Political Science, UCLA

*Ani Sarkissian received her B.A. in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley in 1995, where she completed a senior thesis on the Armenian genocide. She began the Ph.D. program at UCLA in the Political Science department in 1998, earning an M.A. in 2001. She is currently beginning research on her dissertation, which compares the role of religious institutions in democratic transition in Armenia and around the world. Her fields of interest include comparative democratization, civil society, and nationalism.*

### **Religious Political Participation and the Success of Democratic Transition: The Role of the Armenian Church**

What is the role of religion in Armenia's transition to democracy? This paper examines the political involvement of the Armenian Apostolic church in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. It explores the relationship of church and state during communist rule, the role played by the church during transition, and its position since independence. It analyzes organizational features such as the structure of church hierarchy and sources of funding to explain the actions of the church in the political arena. It also highlights the position of the Armenian diaspora in church affairs, detailing the impact it has had on its politics. The paper is part of a larger study examining the role of religion in democratic transition, comparing the Armenian experience with that of countries in the former Soviet Union and other parts of the world. While the Armenian case holds similarities to other predominantly Eastern Christian countries, it is unique in illuminating the impact of historical legacies on the current political situation and pointing to the role that external forces can play in the domestic politics of a country.





**Talin Der-Grigorian**  
History and Theory of Architecture, MIT

*Talin Der-Grigorian is a Ph.D. Candidate in the History, Theory, & Criticism of Architecture Section at the School of Architecture of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Her dissertation is focused on the politics of space and identity within the context of the modern Middle East. As of Spring 2003, she will be teaching non-western architectural history at Rhode Island School of Design. During the academic years 2000-2002, she was a visiting lecturer at the Art History Department of Yerevan State University. She received her M.Arch. from MIT in 1998 and her B.Arch. from USC in 1996.*

### **Reinventing 1700 Years of Christianity: (Mis/Re)Use of Public Space in Republican Armenia**

On a mostly conceptual level, I examine the largest public space during the 1700-year Celebrations in Yerevan: the Lenin/Republic Square left an impression of harmony and religiosity. A post-modern Christian Cross came to replace a modern-utopian Lenin; both erected on a pedestal, both pointing to the "bright" future. The central questions that emerge from the architectural conceptualization and analysis of the square are as follows. How is architecture used as a site of power and resistance in a politically charged society? Why is architecture-as-representation so central to the making of coercive narratives about (post)modern identities and historic grandeur? How do these shifting uses of the landmark leave their imprint on architectural form, function, and meaning? Specifically, the 1700th celebrations of a Christian Armenia provoked the possibilities to make political claims through public art. More importantly perhaps, these claims also occasioned the shaping of the popular sense of aesthetics. Through this example, my point is to analyze the structures that endorse political discourse and, by contrast, sustain social resistance. I will argue that which is lost to architect turn in the case of the Lenin/Cross is its architectural permanence, where it, in turn, becomes a mere sign, vulnerable to impulsive modification of meaning. Political exploitation of public art when left uncontested, not only refers back to a continuity in historic means of coercive representation, but also depicts a mechanism of propaganda not so historic in its passing.



**Victoria Rowe**  
Near Eastern Languages & Cultures,  
University of Toronto

*Victoria Rowe is an independent scholar. In 2000 she received her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto. She has taught Armenian literature there. In 2001-2002 she worked for seven months as a fundraiser for a women's non-governmental organization in the Republic of Armenia and conducted interviews with NGO members from various organizations. The author of the book, A History of Armenian Women's Writing 1880-1921 (forthcoming 2003), and several articles, her research focuses on the intersection of Armenian history, cultural production, and the discourse of women and modernity.*

### **Women's NGOs in the Republic of Armenia: Challenges and Achievements**

The subject of this paper is the process by which women's non-governmental organizations (NGO) in the Republic of Armenia are designing political, economic, and social discourses and programmes to make women's experiences, and what are designated as women's issues, part of the public discourse. Current studies by local NGOs and the United Nations Development Programme have shown that women are not being integrated into the contemporary political structure and cannot access the new and lucrative area of business enterprise because of gender discrimination. This has resulted in women's exclusion from political decision-making and the impoverishment of women and children. As a consequence numerous NGOs committed to the improvement of status of women in the Republic of Armenia have been established since 1991.

Based on a series of interviews I conducted with NGO workers in 2001-2002, the paper will evaluate the challenges and achievements encountered by NGOs when attempting to improve women's economic and political status. The NGOs' mandates include providing humanitarian aid, organizing development projects, employment, training in democracy, including sessions on how to lobby the government to address poverty and lack of affordable health care, and at election time, how to consider party platforms, ask critical questions, and to vote. The surveys, reports, and activities of the NGOs in Armenia are crucial in determining what are the real problems facing women today, and in conjunction with the women who utilize their services, in finding solutions to the problems and challenges of transition.



## Lark Musical Society Recital

### A BOUQUET OF ARMENIAN ART SONGS

<b>EDVARD MIRZOYAN:</b>	ASUM EN [THEY SAY]
<b>EDGAR ABRAHAMIAN:</b>	LUR GISHIRIN [ON A SILENT NIGHT]
<b>P. GANACHIAN:</b>	TSAYGERG [SERENADE]
<b>ROMANOS MELIKIAN:</b>	MI LAR [ONE STRING]
<b>GEVORG DODOKHIAN:</b>	TZITZERNAK [SWALLOW]
<b>A. AYVAZIAN:</b>	YEREVAN
<b>ALAN HOVHANNES:</b>	YAR NAZANI [BELOVED FULL OF CHARMS]
<b>GEGHUNI CHUCHIAN:</b>	ARARAT
<b>N. KALANDERIAN:</b>	HOV LINEM [MAY I SHADE YOU]
<b>KOMITAS:</b>	SHOGHER JAN [DEAR SHOGHER] AND ES ARUN [THIS BROOK]

### Anahid Nersisian (soprano)

Born in Erevan, Anahid Nersisian received her musical training at the Romanos Melikian Music School and Komitas State Conservatory. She has won numerous competitions since the age of six. In 1984 she was presented the Glinka Prize, her most important award to date. The following year she also took part in an international competition in France. During her successful opera career in Erevan she interpreted many leading roles on the stage of the Spendirian Theatre. Since settling in the United States twelve years ago, she has given concerts in various states, including California, Colorado, Illinois, and Utah. In 1999, as a successful participant in the California Opera Company competition, she assumed the main roles in Puccini's *Sister Angelica* and *Il Tabarro*. Presently Ms. Nersisian is on the faculty of Lark Conservatory.

### Shoghig Koushakjian (mezzo soprano)

Shoghig Koushakjian studied with Ms. Nina Hinson as a vocalist at UC Irvine, where she earned her B.M. and MFA degrees. In addition, she has worked with internationally acclaimed artists Marilyn Horne and Warren Jones. Ms. Koushakjian's current operatic credits include *Unulfo* in Handel's *Rodelinda*, *Gertrude* in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, *Augusta* (Ballad of Bay Doe), *Isabella* (L'Italiana in Algier), *Suzuki* (Madama Butterfly), and *Amneris* (Aida), for which she received rave reviews ("Outstanding... both dramatically and vocally" Santa Barbara Independent). She made her professional operatic debut with Pacific Opera at the Orange County Performing Arts Center in Costa Mesa where she sang in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, and Mozart's *Magic Flute*. A versatile artist, Ms. Koushakjian is as comfortable in concert as in opera. As a winner of UC Irvine's Concerto Competition, she performed Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* with the UCI Symphony Orchestra.

### Victoria Symonian (piano)

Victoria Symonian graduated from the Kirovakan Music School in 1978, majoring in piano. Thereafter, she continued her studies at the Leningrad College of Music, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1986. For the next five years she pursued higher studies in piano at Erevan State Conservatory, where she also worked for two years as an accompanist for students of voice. After moving to the US in 1993, she assumed several musical positions: as organist (United Methodist Church of Monterey Park), accompanist (Rainbow Treble Choir), and piano teacher (Lark Conservatory). In fact she is a founding member of the faculty at Lark Conservatory, where, in addition to teaching piano, she also features as principal concertmaster. In 1998 Ms. Symonian joined the staff of the Music Department at California State University, Los Angeles as accompanist.

## Lark Musical Society

Lark Musical Society is dedicated to the advancement of ARMENIAN MUSICAL CULTURE AND THE WESTERN CLASSICAL TRADITION. UNDER THE accomplished direction of Maestro Vatshe Barsoumian, the society has been active since 1989 presenting concerts in Southern California to critical acclaim. Its repertoire attracts a culturally diverse audience, as it skillfully interweaves major European and American masterpieces among the best creations of the most talented Armenian composers.

OVER AND ABOVE ITS MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED MUSICAL EVENTS STAGED BY THE LARK CHORUS, THE DZIADZAN (RAINBOW) CHILDREN'S CHOIRS, AND THE FOLK INSTRUMENT AND DANCE ENSEMBLE, LARK HAS SPONSORED TWENTY scholarly symposia, lectures, and panel discussions, published twenty-three musicological treatises and scores, and produced four sound recordings. MOREOVER, THE LARK CONSERVATORY INAUGURATED IN 1996 HAS BECOME A VIBRANT CENTER OF QUALITY MUSICAL ACTIVITY, WITH 160 STUDENTS BETWEEN THE AGES OF SIX AND SIXTY-SIX CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN ITS VARIOUS COURSES ON MUSIC INSTRUCTION.



## **UCLA Armenian Graduate Students Association**

*The UCLA Armenian Graduate Students Association (AGSA) was established in January of 2002. It seeks to enhance the graduate student experience at UCLA through academic and professional development, networking, and mentorship by the organization of events relevant to the Armenian community and Armenian issues. It is a student-run organization which strongly encourages member-initiated/led programming. While the Winter Quarter 2002 was spent primarily in membership development and recruiting, the Spring Quarter 2002 saw its first major events - a lecture by the California Attorney General, Bill Lockyer as well as the first in what has become a regular series of mentorship events for the UCLA undergraduate community. This past academic term, the UCLA AGSA organized a symposium, held in the Anderson School of Business, on the newly established California-Armenia/Regional Trade Office. It has also hosted an evening with recently appointed Superior Court Judge, Zaven V. Sinanian, at the UCLA School of Law. Next month it will be hosting its third collaborative graduate student and young professional networking event with the Loyola Law School Armenian Law Students Association. In order to help provide more professional development as well as networking opportunities, the UCLA AGSA maintains open lines of communications with the various Armenian professional organizations such as the Armenian Bar Association and the Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America.*

*The UCLA AGSA is particularly proud to share in this collaborative effort with the UCLA Program in Armenian Studies of the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures that has organized this Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies as it embodies the ideals of our mission statement from its organization to its implementation. We hope that it will serve as an inspiration to our members as well as a model for future Armenian student group programming.*

**Please visit our homepage at**

**<<http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/agsa>>**

**or contact us at [agsaucla@ucla.edu](mailto:agsaucla@ucla.edu) if you would like more information regarding the UCLA AGSA, its goals, activities, and/or how to keep in contact with us.**

## **Acknowledgements**

**THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE 2003 GRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM IN ARMENIAN STUDIES WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF TODAY'S PROGRAM:**

*The UCLA Center for European and Eurasian Studies*

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*The UCLA Center for Near Eastern Studies*

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*The UCLA Department of  
Near Eastern Languages and Cultures*

•

*The Society for Armenian Studies*

•

*The UCLA Department of Art History*

•

*The UCLA Social Sciences Academic Council*

•

*Pam Cysner and Janis Guzman,  
UCLA Center for Student Programming*

•

*This event was partially funded by  
Campus Programs Committee of the  
Program Activities Board*

•

**Special Thanks to**

*The Lark Musical Society for their musical program  
Sako Shahinian for flyer design*

**and**

*Flor De Cafe Bakery, Yeznik Tamazyan*

•

*QUIZNOS SUBS, Vartkes Boyadjian  
for donations of comestibles*





# N o t e s

