



# UCLA

Graduate Student  
Colloquium in  
Armenian Studies

**March 3, 2006**

**UCLA Royce Hall 314**



**I-BEN Printing • 818-246-5553**

*My Fellow Graduate Students and Colleagues:*

*On behalf of UCLA Graduate Students Association, I am pleased to welcome you to the fourth annual Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies. It has always been refreshing to me to see the excellent activities that the UCLA Armenian Graduate Student Association conducts. It seems like the AGSA is continuously doing something innovative and this event is certainly no exception. Whether you are intimately involved with the AGSA or just curious about Armenian Studies, by attending this Colloquium, you have come to take part in a unique experience - a gathering of graduate students from around the world who will present their works in progress and their contribution to the growing, interdisciplinary field of Armenian Studies.*

*This Colloquium will provide the opportunity for exploring of a range of topics with the featured speakers. The twelve presenters this year are graduate students from various fields and from locations around the world. I am especially pleased to say that four of the speakers are from our own UCLA graduate student body. It is truly a testament to the organizational strength of the graduate student organizing committee of the Armenian Graduate Students Association that such a mosaic is hosted at UCLA. I'm sure that you will join me in expressing appreciation to the committee for the excellent work they have done on our behalf.*

*I am certain that this colloquium will introduce you to new ideas, and I encourage you all to plant the seeds of new collaborative relationships with your colleagues so that this interdisciplinary field can expand into new arenas.*

*Wishing you all a highly successful event,*

*Jared Fox*

*President*

*UCLA Graduate Students Association*



## 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 Revl. 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 appointment 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 M.A. and Ph.D. The accession of the Minassian 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, the regular instruction in Eastern Armenian has complemented teaching in Western Armenian; presently Dr. Anahid Aramouni Keshishian is lecturer in the former and Dr. Hagop Gulludjian in the latter. The following year, a popular undergraduate minor in Armenian Studies was introduced. This was followed by the graduation of the first student to select an Individual Major in Armenian Studies, and the inauguration of the publication *Moutk*. During Winter Term of 2006, thanks to the munificence of the Friends of the UCLA Armenian Language and Culture Studies, we are pleased to welcome Ms. Lucina Agabian Hubbard of the Thornton School of Music at USC, who along with Dr. Ankica Petrovic, Adjunct Professor in Ethnomusicology at UCLA, is team-teaching a class in Armenian Musical Culture. Currently, proposals are underway to institute an undergraduate major in Armenian Studies.

*The organizing committee of the Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies (GSCiAS) is pleased to welcome you to today's proceedings. This year's program marks the fourth time this event is being hosted at UCLA, a premier institution for the growing field of Armenology and a leader in interdisciplinary studies. We hope that the colloquium will foster the development of Armenian Studies, facilitate interaction between graduate students and faculty from various institutions, provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, and contribute to the professional and academic development of graduate students.*

*This year's organizing committee has brought together a unique group of scholars from institutions across the globe, including Armenia, Hungary, Israel, the UK and the USA. Although all the topics are related to Armenian Studies, they represent a wide range of fields from history, art, and literature to social and religious studies. We hope that the colloquium will offer a unique opportunity for both the presenters and the audience to engage in academic discussion and illuminate numerous issues in the dynamic and diverse area of Armenian Studies. In this way, we hope to encourage student scholarship and provide an arena for the development of new ideas and progress in Armenian Studies.*

*Once again, we would like to welcome you all: undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty and the community at large, to today's program. We hope that each of you will glean something new and leave with an anticipation for future colloquia to come.*

*Sincerely,*

*The 2006 GSCiAS Committee*





### Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian

Dr. 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 at UCLA. From 1978 to 1995, he also served as the Associate Director of the G.E. von Grunebaum Center for Near Eastern

Studies. The author or editor of twenty volumes and sixty scholarly articles relating to Armenian, Hovannisian is a Guggenheim Fellow and has received many honors for his scholarship, civic activities, and advancement of Armenian studies, including election to membership in the Armenian National Academy of Sciences and Encyclopaedias and Medals from their Holinesses, the Catholicos of all Armenians in Etchmiadzin and the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia in Lebanon. Dr. Hovannisian is a founder and three-time president of the Society for Armenian Studies and represented the State of California on the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) from 1978 to 1994. He serves on the board of directors of nine scholarly and civic organizations and has made numerous television and radio appearances on issues relating to the Armenian people and Armenian, Near Eastern, and Caucasian history. Most recently, he served as the historical consultant for the National Geographic Magazine feature article on Armenia.



### Dr. S. Peter Cowe

Dr. S. Peter Cowe, faculty advisor of the colloquium, is Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA. Previously, he has held positions in Armenology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Columbia University, New York. 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 and editor of five, he

is now completing an investigation of the Armenian Republic's post-Soviet publishing industry begun on a NCEEER research grant. A regular contributor to scholarly periodicals, he is co-editor of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*. Currently he is collaborating on a study of the earliest extant Armenian encyclopaedia, an anthology of contemporary women writers from the Balkans, and a project sponsored by the *Septuaginta Unternehmung* of Goettingen.

### Dr. Anahid Aramouni Keshishian

Dr. Anahid Aramouni Keshishian is Lecturer in Eastern Armenian at UCLA. She has 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. Dr. Keshishian has been the publisher and the editor of *The Eighties*, a social and literary magazine, as well as the editor of the student magazine, *Moutk*, published by UCLA NELC. She is a member of the Society for Armenian Studies, the Middle East Studies Association, and the Arvest Art and Literary Association. Dr. Keshishian has written extensively on social and political issues, and on Armenian literary themes. She is the founder and artistic director of the Los Angeles based art organization, Arena Productions. Through Arena Productions, Dr. Keshishian has produced and directed several Armenian plays translated into English, all of which were critically acclaimed by the Los Angeles community. Dr. Keshishian is the Editor in Chief of the literary journal, *Random Agenda*, which features works by a diverse group of creative writers. Dr. Keshishian received the 2005-2006 UCLA Distinguished Lecturer Award from the UCLA Academic Senate Committee on Teaching.



### Prof. Hagop Gulludjian

Prof. Hagop Gulludjian is lecturer of Western Armenian at UCLA and Associate Professor of Armenian Studies at the Oriental Studies School of the Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, where he initiated Armenian Studies classes in 1992. He has researched and occasionally published about a wide range of topics concerning Armenology, as well as the interrelation of technology and culture. He has been the publisher and editor of numerous periodical publications, and has also assisted the Argentine government in technology policy issues. His current research is focused on medieval Armenian literature; Virtuality, Culture and Diaspora; Armenian historical narrative; and Armenian parallels too Anglo-Saxon literature.







**Shushan Karapetyan**

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*Shushan Karapetyan graduated from UCLA in 2004 with a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology and Minors in French and Armenian Studies. She is currently a graduate student in the Near Eastern Languages and Cultures Department at UCLA. She is also teaching East Armenian at Glendale Community College. Her main interest is studying Armenian Drama, both on and off the stage.*

#### The Representation of Women in Sundukian's Pepo and Shirvanzade's For the Sake of Honor

The genre of drama has always played an important role in Armenian society because it has served as a means of communication between the literate and the mass majority of illiterates. Inherently it has a dual role both of portrayal and criticism. However, for a long time, one half of the population was excluded from this art – the Armenian woman. Since Armenian women were not allowed to perform on stage, many of the early Armenian plays did not portray women characters. Fortunately this is not the case in Gabriel Sundukian's Pepo and Aleksandr Shirvanzade's For the Sake of Honor. Not only are women represented in these two plays, but women's issues form significant aspects of the plot. Through a detailed analysis of the female characters in these two plays, this paper will discuss how drama performs its dual function by not only serving as a true reflection of women's role in society, but also using the art to criticize these women's situations.

**Hasmik Yeghiazaryan**

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*Hasmik Yeghiazaryan received her B.A. in English and Italian Languages and Foreign Literature from the V. Brusov State Linguistic University of Yerevan in 2004. Currently, she is working on her Ph.D. in the Department of Foreign Literature. She also teaches of Italian at the University and is going to extend her knowledge of Italian language and literature at the University for Foreigners of Perugia, Italy. Her interests also include the Middle Ages and literary translation.*

#### The Problem of Fanaticism: Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose and Levon Shant's play Ancient Gods.

Eco's The Name of the Rose appeared in 1980 and immediately became a bestseller. The novel touches upon a great number of problems remaining which maintain their relevance up to the present. One of the central problems that Eco brings to light is that of fanaticism. Early 20th century Armenian writer Levon Shant, author of many plays and novels, draws attention to the same theme in his play Ancient Gods (1908).

These two writers lived and worked in different countries and periods and belonged to different literary trends; nevertheless, one can find common features in their. Both select the the medieval monastery as locus of their works. For Eco, this appeal is rather natural, as he is known as a medievalist. In addition, Eco attaches much importance to this period of history as the matrix to modern European culture, arguing that many contemporary problems find their origins there. In contrast, Levon Shant employs the Middle Ages as the best means of drawing attention to the problems of religious fanaticism. Unlike E, who witnessed the predominance of the church in his country and the totalitarian regimes of the 20th century, Shant only foresaw the evils of extremism and fanaticism.

One of the heroes of The Name of the Rose is a senile, blind, fanatic, cleric. He grew blind due to many years spent in the monastic library. The more he learnt, the more he wanted to close the doors of the library – a temple of knowledge for others. Throughout the novel, the blind cleric does everything to hide the second volume of Aristotle's Poetics, which can be regarded here as a symbol of knowledge, cognition. Finally, his fanaticism leads to a great catastrophe in which the monastery is engulfed in flames.

The Abbot, the protagonist of Shant's play burns all bridges connecting him to the life of the laity, trying to uproot all the human in himself. Alongside with the abbot we can see another old cleric in this play – the Blind Monk, whose condition was self-induced. This personage can be regarded as one of the possible future evolutions of the abbot.

In both cases we see how the idea becomes an obsession, an idée fixe. In view of the current wave of extremism, the religious fanaticism in these works becomes more actual. In our research we'll try to establish the motives and reveal the differences and similarities of the two works.





### Janelle Pulczynski

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*Janelle Pulczynski received her B.A. in Languages and Literature from the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN in 1997, and her M.A. in 20th Century American and British Literature from The University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1999. From 1999-2001, she was*

*a Peace Corps volunteer in Armenia, which galvanized her interest in Armenian studies. She was a Fulbright Student in 2002, focusing on contemporary women Armenian authors. Currently she is pursuing her M.A. in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA, and she intends to pursue her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature.*

#### Suicide as a Rite of Passage in Levon Shant's Ancient Gods and Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon

In current society, suicide is generally viewed as a concession of defeat and an unacceptable means to an end. This negative view has been portrayed in literature repeatedly, and few authors stray from this particular connotation. In Levon Shant's Ancient Gods and Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon, however, both main characters' suicides are depicted as beginnings rather than ends. The act of suicide for them is a communion with nature and the only means for the characters, and the authors, to blend two opposing ideologies.

Although Shant and Morrison have different agendas within their works, both utilize suicide as a catalyst for a new beginning discovered through the characters' budding relationships with nature. Shant's play is a commentary on the opposing social and political camps of his time, and one of his suggestions, characterized by Young Monk, is to abandon the current trends and start anew by reconnecting to, and ultimately reinterpreting, ancient beliefs. Morrison, through her character Milkman Dead, exposes the lifelessness and stagnation of contemporary African-American society and argues for a blend of past and present in order to continue to the future. As the two main characters suggest, both authors believe that a new viewpoint is the only means to an acceptable future society, and the voluntary leaps of Milkman Dead and Young Monk symbolize a new beginning via an immersion into the natural world.

This paper argues that suicide is a natural next step for the main characters. Their journeys, both literal and figurative, have taken them as far as they can possibly go within the limitations set by their communities, and in order to transcend they must commit suicide. It also explores the reversion from the spiritual and material worlds to the natural world, and the similarities of the journeys and transcendences of the two main characters.



### Hasmik Khalapyan

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*Hasmik Khalapyan received her B.A. in English and French Linguistics from the Yerevan State Institute of Foreign Languages in 1995. She received her M.A. in English Literature from Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, in 2000. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the History Department of the Central European University, Budapest, Hungary. The title of her dissertation is "Nationalism and the Armenian Women's Movement in the Ottoman Empire, 1875-1914." Currently she is teaching at the Graduate School of Psychology Department of Yerevan State University.*

#### Between Tradition and Modernity: Reforming the Institution of Marriage Among Ottoman Armenians, 1875-1914.

This paper addresses the legal aspect of marriage among Armenians in the late Ottoman era. Up until 1914, there was no written law on marriage/divorce among Armenians, and divorce trials were subject to arbitrary case-by-case solutions. The modernization project and new social norms urged the educated part of the population to develop new views on love, marriage, and divorce. While the Marriage Chamber of the Armenian National Assembly's Religious Council turned a deaf ear to most of the "public" concern on the issues, cases of polygamy practiced by Armenians in the rural areas of mixed religious population and Armenian women's frequent application to Islamic courts which were more tolerable to divorce increasingly alarmed the Council and the Assembly. This paper discusses the legal and cultural aspects of the marriage question, using the records of the Religious and Judicial Councils of the National Assembly, individual trial case reports, and periodical press of the time period. It also illustrates how discussions and arguments over marriage at times went beyond the immediate question of marriage itself to broader issues of contested power between the religious and secular segments of the National Assembly on the one hand, and the Armenian millet and the Ottoman State on the other, pointing to the underlying agony of the struggle between tradition and modernity.





### **Hovhannes Hovhannisyan**

**History and Theory of Religions, Yerevan State University (Armenia)**  
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*Hovhannes Hovhannisyan received his B.A. in 2000 and his M.A. in 2002 in Theology from Yerevan State University. He also graduated from the Public Administration School of Armenia in 2002. Currently he is working on his Ph.D. at the History and Theory of Religions Department, focusing on the Armenian Apostolic Church at the beginning of 20th century. Since 2002 he has been working in the department as a lecturer and a research and teaching assistant. He is the author of six scholarly articles. In 2005, he participated in the Fulbright program in the US entitled "On Religious Pluralism in US". Hovhannes's other interests include inter-religious dialogue. He is a member of the Round Table of The World Council of Churches in Echmiadzin.*

#### **The External and Internal Situation of the Armenian Apostolic Church at the Beginning of the 20th Century**

My paper focuses on the History of Armenian Apostolic Church with an emphasis on the church reforms during the first decade of the 20th century. My research tries to analyze the complex social, political, religious situation of the Armenian Apostolic Church at that time. The historical situation is quite interesting because of the assimilation process commenced by the Russian Empire. One of the main hindrances to assimilation was the diversity of doctrine held by the Armenian Apostolic Church. History proves that the Armenian Church was one of the main impetuses for preserving Armenian identity and nationality. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Russian Government set up Russian Orthodox churches near Armenian churches in an attempt to alter the Armenian Church doctrine and thus assimilate the Armenian people into the Russian Empire.

At the same time a new reform movement commenced within the Armenian Church, which intended to change some parts of the church liturgy and clergy among others, which were considered outmoded. This group of reformers, educated in famous European Universities, received an excellent theological and philosophical education and tried to incorporate some of the European ideas into the Armenian Apostolic church. This liberal movement collided with the opposing conservative side, whose leader was the future Catholicos Gevorg Surenyan.

The investigation of this movement becomes more interesting and challenging when we look at the issue from the perspective the contemporary situation. The goal of this paper is to highlight the situation at the beginning of the 20th century briefly while accentuating parallels at the beginning of the 21st. Notwithstanding the 100 year gap, there are a lot of similarities and lessons to be learned.



### **Dzovig Kassabian**

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*Dzovig Kassabian received her B.A. in Psychology from Haigazian University in 1997, and her M.A. in Clinical Psychology with a minor in School Counseling in 2005. She also studied the piano for several years at Ganatchian Musical College. Currently, she is working as an English Language teacher at La Cite (accent) Culturelle. She is planning to pursue her Ph.D. in Mental Health and Trauma. Her interests include research on the Armenian Genocide, its legal ramifications, and the impact of the Genocide on the subsequent generations. She plans to resettle in Armenia eventually.*

#### **The Level of Assimilation of Armenians in Lebanon as a Function of Visits to the Armenian State**

After Sona Jerejian's comprehensive research on Armenian assimilation in 1976, it was reasonably assumed that the reemergence of the independent Armenian State, along with the generation change and the exodus during the Lebanese Civil War, had introduced changes in the assimilative profile of Armenians in Lebanon. In the descriptive-analytical study I conducted in 2005, I employed the questionnaire, which Anny Bakalian developed on Milton Gordon's theoretical framework of 1964 for her research in 1986 on the assimilation of Armenians in New York and New Jersey. Three groups of Armenians were identified in Lebanon, based on their visits to the Republic of Armenia. My working assumption was that those who had visited Armenia twice or more were the least assimilated, while those who had never visited Armenia or had visited only once, but did not want to visit it (again), were the most assimilated. Those who had visited Armenia only once or never but wished to visit it (again) fell in between. It was concluded that visits to the Armenian State could indeed identify the polarized, traditional, and symbolic ethnics among Armenians in Lebanon. The polarized group comprised the highest proportion of people who expressed the intention to repatriate to Armenia. The results also show that Bakalian's sample was clearly more assimilated than mine except on two factors. One implication of this research is that the relevance of the reemerged Armenian State can be explored through the study of the Armenian Diaspora.



## 2006 Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies • Friday, March 3, 2006 • UCLA Roys Hall 314

### Session 3 - Revisiting the Past and Theorizing the Present: Topics in Armenian Art

Chair: **Jean Murachanian** (Art History, UCLA)

2:30 - 2:50 **Mikael Arakelian** - Institute of Asian and African Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel)  
*The New Julfa School of Armenian Miniature Painting (the 17th century)*

2:50 - 3:10 **Armen Malkhasyan** - History, Institute of Archeology and Ethnography (Yerevan, Armenia)  
*Manuscript Binding Inscriptions as Components of Epigraphy*

3:10 - 3:30 **Vardan Azatyan** - Art History and Theory, Yerevan State Academy of Fine Art (Armenia)  
*The Changing Status of Armenian Art in World Art Histories*

3:30 - 3:50 Discussion      3:50 - 4:00 Tea Break

### Session 4 - Questions of Memory and Identity in Modern Armenian Literature and Film

Chair: **Talar Chahinian** (Comparative Literature, UCLA)

4:00 - 4:20 **Nanor Kenderian** - Oriental Studies, Oxford University (England)  
*he Father, the Son, and the Prostitute: A Reading of Shahan Shahnour's Retreat Without Song*

4:20 - 4:40 **Liana Vardanyan** - Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA (USA)  
*The Rise and Decline of Armenian Village Prose*

4:40 - 5:00 **Ara Soghomonian** - Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA (USA)  
*Atom Egoyan's Narrative Complexity and Density*

5:00 - 5:20 Discussion      5:20 - 6:30 Reception (Royce 306)

Opening Remarks 10:00 - 10:15

**Myrna Douzjian** - Project Director, 2006 Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies

**Dr. Peter Cowe** - Professor and Narekatsi Chair of Armenian Language and Literature at UCLA

### Session 1 - A Comparative Look at 19th & 20th Century Armenian Drama

Chair: **Tamar Boyadjian** (Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA)

10:15 - 10:35 **Shushan Karapetyan** - Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA (USA)  
*The Representation of Women in Sundukian's Pepo and Shirvanzade's For the Sake of Honor*

10:35 - 10:55 **Hasmik Yeghiazaryan** - Foreign Literature, V. Brusov State Linguistic University of Yerevan (Armenia)  
*The Problem of Fanaticism in Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose and Levon Shant's Ancient Gods*

10:55 - 11:15 **Janelle Pulczynski** - Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA (USA)  
*Suicide as a Rite of Passage in Levon Shant's Ancient Gods and Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon*

11:15 - 11:35 Discussion      11:35 - 11:45 Coffee Break

### Session 2 - Social and Religious Issues: Cultural Concerns among Armenian Communities

Chair: **Artineh Samkian** (Education, UCLA)

11:45 - 12:05 **Hasmik Khalapyan** - History, Central European University (Budapest, Hungary)  
*Between Tradition and Modernity: Reforming the Institution of Marriage Among Ottoman Armenians, 1875-1914*

12:05 - 12:25 **Hovhannes Hovhannisyan** - History and Theory of Religions, Yerevan State University (Armenia)  
*The External and Internal Situation of the Armenian Apostolic Church at the Beginning of 20th Century*

12:25 - 12:45 **Dzovig Kassabian** - Clinical Psychology, Haigazian University (Beirut, Lebanon)  
*The Level of Assimilation of Armenians in Lebanon as a Function of Visits to the Armenian State*

12:45 - 1:05 Discussion      1:05 - 2:30 Lunch





**Mikael Arakelian**

Institute of Asian and African Studies, Hebrew  
University of Jerusalem (Israel)  
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Mikael Arakelian received his B.A and M.A. in Design and Painting from the Yerevan State Institute of Fine and Dramatic Arts in 1992. He also received his Ph.D. in Art History from the Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia in 2004. Currently, he is working on his second Ph.D. at the Institute of Asian and African Studies of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His work concerns the Armenian school of miniature illumination at New Julfa in the 17th century. Many of the manuscripts he is studying are located in library collections housed in Armenia, Europe, and the Middle East.

**The New Julfa School of Armenian Miniature Painting of the 17th Century**

The Armenian colony of New Julfa was founded across the river from Isfahan, the Safavid capital of Iran, in the early 17th century. New monasteries and churches with functioning scriptoria developed there. They generated a distinctive school of miniature painting, exemplified by brilliant masters of the Armenian book illumination like Yakob of Julfa, Mesrop of Xizan, and Hayrapet, etc. The combination of Eastern and Western artistic traditions of iconography, colour, composition, and drawing is manifested in their works.

My doctoral thesis aims at studying the Bibles and Gospel Books copied and illustrated by significant representatives of this school of miniaturists in the first half of the 17th century. This school included about 15 scriptoria that produced a great number of illuminated manuscripts. The iconography and the style formed in this region during the first quarter of the 17th century existed until 1721 (the year of the Afghan invasion) and preserved all the characteristic peculiarities of that school. My research will also explore the influences upon these miniaturists from other Armenian, Byzantine, Persian, and European craftsmen of the 14th–17th centuries.

In the course of this work I shall investigate the reasons for the development of local artistic schools in New Julfa, and their links and mutual influences with other centers of Armenian book illumination such as Constantinople, Vaspurakan, Amida, Sebastia in Anatolia, the Crimea and Poland.



**Armen Malkhasyan**

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Armen Malkhasyan received his B.A. in Philology from Yerevan State University in 1986. Since then he has worked as a researcher at the Matenadaran Institute of Ancient Manuscripts. From 1995–2001 he was the director there. He received his Ph.D. in History from the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography in 2005. Armen has published numerous scholarly articles and two books. His latest book, entitled, *The Bible According to the Medieval Armenian Literature (5–12th centuries)*, was published in 2005.

**Manuscript Binding Inscriptions as Components of Epigraphy**

Despite the fact that bookbinding had become a highly developed art in medieval Armenia, the inscription-colophons inscribed on the bindings of the Armenian manuscripts are far less investigated sources of scribe art than internal colophons penned within the manuscripts themselves. They reveal, first of all, the places where the Armenian manuscript bindings were produced as well as the history of the binders. The inscriptions on the bindings are as trustworthy as the lithographic ones, only differing from them by the material on which they have been stamped. In spite of their importance, these inscribed bindings have been discussed by past and present Armenologists only in the context of a technical description of a manuscript. The stamped inscriptions on bindings as sources for the history of schools of binding have not been the subject of special research.

This survey is based on the inscribed bindings of 376 Armenian manuscripts mainly preserved in the Matenadaran. The earliest preserved Armenian metal binding inscription dates from 1093, and the earliest leather binding inscription was produced in Van in 1585. In addition to providing dates and exact chronological information on the structure, material and decoration of the bindings, these inscriptions also allow us to elaborate on the history of the schools of binding in Vaspurakan (XVI–XVIII c.), Karin (XVII–XIX c.), New Julfa in Iran (XVII–XVIII, XX c.), Artsakh-Utik (the second half of XVIII c.), the Crimea and Moscow (XVIII–XIX c.), and Constantinople and Caesarea (XVII–XVIII).





### Vardan Azatyan

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Vardan Azatyan received his B.F.A. in 2001 and M.F.A. in 2003 from the Yerevan State Academy of Fine Art. Currently he is working on his Ph.D. at the same institution. Since 2002, he has been the director and a chief curator of the Visual Arts Department of Armenian Center for Contemporary Experimental Art. Since 2003, he has taught at the Yerevan State Academy of Fine Art. He is a vice-president and founding member of the National Association of Art Critics. He is a translator of philosophical texts; his translations include major works by George Berkeley, David Hume, and Carlos Alberto Torres. He has been a member of the American Philosophical Association since 2001.

#### The Changing Status of Armenian Art in World Art Histories

World art historiography developed in Germany in the early 1840's Germany, within the political context of the affirmation of German national identity. The first surveys (Kugler, Schnaase) were directly constructed on the basis of Hegelian historicism and aimed to universally legitimize Gothic Art as a manifestation of the German Volksgeist. Here medieval Armenian art was regarded as a necessary step in the universal evolution of Christian art that peaked in Gothic style. In the 1850's as Springer made an anti-Hegelian and formalist shift in the discipline, Armenian art was excluded from his survey. Later, through Strzygowski's work, Armenian art was again introduced into German surveys (Woermann, Springer). But after WWI the authority of German scholarship declined and the main surveys of the second half of the 20th century were already Anglo-American (Gombrich, Janson). The presence and absence of Armenian (or any other non-mainstream art) in art historical surveys is essentially connected with the political shifts of the period. The authors of these last surveys were Austrian and German immigrants and disciples of humanistic methods of art history. Medieval Armenian art, so far represented only in nationalist art historical discourses, by definition could not form part of their surveys. At some point, the Soviet Union adopted the 19th century German universalistic model of art historical survey and medieval Armenian art reappeared once more. From the political standpoint, the reason for this was that medieval Armenian art was the artistic tradition of a Soviet Republic. Soviet and Anglo-American art historical surveys, thus, can be seen in the light of the Cold War cultural politics.

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Nanor Kenderian received her Bachelor's degree in Comparative Literature and Philosophy from Fordham University in 2002. Her undergraduate Comparative Literature thesis, "Text as Territory: Armenian Diaspora Literature as Nation-Formation," received the university's Katie Fraser Prize. She recently commenced her doctoral research as a joint Jack Kent Cooke and Clarendon Scholar at Oxford University. Her work focuses on the role and function of memory in the works of Hagop Oshagan and Daniel Varuzhan. In the meantime, she is completing a translation of Varuzhan's *To the Cilician Ashes* (*Giligyan Mokhirnerun*) and *Among Ani's Ruins* (*Aniin Averagnerun Mech*) for Professor Marc Nichanian at Columbia University. She is a flamenco dancer in her spare time.

#### The Father, the Son, and the Prostitute: A Reading of Shahan Shahnour's *Retreat Without Song*

In 1931, a segment of Armenian exiles writing in France formally inaugurated the first post-Catastrophe literary movement by publishing the first volume of the journal *Menk* (translated *We*). The project outlined in the movement's manifesto was "To establish close ties among ourselves, and to strengthen a spirit of sincere solidarity...to act as the cement that will bind young writers scattered to the four corners of the earth, so as to promote the free development and the flowering of a new Armenian literature." The movement lasted less than two years, dissolving partly due to its members' political and ideological disagreements. Despite its short-lived course, *Menk* offers an extraordinary survey of approaches to synthesizing, communicating, and treating Armenian diaspora existence. Over 70 years later, the observations of *Menk's* writers about the meaning and experience of diaspora life remain equally relevant although short of the unforeseen complexity now precipitated by the independence of Armenia. With a free Armenia, the significance of the diaspora has become further problematic, especially in the absence of mainstream formal recognition of its distinction from Armenia proper. One need only consider the emphatic financial support the diaspora community lends to Armenia, while diaspora institutions, especially educational, collapse under economic duress.

My presentation will attempt to encapsulate the *Menk* movement's philosophical project through a close reading of *Retreat Without Song*, the work of one of its most central figures – and the most controversial –, Shahan Shahnour. Although *Retreat* was initially published in 1929, two years before *Menk's* public unveiling, it is not only quintessentially *Menk*, but to date, is considered the definitive diaspora novel. I will provide a close reading of an excerpt from the conclusion of *Retreat* and with detailed reference to Shahnour's technique in the given passage, I will attempt to demonstrate that awareness, acceptance, and cultivation of diaspora culture is an existentially crucial component of 20th century Armenian experience.





### **Liana Vardanyan**

**Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA  
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*Liana Vardanyan received her B.A. in History with minors in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and Armenian Studies from UCLA in 2000. Currently she is a graduate student in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA. Her primary research interest lies in 19th and 20th*

*century Armenian social history and culture, with a specific focus on the issue of Armenian nationalism: an area which has not been a subject of major scholarly study to date. Since 2002, she has been a graduate assistant for Dr. Cowe's research on the digitization of a corpus of letters by the 14th-century Armenian scholar Esayi Nchets'i for inclusion in a critical edition with annotated translation and introduction focusing on Armenian relations with the Papacy (280-1350) in the Department of NELC at UCLA.*

### **The Rise and the Decline of the Armenian Village Prose**

During the latter part of the 19th century a literary movement called village prose was born in Armenia. This movement was later revived and took a different direction, covering the entire Soviet Union after Stalin's death and during Khrushchev's rule. The main causes behind the second manifestation of village prose were the series of reforms that were implemented in this post-Stalinian period. The movement lasted until the early 1980's when the major writers of this movement died and the official censure began to escalate. In both periods of this literary movement the traditional peasant way of life became the object of concern for the writer who represented the peasant as the sole savior of national traditions and memories and as the link between the past and the future generations. The final downfall of the movement was mainly caused by the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev with his glasnost and perestroika programs of reconstructing the Soviet Union. During the first period of the village prose the attention of the writers was directed towards the backwardness of the peasant, their destruction that resulted from unjust government policies and migration into the city, and at the adulteration, corruption and vulgarity of the city and its lifestyle which destroyed the purity of humans and separated him from his roots and ancestors. The concern of the Soviet village prose writers was also the same. However, as opposed to changing and modernizing the village and the peasant, which seemed far less important, they put emphasis on preserving peasant customs from those who would carelessly and thoughtlessly destroy them. This was the main concern of writers of both periods as they wanted the uninterrupted continuum of the link between the ancient Armenian and the present generation or youth. In other words, the writers of "village prose" have tried to rescue the social history and the memory of their country, which would in some way pave the way for a better future.



### **Ara Soghomonian**

**Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UCLA  
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*Ara Soghomonian received his B.A. in Radio, Television and Film in 2001, with a specialization in Screenwriting from California State University Northridge. Prior to that, he worked at 20th Century Fox and Columbia/TriStar Pictures for 5 years in feature film production development. Currently, he is completing work for his M.A. in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA. His future research plans include examining the field of Armenian Cinema as he continues toward his Ph.D., focusing on cinematic works from Armenia as well as the Armenian Diaspora. Additionally, he plans to help increase awareness of Armenian filmmakers and their work. Ara has written five full-length scripts and aspires to one day add to that total.*

### **Atom Egoyan's Narrative Complexity and Density**

When watching a film created by Atom Egoyan, one cannot disregard the fact that his films are complex and dense in narrative structure and character development. Stylistic complexity and narrative density in Egoyan's films put him in a select club of auteurs, filmmakers who are unafraid to push the boundaries of their work and who develop a faithful following. Their audience becomes much more familiar with the filmmaker's signature style, rather than the genre to which their films belong. Egoyan's intense devotion to his own style is reflected in every film he creates. He attempts to pull in his audience by creating characters that are reflections of the darkest elements of our own selves. Egoyan is unafraid to expose characters in his films that are awkward, detached or just simply strange and different. His characters frequently deal with personal struggle, grief, and loss, and the audience is invited to look beneath the surface of these characters. Egoyan's dense narrative style produces characters that exhibit emotions and experiences that we, his audience, at times keep restrained within ourselves. He wants his audience to criticize his characters, and to be judgmental of them, but more importantly he wants his audience to also look beneath their own personal surfaces. Using dark, difficult, disturbing and dense subject matter as his vehicle, Egoyan's work at times deals with uncomfortable and taboo subject matter. In Egoyan's films, watching events we shouldn't is precisely what he wants us to do.



## **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 through the organization of events relevant to the Armenian community and Armenian issues. It is a student-run organization which strongly encourages member-initiated programming.

This past academic term, the UCLA AGSA has held the fifth annual Mentorship Series event, and presently, the UCLA AGSA is in the planning phase of a Networking Mixer and a Law Alumni Reception for the near future, amongst numerous other events.

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 community and professional organizations such as the Armenian Bar Association and the Armenian Engineers and Scientists of America.

The UCLA AGSA is particularly proud of its annual Graduate Student Colloquia in Armenian Studies, as they require a tremendous amount of planning, patience, and foresight, not to mention their uniqueness in the western U.S. We hope that this year's Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies serves as an even greater 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/>  
(new website is under construction)

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.

## **Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies 2006 Committee**



*Top Row:* Ara Soghomonian, Haig Hovsepian, Talar Chahinian, Myrna Douzjian (Project Director), Lilit Keshishyan, Arpi Siyahian, Artineh Samkian, Tamar Tomassian; *Bottom Row:* Shushan Karapetyan, Ramela Abbamontian, Janelle Pulczinski, Jean Murachanian; *Not Shown:* S. Peter Cowe (Faculty Advisor), Tamar Boyadjian, James Hagop Tabibian



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