



18TH ANNUAL
UCLA
COLLOQUIA
in ARMENIAN
STUDIES

ROYCE HALL 314

FEBRUARY 6-7
2020

WELCOME
TO THE

18TH ANNUAL

UCLA

COLLOQUIA

in ARMENIAN

STUDIES

UCLA





**UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT
COLLOQUIUM
THURSDAY EVENING
FEBRUARY 6, 2020**

**4:30 - 6:30 PM
ROYCE HALL 314**

**GRADUATE STUDENT
COLLOQUIUM
FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 7, 2020**

**9:30 AM - 5:30 PM
ROYCE HALL 314**

**5:30 PM - 8:00 PM
MELNITZ HALL
JAMES BRIDGES THEATER**

*Cover image:
Ateshian, Aram, Archbishop. Hmayil Armenian
prayer scroll number 1. [Istanbul, 1725]. Image 5.
Retrieved from the Library of Congress, African
and Middle Eastern Division, Armenian Rarities.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2014373044/>*

UCLA

PROGRAM IN ARMENIAN STUDIES

Armenian Studies at UCLA is currently one of the largest programs outside Yerevan and, with roots going back over half a century, is one of the oldest in the USA. Instruction is organized around two nodes, the Narekatsi Chair of Armenian Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages



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and Cultures (NELC), held by Dr. S. Peter Cowe, and the Richard Hovannisian Chair in Modern Armenian History, held by Dr. Sebouh D. Aslanian, which was created in 2011 in honor of Dr. Richard

G. Hovannisian, presently emeritus holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in the Department of History.

Over the last decade, a Research Program in Armenian Archaeology and Ethnography was endowed by Ms. Zaruhi Sara Chitjian at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, currently directed by Dr. Kristine Martirosyan-Olshansky. Offerings in Armenian music have also been expanding. An introductory class is regularly taught by Dr. Karenn Chutjian Presti, while this year an Armenian Ensemble has been founded in the Ethnomusicology Department under the leadership of Armen Adamian.

UCLA offers instruction in all three major standards of the Armenian language. Dr. Hagop Gulludjian is lecturer in Western Armenian, while Dr. Hrach Martirosyan joined us last year as lecturer in Eastern Armenian.



և փրկեցէ նմ
չարեաց. և ամբո
ծածուկ աջ. մե
խրով պարսպեալ
պէտքն անխոյ
մնաց. ՚ի խորին
ծերութիւն. և ՚ի
Հանդերձեւումն
երկնից արքայու
թիւն պարկեացէ
ամէն.



բոն Պարթոբե նարեկո
. իսկ
գանուոյ, օրնեալդ
աշաւորի անքնին
տկարանայ առ ՚ի
ո ՚ի ծագել անրաս
մու. Է. քոյ փառաց,
ածին դ. և. ք. Վրն
ան կապալը. իւր
կենդանածնին մա
ն Տարուածք. իւր
նին ապահանու. Էր
ք. Վասանջին Տե
- խաւարն. Ս. եկ
մառախուն. փա
ռտի սղամուղջն.
Կնայ գիշերն.
պն. Չ. բանան չա
տու. աշատութիւր.
ն. քո. Ը. մենակալ
ն. ք. եկիք կորուսա
ւիս, այլ կեցուցա
միւն շարիս իմ
դ. քո. Վ. ՚ի դ. ու.

նձառ, և երկրի
ոյն և յնք ծա
կիզն ամի և յա
մբ, օրնեալդ ՚ի
դ ընդ. Տօր և Տօ
ր.

The Program services an Armenian concentration in the NELC department's Middle Eastern Studies Major as well as a popular undergraduate Armenian Studies Minor. Graduate degrees are offered in NELC, History, and Archaeology.

Last year marked the inauguration of the Promise Armenian Institute established through a bequest from the estate of the late Mr. Kirk Kerkorian, which is directed by Dr. Ann R. Karagozian, Distinguished Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering. It will function as a nucleus for internal studies of Armenian history and culture as well as spearheading diverse extramural initiatives relating to the Armenian Republic and the Armenian Diaspora.

LAST YEAR MARKED THE INAUGURATION OF THE PROMISE ARMENIAN INSTITUTE ESTABLISHED THROUGH A BEQUEST FROM THE ESTATE OF THE LATE MR. KIRK KERKORIAN, WHICH IS DIRECTED BY DR. ANN R. KARAGOZIAN

Over the last few years the Program has established memoranda of understanding between UCLA and various institutions, including the American University of Armenia, the Russian-Armenian University, the Matenadaran Institute of

Manuscripts, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, the National Library, and Museum of Art and Literature in Yerevan. Currently, it is engaged in various collaborative projects, one being a joint annual Summer School with AUA.

The nucleus of the university's rich Armenological holdings was formed by the bequest of the library of Dr. K.M. Khantamour in the late 60s, subsequently enhanced by the accession of the Minassian collection of manuscripts (recently digitized), the largest repository of its kind in the Americas, archives, and printed books that buttressed the Program's research capabilities. Collection development has been facilitated by an endowment from the Friends of the UCLA Armenian Language and Culture Studies.



PROFESSOR
**S. PETER
COWE**

**Narekatsi Chair
of Armenian Studies**

*Near Eastern Languages & Cultures
University of California, Los Angeles*

S. Peter Cowe is Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles where he serves

as Director of the Center for World Languages. Previously, he has held positions in Armenology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Columbia University, New York and as Director of the Research Program in Armenian Archaeology and Ethnography at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA. His research interests include Late Antique and medieval Armenian intellectual history, in which connection he has contributed most of the Armenian entries to the series *The Textual History of the Bible* (Brill), the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia in the context of state formation across the medieval Mediterranean, Muslim-Christian dialogue, for which he has written the later entries to the series *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Biobibliographical History* (Brill) and modern Armenian nationalism, on which he has produced an extended essay (*Le Muséon*, 2013). The author of five books in the field and editor of ten, he contributes regularly to scholarly journals and is the past co-editor of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*. He has served on the executive board of the Society for Armenian Studies and Association Internationale des Etudes Arméniennes. A recipient of the Garbis Papazian award for Armenology, he was inducted into the Accademia Ambrosiana, Milan, in 2015. Most recently, he was awarded a doctorate *honoris causa* by the Russian-Armenian University of Armenia. His latest work *The Armenians: Religious and Cultural Interchange across the Mediterranean and Near Eastern World* is to be published by Gorgias Press, New Jersey.



PROFESSOR
**SEBOUH DAVID
ASLANIAN**

**Richard Hovannisian Chair in
Modern Armenian History**

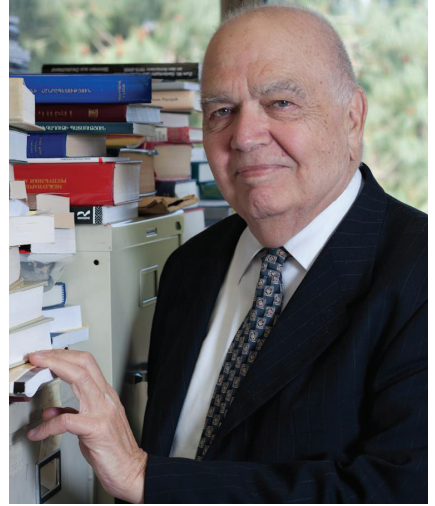
*Department of History
University of California, Los Angeles*

Sebouh David Aslanian is the Richard Hovannisian Endowed Chair of Modern Armenian History and Associate Professor in the Department of History at UCLA. Aslanian specializes in early modern world and Armenian history and is the author of *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011) which was the recipient of the PEN Center's Exceptional UC Press First Book Award and winner of the Houshang Pourshariati Iranian Studies Book Award, Middle East Studies Association (MESA), 2011. His essay "Une vie sur plusieurs continents : Microhistoire globale d'un agent arménien de la Compagnie des Indes orientales (1666-1688)" appeared in *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* in 2019. Aslanian is now completing his second book manuscript (under contract at Yale University Press) dedicated to early modern global print history and provisionally titled *Early Modernity and Mobility: Port Cities and Printers Across the Armenian Diaspora, 1512-1800*. He is also working on a manuscript on the global microhistory of the early modern Indian ocean based on the voyage of a ship called the Santa Catharina.

PROFESSOR
EMERITUS

RICHARD HOVANNISIAN

*Department of History
University of California, Los Angeles*



Dr. Hovannisian is Professor Emeritus 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 thirty volumes and sixty scholarly articles relating to Armenian, Caucasian and Near Eastern History, Dr. 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 Encyclicals and Medals from their Holinesses, the Catholicos of All Armenians in Etchmiadzin and the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia in Lebanon. He is the author of five volumes on the Republic of Armenia and has edited and contributed to five volumes on the Armenian Genocide and fourteen volumes on the cities and provinces of historic Western Armenia.

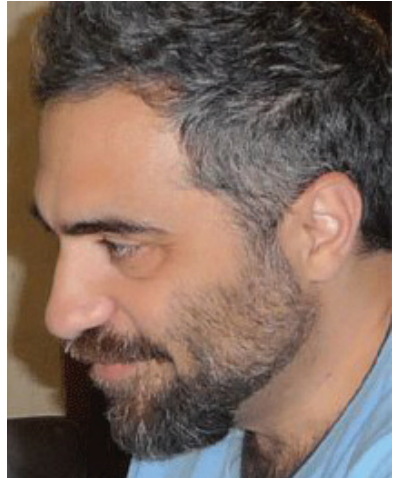
Dr. Hovannisian is a founder and six-time president of the Society for Armenian Studies and represented the State of California on the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) from 1978 to 1994. He serves on the board of directors of nine scholarly and civic organizations and has made numerous television and radio appearances on issues relating to the Armenian people and Armenian, Near Eastern, and Caucasian history. Currently he is Distinguished Presidential Fellow at Chapman University and adjunct professor of History at USC to work with the Shoah Foundation on Armenian survivor testimonies.

DR. HAGOP GULLUDJIAN

Lecturer in Western Armenian

*Near Eastern Languages & Cultures
University of California, Los Angeles*

Hagop Gulludjian has researched and published on medieval Armenian poetry, heritage language and language vitality, interactions between virtuality, culture and diasporas, and modern to postmodern Diaspora Armenian literature. Currently he is in charge of Western Armenian at UCLA, while working on a volume on the mystical poetry of Grigor Narekatsi, and researching and writing on Nigoghos Sarafian and Krikor Beledian. He has an extensive consulting background, having assisted both private and government entities on technology policy issues.





DR. HRACH MARTIROSYAN

Lecturer in Eastern Armenian

*Near Eastern Languages & Cultures
University of California, Los Angeles*

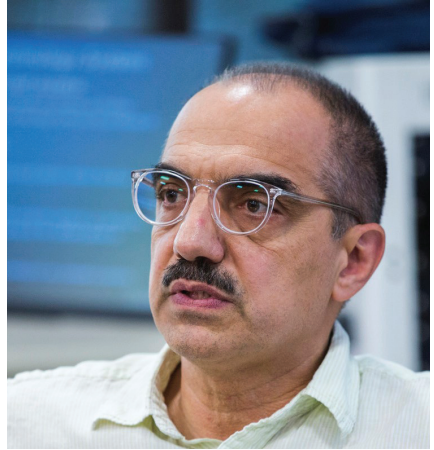
Hrach Martirosyan is currently Lecturer in Eastern Armenian in the department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at UCLA. After receiving his MA in Philology from Vanadzor Pedagogical Institute, he pursued graduate studies under the supervision of Prof. Sargis Harutyunyan at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Armenian Academy of Sciences in Yerevan. His dissertation was published in 2009 as *Etymological Dictionary of the Armenian Inherited Lexicon* (Brill) and forms part of the larger project to compile an Indo-European Etymological Dictionary. Thereafter, he moved to Leiden University as a Guest Lecturer in the field of Classical Armenian from an Indo-European perspective (2011-2015). Subsequently, he held a postdoc at the Institute of Iranian Studies of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna (2015- 2017), investigating Armenian personal names of Iranian origin under the supervision of Velizar Sadovski in the framework of an Iranian Prosopographical Dictionary. He returned to his position at the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics to continue etymological research on native Armenian vocabulary before coming to UCLA in Fall 2019.

DR. VICTOR AGADJANIAN

*Department of Sociology and the
International Institute*

University of California, Los Angeles

Victor Agadjanian is a professor in the Department of Sociology and the International Institute at UCLA. He is a social demographer and his Armenia-related research has focused primarily on labor migration and its consequences for health and socio-economic well-being of non-migrating household members in rural areas. He has also studied abortion in Armenia. He has directed several large-scale sociological studies in Armenia, including a nationally representative Gender Barometer Survey. He has also directed projects aimed at building instructional and research capacity at Yerevan State University funded by the US federal government. In addition to his work in Armenia, Prof. Agadjanian has conducted research on migration, marriage and family, sexual and reproductive health, ethnicity, and religion in other parts of the former Soviet Union and elsewhere in the world.





DR. KARENN CHUTJIAN PRESTI

*Herb Alpert School of Music
University of California, Los Angeles*

Karenn Chutjian Presti works in three different fields: music, pedagogy, and language. As a pianist, she has performed extensively as a soloist and collaborator, winning competitions such as the US Open Music Competition, the

Leni FéBland Foundation Competition, and the Armenian Allied Arts Competition. In her positions as a vocal coach at UCLA and a staff accompanist at USC, she played for the studios of teachers such as Eleanor and Alice Schoenfeld, Martin Chalifour, and Midori. Active in both Europe and the United States, Dr. Presti's "superbly offered" evening of art song in Bavaria's Stadttheater Ingolstadt led to her work as a pianist and vocal coach performing at the Heppel & Ettlich Theater in Munich and accompanying the studio of Felicia Weathers. Also versed as a ballet pianist, Dr. Presti currently arranges, composes, improvises, and plays for the Redondo Ballet, with her first recording of ballet music due out later this year.

A pre-concert lecturer specializing in Armenian music and nationalism in music, Dr. Presti's musicological work began with her dissertation under Dr. Richard Dekmejian while completing her doctorate at USC: "The Reality of Social Realism: Socialist Realism and Its Application to Soviet Armenian Composers".

Dr. Presti's passion for music instruction and her formal study of pedagogy have gained her faculty positions at the San Domenico School, the Pasadena Conservatory of Music, Munich International School, Lark Musical Society, and the Artetonale Schule für Musik. Her students are winners of the Armenian Allied Arts Competition and the national Reflections Music Composition competition.

Fluent in five languages and literate in several more, Dr. Presti's publications and recordings include *My First Armenian Songbook*, released in 2017. Her latest, book, *Asdghig Wants to Grow Up Quickly*, was awarded a grant by the Gulbenkian Foundation and published in 2019.

DR. KRISTINE MARTIROSYAN – OLSHANSKY

**Director of the Research Program
in Armenian Archaeology and
Ethnography**

*Postdoctoral Scholar/Cotsen
Institute of Archaeology - UCLA*



Dr. Martirosyan-Olshansky directs the Chitjian Research Program for Armenian Archaeology and Ethnography at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology (UCLA). She received her PhD in Archaeology from UCLA in 2019. Her research focus is on the prehistoric societies of the Armenian Highlands and Southern Caucasus, namely the appearance of early sedentary agricultural societies. She uses geochemical methods to trace the geological origin of obsidian artifacts to address questions of prehistoric mobility, resource utilization, and interactions with the inhabitants of nearby regions.

Dr. Martirosyan-Olshansky has been conducting field research in Armenia since 2008. She has conducted research at the Areni-1 Cave site and the medieval capital of Dvin, and she has directed a survey of the Arpa River Canyon focused on documenting cultural monuments. She is currently co-directing the Masis Blur Archaeological Project, which aims to reconstruct the socio-economic lifeways of the inhabitants of a Late Neolithic settlement (6000 BC) in the Ararat Plain. Dr. Martirosyan-Olshansky is also the principal director of an archaeological field school program, through which she engages young students with Armenia's material cultural heritage. She has also participated in archaeological research and excavations in Israel, Egypt, and Peru.



ARMEN ADAMIAN

PhD Student, *Ethnomusicology*
University of California, Los Angeles

Armen Adamian is a PhD student in Ethnomusicology at UCLA. His research examines the socio-political implications of Armenian music and dance. Studying both historical and current trends in the practice of Armenian folk music, his research seeks to understand the dynamic role of performance in ever-shifting constructions of national identity. Alongside his academic studies, Armen practices duduk and is the co-founder of an Armenian *azgagrakan* ensemble in Los Angeles. Through performance and community engagement activities, the ensemble aims to promote the viability of traditional Armenian aesthetics in diaspora. Armen received an MA in Ethnomusicology from UCLA, a BA in Psychology and a BA in Music Composition from Humboldt State University.

UCLA Armenian Ensemble

The Armenian Music Ensemble is UCLA's first ever course devoted to the practice and performance of traditional Armenian music and dance. Structured as a series of workshops focusing on song, instrumental music and dance, the ensemble offers an integrative approach to music pedagogy and performance. Drawing from ethnographic sources and oral traditions, this course addresses important issues such as ideological, aesthetic and socio-political debates regarding the practice of Armenian music, dance and folklore at large. Offered for the first time in winter 2020, this course is supported by UCLA Armenian Studies, The Department of Ethnomusicology and the emerging Armenian Music Program.

UNDERGRAD STUDENT COLLOQUIUM PROGRAM
THURSDAY EVENING, FEB 6, 2020

REFRESHMENTS & OPENING REMARKS

4:30-5:00 PM

REFRESHMENTS

5:00-5:10 PM

OPENING REMARKS

MARY MURADYANTS

*Director of the 2020 Undergraduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies
Political Science, UCLA*

Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies

DR. S. PETER COWE

*Near Eastern Languages and Cultures,
UCLA*

*Themes in 19th-20th Century
Armenian Poetry*

CHAIR: Michelle Garapetian (Political Science, UCLA)

5:10 – 5:30 PM

MEGHETY MANOYAN

Biology, UCLA

“Muses and Creative Forces in Armenian Poetry”

5:30 – 5:50 PM

ANGELA MANUKYAN

Physiological Sciences, UCLA

“The Ever-Evolving Perspectives of Armenian Poets”

5:50 – 6:05 PM

DISCUSSION PERIOD

6:05 – 6:15 PM

COFFEE/TEA BREAK

6:15 PM

**AWARD OF UNDERGRADUATE
COLLOQUIUM PRIZE**

2020 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



MEGHETY MANOYAN

*Undergraduate Student
University of California, Los Angeles*

meghetymanoyan@gmail.com

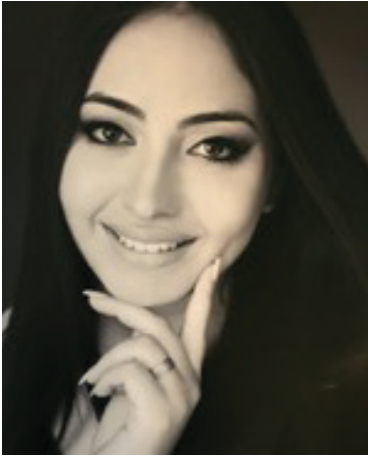
Meghety Manoyan is a third-year undergraduate at the University of California, Los Angeles. After graduating from AGBU Manoukian High School, she started attending UCLA as a Biology major, and recently declared an Armenian Studies

minor. She is currently pre-med.

Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of the different ways in which certain Armenian poets of the 19th-20th centuries addressed the many inspirational insights and creative forces at the core of their literary work. Several achieve this by appropriating the figure of the muse which modern Armenian literature borrowed from Greek mythology and poetry. My paper will concentrate on the works of three such poets, Hovhannes Hovhannisian, an Eastern Armenian poet, and his Western Armenian counterparts Misak Metzarents and Taniel Varuzhan. Although Hovhannisian discussed the sources of his inspiration in multiple works, he focuses on the theme directly in the poem «Իմ Մուսային» which is specifically dedicated to, and directly evokes, his muse. In contrast, Metzarents presents his inspiration indirectly through appeal to nature and the theme of love. However, Varuzhan, in contrast, follows in the tradition of Hovhannisian, in directly conversing with his muse in two poems appropriately entitled «Մուսային». Through these poems, readers are also provided context and clues about the poets' writing styles, ideologies, and sociopolitical views. Although each poet possesses unique, defining qualities and views, the paper argues they also share certain values in common, which find expression in such poems.

2020 UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



ANGELA MANUKYAN

*Undergraduate Student
University of California, Los Angeles*

angelamanuk@hotmail.com

Angela Manukyan is a pre-medical student studying Physiological Sciences at UCLA and aspires to become a physician. She is also minoring in Armenian Studies at university, aiming to expand her knowledge of and literacy in her cultural background. Upon delving into Armenian literature at an institutional level, she has become immersed in the rich context Armenian poems and historical works provide, and the changes in perspective and understanding they offer diverse Armenians around the world in attempting to understand their history and origins.

Abstract

This paper explores the impact of context and life experience on poets and their perception and presentation of ideas through time, under the impact of certain influences. It concentrates on the works of Rapayel Patkanian, Hovhanness Hovhannisian, and Misak Medzarents, Romantic and Symbolist poets of the 1880s-1930s.

Nature is a common theme central to both genres, and the poets employ many images drawn from nature to communicate their insights and perspectives to readers. The sphere of nature remains the same, but its characterization is nuanced according to context in the poems that develop it. This variation may reflect the poet's individual path of discovery or his intention to convey to the reader a specific facet of the theme. The poets adjust the application of a symbol or image depending on their intentions or shifts in personal perspective based on life experiences. Hovhannes Hovhannisian and Rapayel Patkanian employed natural imagery to evoke an external environment, while Misak Medzarents turns to the theme of nature to suggest and reflect his changing internal, psychological environment.

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM

2020

COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Dr. Peter Cowe
Founder/Faculty Advisor



Mary
Muradyants



Michelle
Garapetian



David
Pogosyan

NOTES

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2020

BREAKFAST & OPENING REMARKS

9:30 – 10:00 AM

BREAKFAST

10:00 – 10:10 AM

Director of the 2020 Graduate Student Colloquium in Armenian Studies

ANATOLII TOKMANTCEV

*Near Eastern Languages and Cultures,
UCLA*

Narekatsi Professor of Armenian Studies

DR. S. PETER COWE

*Near Eastern Languages and Cultures,
UCLA*

PANEL 1

Homeland and Diaspora: Displacement and its Effects

CHAIR: Armen Adamian, Ethnomusicology, UCLA

10:10 – 10:30 AM

ANI SHAHINIAN

University of Oxford

“The Martyrdom of Awag Salmastec’i (1390): An Inquiry into Business Relations Between Christians-Muslims in Salmast, Persia and Bałeš, Lake Van Region in Late Medieval Armenia”

10:30 – 10:50 AM

BOGDAN PAVLISH

Northwestern University

“Networking in Exile: Patronage and Marriage Strategies of Armenian Refugee Kaspar Butachowicz in Late Seventeenth-Century Poland-Lithuania”

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM PROGRAM

10:50 – 11:10 AM

AYŞENUR KORKMAZ

University of Amsterdam

“‘No Place Like Home’: ‘Ergir’ and the ex-Ottoman Armenians in Soviet Armenia”

11:10 – 11:30 AM

NANE KHACHATRYAN

Erasmus University Rotterdam

“Construction of Visual Representation of Armenia as a Travel Destination: A Synthesis of Tourist and Local Gazes”

11:30 – 11:50 AM

DISCUSSION PERIOD

NOON – 2:00 PM

LUNCH BREAK

PANEL 2

19th century Ottoman-Armenian Literature

CHAIR: Jesse Arlen, Near Eastern Languages & Cultures, UCLA

2:00 – 2:20 PM

NORA BAIRAMIAN

Columbia University

“Beyond the Iron Ladle: Education, Gender and Economic Independence in the Work of Mkrtich Khrimean ‘Hayrik’”

2:20 – 2:40 PM

ARIF TAPAN

Boğaziçi University

“Reading Nineteenth-Century Armeno-Turkish Novels as Another Phenomenon: A Narratological Perspective”

2:40 – 2:50 PM

DISCUSSION PERIOD

2:50 – 3:15 PM

COFFEE/TEA BREAK

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2020

PANEL 3

Women in Contemporary Armenia

CHAIR: Natalie Kamajian, World Arts & Cultures/Dance, UCLA

3:15 – 3:35 PM

HASMIK KNYAZYAN

Independent Researcher

“Hanging Out to Dry, or...: The Socio-Cultural Aspects of Hanging Laundry (the Armenian Case)”

3:35 – 3:55 PM

ANI DER GRIGORIAN

London School of Economics and Political Science

“Spontaneous and Unorganized? Reconceptualizing Formal and Informal Activism in the Armenian Women’s Movement”

3:55 – 4:05 PM

DISCUSSION PERIOD

PANEL 4

Socio-Political Trends in Contemporary Armenia

CHAIR: Arpi Melikyan, French & Francophone Studies, UCLA

4:10 – 4:30 PM

LILIT GHAZARYAN

UCLA

“Language Practices and Policies in Kindergartens in Yerevan, Armenia”

4:30 – 4:50 PM

URBAN JAKSA

University of York

“Pashinyan vs. the Karabakh Clan: Re-Examining Patronal Relations Between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh”

4:50 – 5:00 PM

DISCUSSION PERIOD

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT COLLOQUIUM PROGRAM

GUEST SPEAKER

5:00 – 5:15 PM

DR. SERGIO LA PORTA

*Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies
Fresno State University*

AWARD

Salmast Heritage Association Award

5:15 – 5:20 PM

PRESENTATION

RECEPTION

Melnitz Hall

5:30 – 6:30 PM

LOCATION CHANGE TO MELNITZ HALL 1409

*Outside of James Bridges Theater at the
UCLA School of Theater, Film, & Television*

FILM SCREENINGS

James Bridges Theater, Melnitz Hall

6:30 PM

JAMES BRIDGES THEATER

Screening of “Motherland” by Emily Mkrtychian & Jesse Soursourian, followed by Q&A with director

7:15 PM

Screening of “Gate to Heaven” by Jivan Avetisyan, followed by Q&A with Jivan Avetisyan, Adrineh Mirzayan, Arthur Chalekian, and Garo Madenlian

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



ANI SHAHINIAN

University of Oxford
ani.shahinian@stx.ox.ac.uk

Ani Shahinian is a D.Phil. Candidate in Armenian History and Theology at the University of Oxford. Her doctoral research addresses the question of Christian Martyrdom in the Lake Van Region in the Context of Late Medieval Political and Ecclesiastical History. Ms. Shahinian holds an M.A. degree in Near Eastern Languages and Cultures from UCLA, and graduate certificates in Philosophy and Theology from the University of Oxford. She received her B.A. in Philosophy, Ethics, and Professional Writing from the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB).

Prior to her academic career, Ms. Shahinian worked at the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), assisting with investigations and prosecutions of human trafficking cases and criminal civil rights abuses. While working at DOJ, she detected parallels between contemporary and historical human rights violations, and the evolving significance of victim and witness testimony, in both legal and historical contexts. Her academic career became a corresponding journey of investigation and discovery of similar concepts she observed during her government career, directing her research interests in witness testimonies in martyrdom accounts and as they reflect on Christian-Muslim relations in Late Medieval Armenia.

“The Martyrdom of Awag Salmastec’i (1390): An Inquiry into Business Relations Between Christians-Muslims in Salmast, Persia and Bałeš, Lake Van Region in Late Medieval Armenia”

According to a martyrology found in Grigor Cerenc’ Xlatec’i’s (1349-1425) *Yaysmawurk’*, on 23 February 1390, Awag Salmastec’i was martyred in Bałeš, south-west of the Lake Van region. The author – who may or may not have been Xlatec’i himself – imbues Awag’s martyrdom narrative with Scriptural undertones, providing a treatise on God’s attributes and a chronological overview of salvation history, concluding with Apostle Paul’s words on the suffering and endurance of the faithful ones during times of tribulations. From this metaphysical preface, the author launches into Awag’s martyrdom narrative, with little orientation. The narrative introduces a male Armenian youth named Awag who worked in Salmast as the

apprentice of a Persian Muslim who was an expert in his trade. The narrative affirms that Awag had kept his Christian identity and faith, but the public perceived him to have been a tačik (Muslim). After some 30 years, Awag is seen in Bateš by another Persian Muslim who recognizes Awag from his years in Salmast and detects Awag's practice of his Christian faith. The Muslim confronts Awag and reports him to the authorities, who charge him with apostasy under Islamic law. Awag affirms his Christian faith before the authorities. But the local mob interrupts the proceedings and murders Awag during his transfer from the custody of the local emir Amir-Saraf to the custody of the local Islamic judge (the qāđī). The Armenian Church esteemed Awag as a martyr and celebrated his life, adding his martyrdom to the account of Christians in history who had stood in defense of their Christian identity during periods of increased interreligious tension.

The aim of this paper is twofold. The first section assesses the relationship between the city of Salmast and the city of Bateš, studying their trade routes and the artisan life. The second section of this paper examines how conversion to and apostasy from Islam occurred in the Armenian Highlands and its greater region during the Late Medieval period, prior to the establishment of Ottoman rule west of Constantinople. If a Christian worked as a subordinate to a Muslim, did that fact indicate that the Christian must have been a convert? Did the public image of a Christian working for a Muslim imply that the Christian renounced his faith to do so? More broadly, what were the laws that governed Christian testimony and Muslim testimony before qāđīs and emirs in Late Medieval Armenia? And were there instances in which Christians and Muslims had business relations and interacted as co-equals in their trade and faith? Awag's martyrdom highlights the increased interreligious complexity of business transactions and artisan life in Late Medieval Armenia under Muslim rule in Salmast and the emerging Muslim society in Bateš. This paper investigates the pressures and social tensions that led to the martyrdom of Awag, contextualizing the historical and social realities that the text assumes and adumbrates.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



BOGDAN PAVLISH

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Bogdan Pavlish is a third-year PhD student in history at Northwestern University. He specializes in the history of early modern Eastern Europe with a focus on Poland-Lithuania. His current research project deals with the Armenian diaspora of Poland-Lithuania and its role in mediating between Europe and the Middle East. Focusing on trans-regional networks of Armenian

merchants, clerics, and missionaries based in southeast Poland-Lithuania, Bogdan examines their social and religious dynamic across shifting political and confessional boundaries in the second half of the seventeenth century. He has done research in archives and libraries in Ukraine, Poland, and the Vatican. His other research interests include the history of early modern Catholic missions, European Jews, the Ottoman Empire, the history and philosophy of knowledge. Bogdan studied social sciences at Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in Ukraine and comparative history at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.

“Networking in Exile: Patronage and Marriage Strategies of Armenian Refugee Kaspar Butachowicz in Late Seventeenth-Century Poland-Lithuania”

My paper attempts a microhistory of the Armenian merchant Kaspar Butachowicz who along with his community was displaced in the course of the Polish-Ottoman wars in the 1670s. Drawing on some basic notions of cultural sociology and network analysis, I reconstruct Butachowicz's identity and life trajectory through more than twenty years of his exile in the city of Lviv in southeast Poland-Lithuania. As I argue in this paper, his ability to improvise an appealing public persona and cultivate overlapping social ties helped him smoothly integrate into the adoptive community. By carefully cultivating his patronage and marriage ties, Butachowicz got related to some of the wealthiest Armenian families and became an important community leader in Lviv. His embrace of the exile Armenian identity and Polish Baroque culture epitomized major social and cultural shifts in the entire Armenian diaspora of late seventeenth-century Poland-Lithuania. The paper is based on Butachowicz's rich collection of notes as well as trial records of the Armenian community of Lviv.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



AYŞENUR KORKMAZ

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Ayşenur Korkmaz is a Ph.D. researcher at the University of Amsterdam, European Studies. She gained her Master's degree at Central European University, Nationalism Studies with honors. Her main areas of interest are the Armenians of the late Ottoman Empire, Soviet Armenian history, as well as anthropological concepts of homeland, sacralization, and materiality. She published several articles on

the Hamidian Massacres, and the lives of Ottoman Armenian intellectuals in the nineteenth century, and the Armenian genocide. Korkmaz's current doctoral research explores the post-genocide articulations of the Armenian homeland (Ergir), through materiality and the rituals of indigeneity.

“No Place Like Home’: ‘Ergir’ and the ex-Ottoman Armenians in Soviet Armenia”

This paper explores spatial attachments among the ex-Ottoman Armenians who survived the Armenian genocide and settled in their ‘new homeland’, Soviet Armenia. It addresses the question of how the refugees dealt with loss and displacement and reflected on their former hometowns, referred to as ‘Ergir’, a spatial construct denoting a symbolic ‘Armenian homeland’ or a ‘local homeland’ in Anatolia. I argue that the refugees conceptualised Ergir not only in relation to their expulsion but also the socio-political factors that influenced them in Soviet Armenia in three periods. The first era of reflection on Ergir was the 1920s and 1930s, replete with nostalgic sentiments. The second was the suppression of the theme of Ergir, between 1936-1960, particularly during political crackdowns in Stalin's era. The third period saw the revival of Ergir and marked a new phase in the conceptualisations of ‘homeland’ in which the displacement from Anatolia in 1915-1916 and the Stalinist purges have been enmeshed into one tragedy of the ex-Ottoman Armenians.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



NANE KHACHATRYAN

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Born in 1990, Yerevan, Armenia. Attended National Aesthetic Center in Yerevan, studying graphics and art history (1997-2005). Graduated Yerevan State University (BA, 2007-2011) and Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts (MA, 2011-2013), department of art history and theory.

Accomplished second MA course in Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands (2018-2019) in History, Culture and Communication. Beginning from 2009 was involved in different international projects, in terms of which studied and practiced photography. In 2011-2013 worked as a photography tutor for Armenian-Turkish reconciliation project assisted by German government. Since 2011 conducts a research in the theory of photography and representation of Armenia through images. Currently works as a freelance tour guide in Armenia and Artsakh, leading cultural and hiking tours.

“Construction of Visual Representation of Armenia as a Travel Destination: A Synthesis of Tourist and Local Gazes”

A 17th century drawing by French traveler depicts Yerevan as a provincial town between the hills in the Near East, with caravans transporting goods through the Silk Road. Posters of social realism later marketed this city with its industrial potential, highlighting the mountainous landscape of Soviet Armenia. A country now off-the-beaten track with ancient history and high mountains, is how the Republic of Armenia presented in contemporary travel photography. Hence, this paper studies the visual forms of representation of Armenia as a travel destination since 17th century until today. It reviews the subject in historical progression, finding the transformations, similarities and/or differences in visual messages created by foreign travelers, as well as by local tourism authorities. Exploring early drawings of western travelers, this research reveals an iconographic tradition for depicting Armenia through the tourist gaze. Its logical continuation is studied in modern and post-modern photographs created primarily by tourists, and secondly by destination marketing companies. The case of Armenia is chosen as a newly emerging tourist destination, which lacks any research done in the field of visual studies and marketing. The study brings in new perspectives to the vast field of visual studies by unique images of Armenia. The combination of photographs and texts construct an affective image of Armenia as a heavily-cultured unknown country with mountainous sublime nature, still in its early stages of development.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



NORA BAIRAMIAN

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Born and raised in California, Nora received her first graduate degree from the University of California, Irvine in History. From there, she moved to Armenia for four years where she worked at the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies. She moved back to the states to work toward her second graduate degree at Columbia University in the Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies department

where she completed her thesis on Mkrtych Khrimian “Hayrik.”

“Beyond the Iron Ladle: Education, Gender and Economic Independence in the Work of Mkrtych Khrimian ‘Hayrik’”

Mkrtych Khrimian is considered a “larger-than-life” figure in Armenian history whose image has frequently been condensed to only include select moments of his career. This narrow understanding of much of his work has resulted in a skewed interpretation of his influence which often fails to analyze how Khrimian fit within the broader discourse of Ottoman history and the turbulent changes occurring in the empire in the 19th century. My work reassesses the legacy of Khrimian by expanding the constricting appraisal of the cleric and examining his own publications and writings and dissecting lesser-discussed themes in his work including his emphasis on education, his thoughts on gender equality and, lastly, the importance he placed on economic development in the Ottoman borderlands.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



ARIF TAPAN

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Arif Tapan received his BA in Turkish Language and Literature from Boğaziçi University, his MA in Cultural Studies from İstanbul Şehir University. At present he is a research assistant and Ph.D. candidate at Boğaziçi University, at the Department Turkish Language and Literature. His research and publications focus on 19th century modern Ottoman literature(s), and he is especially interested in 19th century Armeno-Turkish novels and periodicals.

“Reading Nineteenth-Century Armeno-Turkish Novels as Another Phenomenon: A Narratological Perspective”

In this study, two Armeno-Turkish novels, Akabi Hikayesi (Ագապի Հիքեայէսի [The Story of Akabi]), published in 1851, by Hovsep Vartanian (Vartan Pasha) and Bir Sefil Zevce (Պիր Սէֆիլ Զէվճէ [A Miserable Wife]), published in 1868, by Hovsep Maruş are mainly analyzed narratologically. The novels were discussed in terms of narrator(s), focalization, time and space. By this way, it is aimed to question the positions of Akabi Hikayesi and Bir Sefil Zevce within the context of nineteenth-century modern Ottoman novel (or Tanzimat-period novel); through which it is aimed to fill the basic gaps in the interpretations of these novels so far. The reason why the novels are studied narratologically is that narratology can be used as an objective method of identifying possible deficiencies in novels’ existing readings. The objectivity, here, corresponds to analyzing the narrative structures of novels only through the basic concepts of narratology, regardless of socio-cultural, historical, political, religious-ethnic, moral judgments and justifications at the time when the novels were composed and published. In other words, it is aimed to problematize the sufficiency of reading Akabi Hikayesi and Bir Sefil Zevce through the most common themes related to nineteenth-century Ottoman novels. Narratological readings of Akabi Hikayesi and Bir Sefil Zevce will ensure that the narrative structures of the novels are correctly identified and will also reinforce their literary position in the context of the nineteenth-century Ottoman novel. In this way, it is aimed to enrich the existing literary analyses of both nineteenth-century Armeno-Turkish novels and modern Ottoman novel.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



HASMIK KNYAZYAN

Independent Researcher

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Hasmik Knyazyan is an independent researcher in the sphere of cultural anthropology. She studied Ethnography in Yerevan State University and continued her second MA at the European University at Saint Petersburg, faculty of Cultural Anthropology. Her main studies and research interests refer to the anthropology of memory, visual and urban anthropology.

“Hanging Out to Dry, or...’: The Socio-Cultural Aspects of Hanging Laundry (the Armenian Case)”

Looking attentively at the laundry ropes hanging out along the windows, balconies in the streets and yards of the Armenian villages and urban settlements your cultural competency surely will let you identify special regularities (color combinations, size equality, sequence, hanging direction, age/sex factors, the position for underwear etc.) in the way of hanging clothes. In many perceptions among the Armenians such kind of aesthetic factor of this practice of everyday life indicates the qualitative features of a person who hangs it, and it can even be an indicator of a family moral image. The purpose of this research is to find out the social and cultural aspects hidden behind this canonized practice. The study concerns the anthropology of everyday life, and it touches upon gender and semiotic issues. It examines the ways of transition of this tradition, the interpretation of its holders to the laundry drying ways and the aspects conditioned by gender roles. This research is based on three years of observations, photographing, media sources survey and 5 thematic interviews with housewives of different ages in Yerevan, Stepanakert, Gyumri, and Talin. The results of the study show that this practice, being especially common to women is becoming a special sign system due to its demonstrativeness. The research also shows that the technical changes and privatizing of the drying practice decrease the influence of public pressure, contribute women autonomy, change women’s social roles in modernizing Armenian family.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



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Ani Der Grigorian graduated from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2018, where she earned a master's degree in Social Policy and Development with a focus on NGOs. Prior to studying at LSE, Ani earned her bachelor's degree in Anthropology and International Development from the University of California, Los Angeles. In 2016-17 she spent a year living in Armenia interning at two women's rights NGOs—Women's Resource Center Armenia and Society Without Violence. Since graduating from LSE, Ani returned to Armenia as an International Fellow at the Caucasus Research Resource Center. Her research interests include gender and development, civil society-state relationship, and social movements.

“Spontaneous and Unorganized? Reconceptualizing Formal and Informal Activism in the Armenian Women's Movement”

Dominant social movement theories, particularly Tarrow's contentious politics paradigm, suggest that the ability for movements to achieve change is linked with the extent to which they institutionalize within formal politics. However, the literature is inadequate for understanding movement development within a post-Soviet context where movements do not follow the linear informal-to-formal transition when trying to create change. In Armenia, institutionalized forms of activism, particularly non-governmental organizations (NGOs), have been working within the formal political sphere to address social issues since the 1990s, while more informal initiatives have only just emerged in the last decade but present new opportunities to exert agency and influence change from the margins of formal institutions.

The purpose of this study is to explore the dynamics within the Armenian women's movement in order to understand formal and informal avenues used by women in Armenia to achieve gender equality and social change. Drawing from a dozen interviews conducted between March and April 2018, this research analyzes the various approaches used by movement actors to achieve their goals. The study argues that alternative forms of contention underscore the tactics used by the women's movement and that context-specific challenges have blurred boundaries between formal and informal activism.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



LILIT GHAZARYAN

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Lilit Ghazaryan is a second-year PhD student at UCLA in the Anthropology department, specializing in linguistic anthropology. Her research interests include language socialization, peer language socialization, multilingualism, metalinguistic awareness among children, heritage language maintenance, language policies in education. Currently Lilit is working on a study regarding the language policies in kindergartens in Yerevan, Armenia, and the way both teachers and children navigate the dynamic linguistic environment of the country along with the existing language ideologies. To conduct this study she has received the Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship from the US Department of Education, and the Graduate Research Mentorship Award from UCLA. She has previously conducted a study at an Armenian daycare located in the Greater Los Angeles Area, looking at the Armenian-American children's daily speech, their skillful way of navigating between English and Armenian, and their developed metalinguistic awareness showcased through translation, code-switching, and language performance. Lilit was born and raised in Yerevan, Armenia. Before moving to the United States, she attended the Yerevan State University for 2 years, studying linguistics and cross-cultural communications in the department of Romano-Germanic Philology. She currently holds a bachelor's degree from UCLA with a major in Linguistics and Anthropology and a minor in Russian Language, graduated with Magna Cum Laude, College Honors, and Dean's Honor.

“Language Practices and Policies in Kindergartens in Yerevan, Armenia”

The Republic of Armenia is a country with a dynamic linguistic environment, where aside from the native Armenian, at least two other languages (Russian and English) are present. Following the strict language policies of the Soviet Union, where Russian was the lingua franca, during the post-Soviet era Russian was still the popular non-native language, holding a certain degree of prestige, it was associated with higher education and higher class. Later there was a visible shift of prestige from Russian to English as people saw English as a more economically beneficial language to learn (Blauvelt, 2013; Shafiyeva & Kennedy, 2010). English was also the language that opened doors to the digital world, which was another factor of its popularity (Pearce & Rice, 2014). Currently people recognize the loss of Russian fluency among the residents of Armenia, which happened due to the abovementioned prestige shift from Russian to English. There are some efforts to restore the fluency in Russian, especially among children. To better understand the relationship between the prominent languages in the Republic of Armenia I look at the language policies in kindergartens (both private and public), children's and teachers' speech patterns, and its relation to larger political-economic standing of the country. I particularly look at teacher corrections relating to language use and what they reveal about the existing policies and ideologies. During my 2.5-month-long summer field work in Armenia, I visited three kindergartens (2 public and 1 private), where I observed and video-recorded children's naturally occurring conversations at play time, language classes, and some other classes children had in their daily schedule. I also interviewed parents of kindergarten-aged children, kindergarten staff, and government representatives to understand the linguistic reality the children are growing up in. The analysis of the data is done through the theoretical focus of language socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986), and peer language socialization (Goodwin & Kyratzis, 2011), which look at interactions as potential source for gaining linguistic and sociocultural knowledge.

2020 GRADUATE STUDENT PRESENTER



URBAN JAKSA

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Urban is currently completing a PhD in Politics at the University of York. His research focuses on protracted conflicts in post-Soviet space, specifically the foreign relations of unrecognized and partially recognized states. His wider interests include ethnic conflict, political transition, borders and security in its wider sense (human, ontological). Currently a UN Alliance of

Civilizations Fellow, in 2016-2017, Urban was a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University and a year before a visiting scholar at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. He has worked for NATO, OSCE, and think tanks such as the Caucasus Research Resources Centres in Yerevan and the Polish Institute for International Affairs in Warsaw. Urban has published his research in edited monographs by Routledge, Springer, Palgrave and presented it at NYU, Columbia University, LSE, UCLA, and other venues.

“Pashinyan vs. the Karabakh Clan: Re-Examining Patronal Relations Between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh”

The paper examines the relations between Armenia and the internationally unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Armenia, along with its diasporic networks, acts as a patron to Nagorno-Karabakh, providing the entity with security, political support, budgetary funds, and infrastructural development. However, Nagorno-Karabakh is an outlier among the post-Soviet de facto states as its elites – sometimes referred to as the ‘Karabakh Clan’ – have historically exercised a strong influence over the politics of Armenia. Robert Kocharyan was first President of Nagorno-Karabakh before serving as the Prime Minister and later President of Armenia, becoming the only person in recent history to serve as president of two states. The 2018 Armenian Revolution disrupted this two-way patronal relationship as the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has attempted to crack down on the ‘Karabakh Clan’, an ally of the ousted President Serzh Sargsyan. Kocharian himself was repeatedly charged, arrested (for the third time in June 2019), and released. In the light of these recent events, the author re-examines patronal relations between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh. Can the weakening of the ‘Karabakh Clan’ be an opportunity for democratisation and development of Nagorno-Karabakh or are the old patronage networks likely to be replaced with new ones? What does it take for political transition to be sustainable in a region that has seen repeated outbreaks of democratization, as well as the tendency for authoritarianism to re-emerge? The author addresses these questions by drawing on Henry E. Hale’s analysis of regime dynamics, as well as his own comparative research on post-Soviet de facto states.

2020 COLLOQUIA GUEST SPEAKER



DR. SERGIO LA PORTA

Dr. Sergio La Porta is the **Haig and Isabel Berberian Professor of Armenian Studies** and **Interim Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at California State University, Fresno**. He received his PhD in Armenian and Near Eastern Studies from Harvard University in 2001 where he wrote his thesis on Grigor Tat'ewac'i's *Book of Questions*. Prior to his appointment to Fresno State, Dr. La Porta taught Armenian and Religious Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research interests include medieval Armenian intellectual and social history, philology, and

apocalyptic literature. Dr. La Porta's recent publications include articles entitled "The Persistence of History: Two Armenian Reactions to the Failure of Prophecy," and "A Fish Out of Water? Armenia(ns) and the Mediterranean." In addition to publishing a study on Armenian commentaries on the works of Dionysius the Areopagite (2008), he co-edited with B. Crostini, *Negotiating Co-existence: Communities, Cultures and 'Convivencia' in Byzantine Society*, and a volume with K. Bardakjian entitled, *The Armenian Apocalyptic Tradition: A Comparative Perspective*. Dr. La Porta served as the Editor of the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* from 2011 to 2019, and co-founded the Fresno Institute for Classical Armenian Translation with Dr. Michael Pifer in 2018.

2020 COLLOQUIA FILM SCREENING

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A FILM BY EMILY MKRTICHIAN AND JESSE SOURSOURIAN
PRODUCED BY EMILY MKRTICHIAN, JESSE SOURSOURIAN, AND FULIANE PETIKYAN
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS FULIANE PETIKYAN, NAZELI KODJOIAN, AND SEBU SIMONIAN
CINEMATOGRAPHY BY ALEX IGIDBASHIAN EDITED BY KOHAR MINASSIAN
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY MARTIN CRANE ADDITIONAL MUSIC BY ANGEL DERADOORIAN
SOUND DESIGN BY MUTEUNMUTE STUDIOS



2020 COLLOQUIA FILM SCREENING

EMILY MKRTICHIAN

Director of the film “Motherland”

Emily Mkrtichian is an Armenian-American filmmaker and writer. Her films touch on themes of Memory, Place and Identity, exploring creative and collaborative ways to tell stories from marginalized communities around the globe. Her work includes the immersive, multimedia installation *Luys i Luso*, created in collaboration with Tigran Hamasyan, an exploration of music’s effect on spaces that were lost to a genocide a century before. The installation has

traveled to Munich (Unterfahrt), Armenia, NYC (BRIC Arts), LA (Arts Activation fund recipient for public art), Istanbul (DEPO Gallery), and Sophia, Bulgaria. Emily directed the viral web documentary *Levon: a Wondrous Life*, about 60-year-old rollerblader living exuberantly in the post-Soviet landscape of Yerevan, Armenia; and she just completed the short documentary *Motherland* (World Premiere Full Frame Film Festival, Camden IFF, Brooklyn IFF, Hot Springs FF, BendFilm, Big Sky IFF) about the women who shake tradition and risk their lives to rid their country of landmines left over from an ethnic war.



“Motherland” Synopsis

What if fighting for your country meant going against some of its most traditional values? *Motherland* is a documentary about the women who shake tradition to rid their country of landmines left over from a devastating ethnic war. Individually outcast; together, a collective - the deminers support each other as they take on the dangerous role of breaking stereotypes and securing the future of their war-torn republic.

Both Q&A sessions will be led by Zareh Arevshatian, Media Coordinator, Melnitz Theater

2020 COLLOQUIA FILM SCREENING



“Gate To Heaven” Synopsis

Robert Sternvall is a German journalist who has made his name for his reportage on the war in Nagorno-Karabagh (1992-94). Learning about the resumption of hostilities in April, 2016, he quickly leaves Berlin to cover them. This time he is wounded when his car is bombed and is transferred to a hospital in Yerevan. Invited to a charity opera concert featuring a young diva Sophia Marti, he develops an immediate attraction toward her. Later, Sophia proposes Robert join her on a visit to her favorite childhood haunt, the “Gate to Heaven” gorge. There she would spend time with her father, also a photographer, who had been killed during the previous war. Robert, however, is a no-show, flying back to Germany instead. Meanwhile, the local press uncovers details about Robert’s dark secret . . .

2020 COLLOQUIA FILM SCREENING

JIVAN AVETISYAN

Director of the film “Gate To Heaven”

Jivan Avetisyan is an Armenian film director, born in Gyumri, raised in Artsakh, and currently based in Yerevan, capital city of the Armenian Republic. My lifelong dream of storytelling, chronicling history, and putting Artsakh on the world map has been realized through the art of filmmaking. I have created well over 20 documentaries, short films, and three feature films. My first feature film, Tevanik, gained recognition at over twenty international film festivals, garnering over twenty awards including Best Feature Film. My second feature film The Last Inhabitant was screened at A class international film festivals including Shanghai and Venice and was considered for Best Foreign Language Film and Best Original Score in the 73rd Golden Globe Awards; it won Best Feature Film and Best Actor Award at the Scandinavian International Film Festival in Helsinki, Finland. Lastly, the film was licensed by HBO Eastern Europe. My third film project Gate to Heaven is making its round in the festival market. I continue to thrive to tell stories about my hometown, and am currently in the development stage of my fourth feature film which is earmarked for production in 2021.



*Both Q&A sessions will be led by Zareh Arevshatian, Media Coordinator,
Melnitz Theater*

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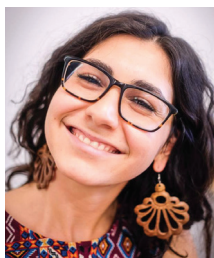
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NOTES

NOTES

18TH ANNUAL
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2020

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S P E C I A L T H A N K S

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Ara Soghomonian

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