Anatolii Tokmantcev received his B.A. in History from the Siberian Federal University in Russia and his M.A. in Cultural Anthropology from the European University at Saint Petersburg. Currently, Anatolii is a PhD Candidate in Armenian Studies at UCLA. In his dissertation, he seeks to account for the remarkable growth of the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ community in Armenia in the post-Soviet period despite the high animosity on behalf of the state and general population.

Drawing on the analysis of various newspaper articles, this presentation focuses on the evolution of the relationship between the Jehovah’s Witnesses and Armenian state during the post-Soviet period. Scholars have argued that Jehovah’s Witnesses’ rejection of blood transfusion, conspicuous intolerance to other churches and/or national symbols, and conscientious objection are the main source of tension between the Jehovah’s Witnesses, on one hand, and the society and the state, on the other. However, the trajectory of the relationship between the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the post-Armenian state shows that the main point of contention is the struggle over the absolute hegemony/taken-for-granted-ness of the ethnocentric ideology of independent Armenia.

All welcome

Pizza and refreshments will be served

All proceedings will be in Armenian