

A photograph of a woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a patterned top, crouching in a lush green forest. She is holding a small bouquet of flowers and smelling them. The forest is filled with tall, thin trees and dense undergrowth.

ARMENIAN ECOLOGIES

Real and Imaginary



LSA

CENTER FOR
ARMENIAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

NEWSLETTER
FALL 2021 - ISSUE 15

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EDITORS MELANIE TANELIAN NAIRA TUMANYAN

DESIGN SOLDEVILLA DESIGN bradlyh@umich.edu

CONTRIBUTOR DAVID MERCHANT

COVER IMAGE DAVIT SAROYAN

**LET US KNOW
WHAT YOU THINK!**

armenianstudies@umich.edu

Facebook:

@CASumichAA

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We at the Center for Armenian Studies welcome you back to a new academic year! Looking back at last year, I could never have imagined that I would be tasked with steering the center through a severe moment of global crisis. Staff, faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and students worked with diligence, perseverance, and great patience as we navigated through financial restrictions, an academic year of virtual engagement, and continued displacements from our routines and schedules. I must say that I am honored and impressed by how our community took on the challenge. Everyone was ready to adjust with grit and wonderful creativity to the circumstances that necessitated swift changes in our work.

We are now looking forward to everyone returning to campus and working with our community to provide a program that will engage the excellent historical and artistic work of a group of international scholars as well as open discussions around current concerns in Armenia and the Diaspora. We will introduce a hybrid (in-person and virtual) format for those events that are not fully online, so that our international audience may continue to engage with us in real time.

Every year we advance a framework that connects our lectures, workshops, and film screenings. Witnessing the recent Nagorno-Karabakh war's impact on humans and nature and natural disasters around the globe generated by the climate crisis, we are introducing the theme *Armenian Ecologies: Real and Imaginary*. In a recent report, the Conflict and Environment Observatory (CEOBS) has investigated the environmental dimensions of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and perhaps not surprisingly has concluded that the "historical and frozen conditions of the conflict have significantly impacted the landscape and geodiversity. This is clearest along the line of contact, which is now strewn with unexploded ordnance, trenches, conflict debris and toxic remnants of war – a threat to people, livelihoods and biodiversity." Moreover, as the climate crisis is an undeniable reality, scholars across the humanities and social science have begun to pay particular attention to the relationships between



Melanie Tanielian

living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment, or in short - ecologies. With this in mind, the Center for Armenian Studies invites you to join us in examining Armenians through their relationship with their physical environments past and present.

Armenian ecologies as an analytical frame naturally will insist on a dialectical relationship of humans and nature, as they are real and imagined. Consequently, this year's program brings together scholars from wide-ranging fields including history, geography, and literary studies. These scholars will foreground Armenian ecologies, by introducing what we might call an interdisciplinary anthropogenic scholarship, which "spells the collapse of the age-old humanist distinction between natural history and human history."* The Anthropocene, or the age of humans, as a scholarly frame demands no less than integration of climatic and ecological change with the cultural, social, and political changes historians already study. Moreover, this will allow us to map the interconnection between ideas, emotions, genres, or other non-material entities.

* Chakrabarty "The Climate of History: Four Theses," *Critical Inquiry* 35, no. 2 (Winter 2009): 197–222, here 201.

From the environmental impact of the wars in Nagorno-Karabakh, changes in land use, the memories of landscapes, to mapping and studying Armenians in multi-ethnic landscapes to viewing the genocide through deep maps, we will view Armenians' history and contemporary experience as intricate ecologies of being.

Joining our community this coming year and ready to engage with us considering the historical and literary representations of Armenian ecologies are two Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellows, Matthew Ghazarian and Helen Makhdoumian. I would like to publicly welcome them here.

It is a great pleasure to work with such creative and intellectually engaging colleagues here at Michigan,

the work as the director this coming year. We hope to continue to expand our work, none of which would be possible without the robust support of our community. So I would like to take this opportunity to solicit your help in establishing an endowed Armenian Studies Graduate Student Fellowship fund that will cover tuition as costs for higher education are on the rise. I hope you will consider contributing to our campaign that will ensure the future of the next generation of students in Armenian Studies.

I am very much looking forward to seeing you all either in person or online.

Melanie Tanielian
Director, Center for Armenian Studies

Aghveran, Armenia. Photo by Norayr Grigoryan



MEET THE MANOOGIAN FELLOWS

Matthew Ghazarian

2021-22 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow

Matthew Ghazarian received his PhD from Columbia University's Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies in 2021. His research focuses on the late Ottoman Empire and modern Middle East, exploring the intersections of environmental history, political economy, and communal conflict. His dissertation, "Ghost Rations," examines the development of the conflicts that tore apart the multi-ethnic, multi-confessional Ottoman Empire. Suffering, unequally borne, radicalized notions of belonging and exacerbated communal tensions, sowing the seeds for violence to come. Ghazarian also contributes to an Ottoman History Podcast and has taught in the Armenian Studies Program and the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of California, Berkeley.

Research Interests: critical political economy, environmental history, Ottoman history, history of violence, sectarianism.

Approaching Ottoman society and ethnic conflicts through the lens of environmental history is an interesting angle to study the past. Why is it important and what insights does it offer us today?

I focus on the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century because it was a period of transformations that began with a Sultanic declaration of religious equality (1839) and ended with a dramatic wave of communal violence, the Hamidian Massacres (1894-97). My project studies the central role of material conditions – hunger, debt, drought, and inequality – in putting new ideas about difference and belonging into practice. By focusing on famine and debt in rural areas, I trace new histories of sectarianism, environment, and violence in the Middle East and show how the inequalities that arose from uneven famine aid and debt burdens sparked competition and conflict between Christians and Muslims and Armenians, Kurds, and Turks. Today, such a study offers insights into how seemingly distinct problems like inequality, ecological collapse, and social conflict are all connected.

Tell us about the project(s) you are currently working on.



Matthew Ghazarian

I'm working on turning my dissertation into a book, as well as an article about the role of the Hamidiye light cavalry regiments in the history of the Hamidian Massacres of 1894-97.

What made you choose to apply for our postdoctoral fellowships and why are you excited to be part of our Armenian Studies community?

The Center for Armenian Studies has and continues to host scholars who produce fantastic scholarship. I applied so I could have the opportunity to collaborate with the community here, and to work with that community to push the boundaries of what Armenian Studies can be.

What do you hope to accomplish during your postdoctoral year?

I look forward to meeting and collaborating with members of the CAS and broader University of Michigan community to make headway on my book and finish my article on the role of the Hamidiye light cavalry in the history of the Hamidian Massacres of 1894-97.

What course are you teaching in the winter 2022 semester?

I am slated to offer a course called Famine: Nature, Humanity, and Global Political Ecology in the Modern Era. It will compare the famines of Anatolia with several cases of famine from around the world in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The seal of the Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate's Central Famine Commission, founded in early 1880 to provide aid to famine-stricken people in the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The seal was present on correspondence between the Commission and prominent Ottoman Armenians like Mkrditch Khrimian and Karekin Srvandzhtians, who worked with them to provide money, food, and other aid to the people of these regions, following the devastating 1877-78 Russo-Ottoman War, and the chaos of its aftermath. This correspondence is held in the Charents Museum of Literature and Arts in Yerevan, Armenia.



"Group d'affamés de Van," cover illustration of French periodical *Le Monde Illustré* on 22 May 1880 (courtesy of Bibliothèque Nationale de France).



Helen Makhdounian

2021-22 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow

Helen Makhdounian received her PhD in English from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Trained as an interdisciplinary scholar, Makhdounian also earned a minor in American Indian and Indigenous Studies as well as certificates through the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies (HGMS) and the Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory. From 2015-18, she co-organized the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies, an interdisciplinary graduate student and faculty member reading group on campus. She regularly contributed to *Days and Memory*, the HGMS blog, and her articles have appeared in *Modern Fiction Studies*, *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, and the *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*. In addition to teaching literature and composition courses at the University of Illinois, Makhdounian held administrative appointments as a Peer Mentor for New Instructors, Digital Literacies Coordinator, and an Assistant Director of the Undergraduate Rhetoric Program as well as an Assistant Director of the campus writing center.

Research Interests: Questions of memory work as they relate to histories of collective violence in two regions: the US and Canada on the one hand and the Ottoman East and the Middle East on the other.

How did you become interested in trauma, memory, and studying indigenous and diasporic communities?

A formative text that shaped my interests was Leslie Marmon Silko's *Storyteller*, which I was exposed to in an undergraduate literature class. As my undergraduate studies progressed, I kept thinking about this text while simultaneously having opportunities to take a translation course, design an independent study on Armenian American literature, and then design one on Armenian artists, especially in the diaspora. In general, the faculty who supported my intellectual inquiries were not trained in Armenian Studies nor did they know Armenian. The faculty in the English Department, for instance, specialized in Native American, Latina/o, and Caribbean literatures. Still, as mentors, they gave me readings from their respective training and encouraged me to do a couple of things. They helped me understand the kinds of questions posed in literary studies, to what end, and how answers are found. They encouraged me to see Armenian Studies, like any field, as developing in stages and to look for methodologies, debates, gaps in knowledge, and so



Helen Makhdounian

forth in that arc. I was reading critical scholarship that helped me understand the literatures of indigenous and diasporic communities. At the same time, I was, through those same readings, learning how to learn the field of Armenian Studies.

My interest in the two other elements of your question developed in graduate school. Looking back, I suppose I was interested in trauma studies and memory studies as an undergraduate, but I did not yet have the tools to identify them as such. At the University of Illinois, I was fortunate to come across the Future of Trauma and Memory Studies, an interdisciplinary faculty and graduate student reading group. I went on to co-organize the group for three years, and it was through those sessions that I came to grasp the breadth of those two fields of inquiry. At the University of Illinois, I also found my academic home through the Initiative in Holocaust, Genocide, and Memory Studies, which regularly sponsors guest lectures, film screenings, and conferences. I developed an interest in the study of trauma and memory in part because of the model of collaboration that I witnessed through such events. Under the categories of trauma and memory, we could hold knowledge of an array of texts and contexts in relation. Simply put, I love that!

Tell us about the project(s) you are currently working on.

I am drafting two essays. In the first one, I am cognizant of writing to an Armenian Studies audience. In part, the essay can be characterized as a teaching piece. In that I hope to distill for this specific audience the origins, aims, and scope of two overlapping but distinct fields: Indigenous studies and settler colonial studies.

I do not profess to know everything, of course. Still, in light of recent scholarly discourses that I am seeing in Armenian Studies, I would like for this piece to be a resource for our community, in and beyond the academy. My second objective is to illustrate how some of those emerging arguments in Armenian Studies can be in conversation with these other fields. I hope the piece leaves readers with a meaningful message: Let us engage our colleagues with an open heart and mind to learning.

The second turns to contemporary poetry and prose by Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Muscogee (Creek) authors. It is a part of my ongoing interest in revisiting inherited methodologies in trauma studies and memory studies. A Eurocentric lineage of critical theory undergirds those two frameworks. I find myself, though, reading scholarship in Indigenous studies and settler colonial studies that I identify as engaging questions about trauma and memory, even if the authors themselves have not staked that claim. Moreover, the literary works I have in mind lend themselves to theorizations of memory work, both in terms of thematic content and form. I am not sure yet where this essay will take me, but I look forward to making meaning of what these creative works have to say about monuments, memorials, and the scales of memory work.

What made you choose to apply for our postdoctoral fellowships and why are you excited to be part of our Armenian Studies community?

I had previously presented at the annual international graduate student workshop organized by the Center for Armenian Studies. The feedback that I received on my paper and the conversations I had with fellow presenters, the Armenian Studies academic community, and guests were generative. In fact, as I developed my dissertation afterward, I revisited some of the ideas and arguments that I worked through in that piece. I was inspired to apply for a fellowship because I knew that I would, as I did in the past, benefit immensely from the feedback that I would receive on my work.

To answer the second part of the question, I want to emphasize the word “community.” I attended institutions that did not have formal academic units called Armenian Studies. In a way, I have been teaching others about the field while I am simultaneously learning about the field myself. The experience of teaching diverse audiences and of thinking along interdisciplinary lines among colleagues with diverse intellectual interests puts me in a unique position. I am excited to now be part of an institutional community so that I continue



*Helen Makhdoumian, Installation.
Patterns: Tree Bark and Butterfly Wings.
Wire and Etched Transparency Film. 2014.*



to learn about the origins and trajectories of the field and to imagine together the future of Armenian Studies. I am also excited for the events the center will host, especially the workshop that we as fellows will organize in the spring.

What do you hope to accomplish during your postdoctoral year?

I will be working on a couple of projects during this year. My focus will be on turning my dissertation into a book manuscript titled “A Map of This Place: Nested Memory and the Afterlives of Removal.” The project centers the category of indigeneity to reframe questions of place, space, movement, and belonging articulated in transnational and transcultural memory studies. To that end, I develop a connective study of how memories of dispossession and removal travel across time, generations, and geographies. I do so through a contrapuntal study of contemporary Armenian American, Palestinian American, and American Indian/First Nations novels and memoirs. Working in this way, my project offers “nested memory” to articulate the structure of the intergenerational transmission of memory in the face of the recursivity of trauma. As my analyses of novels and memoirs further illustrate, the notion of nesting also accounts for the ways in which memory work unfolds in place and how memories are emplaced.

Emerging from my dissertation is a second book project on the figure of what I call the “distant witness.” An exile, diasporic subject, or transnational citizen, this figure lives in the same temporality of collective trauma that her community experiences but at a geographic remove. I come to this concept from prose and art concerning transatlantic slavery, Indigenous removal, and sovereignty across the US-Canada settler border, apartheid in South Africa, the Syrian Civil War, and the August 2020 Beirut port explosion. Beyond advancing the study of diaspora relations, this project has implications for conceptualizations of testimony work. Solidifying my arguments on nested memory will lead me to lay the conceptual groundwork for this latter project.

Finally, I have a long-term goal of writing a comprehensive article that serves as a history and thematic overview of Armenian American literature. Access to library holdings at the University of Michigan and the Armenian Research Center will help me fill in the gaps of my knowledge on this literary canon. I suspect I will accumulate too many titles and jot too many notes for one piece. Let us see what intellectual journey the

stacks will set me upon!

What course are you teaching in the Winter 2022 semester?

I am teaching an interdisciplinary course titled “Armenian Relationality: Diasporas Old, New, and In-the-Making.” Taking cues from recent scholarship within and beyond Armenian Studies, this course turns to literature, art, print culture, and song to offer a relational approach for the study of diasporic Armenian experiences. Relational encompasses both time and space, which allows us to juxtapose migrations pre- and post-1915 as well as to situate different geopolitical sites of upheaval in conversation (Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Soviet Armenia, and Artsakh). This course will appeal to students within and beyond Armenian Studies as it situates Armenian migrations ensuing lived conditions within connective, regional, and global paradigms.

I have organized the course around four thematic units, and each will prompt students to think critically about how primary and secondary readings can illuminate one another. For instance, the first section, “Methodological Foundations: Armenians of the World, Armenians in the World,” brings poetry by Vahe Godel and photography by Scout Tufankjian to bear on received methodologies in Armenian Studies concerning transnational, diasporic, and network belonging. Second, “Telling Our Transits Through Objects of Study,” welcomes students to take the concept of what Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh calls “survivor objects” and apply it to the study of song, storytelling, and mixed media art. Third, “Sites and Processes of Homemaking” pairs Rabih Alameddine’s *The Hakawati* alongside texts that grapple with Armenian identity formation and collective trauma in the locations I previously mentioned. Last, “And It All Comes Together,” has students dive into *The Houshamadyan Project* and holdings in HathiTrust to generate a discussion on archivization and working in the archives. I am excited to think about these materials alongside my students and especially to hear their insights!

REMEMBERING ALICE HAIDOSTIAN (1925–2021)

Alice Haidostian was a woman of passions, and two of those passions – her love for things Armenian and her love for the University of Michigan – intersected some four decades ago when she approached Mr. Alex Manoogian and began lobbying for an Armenian Studies Program at the University of Michigan. She, along with Ben Stolz of the Slavic Department, and Edmond Azadian, whom I have always referred to as Mr. Manoogian’s Minister of Culture, convinced Alex that he should endow a tenured professorship in modern Armenian history. It took another two years before “the old man” agreed. As Mr. Manoogian told me years later, he found it hard to say no to Alice! That, indeed, changed my life, and in 1981, together with my wife Armena Marderosian we came up to Ann Arbor and began a new phase in our lives and careers.

Alice was the backbone of the program, the link between the Greater Detroit community and our program in Ann Arbor; she was the dynamo at the center of our center. When her beloved husband Berj died, she set up the annual lectureship in his name, which has become the major public event of our academic year. As she remembers him, we remember her.

I should mention one more of Alice’s passions: music. She was closely connected to and supportive of the University Musical Society and worked for years to have the opera *Anoush* staged at the Michigan Opera Theater. Director David DeChiera, who produced *Anoush* in Detroit, told the press that he had been persuaded to undertake the project by a friend, noted Detroit music lover and pianist Alice Haidostian. You could not say no to Alice Haidostian!

I have my own story about Alice and music, or at least it is a story that Alice told me many times. When she was a little girl studying piano, one of her teachers was none other than the Armenian composer and ethnomusicologist Grikor Mirzaian Suni, my grandfather. As she related her experience to me, Suni was a very strict teacher, and when she made a mistake, he rapped her fingers. I apologize for that, Alice, but after those lessons you certainly played beautifully.



Alice Haidostian

So, our sorely missed, much beloved, Alice, I thank you for all you did for me, the Suny family, for the University of Michigan and the Armenian Studies Program, and for music in Michigan. Not everyone changes people’s lives as you did, for the good, the positive. You know, wherever you are, your legacy lives on.

Ronald Grigor Suny

*William H. Sewell Jr. Distinguished University
Professor of History, University of Michigan*

ARMENIAN ECOLOGIES

REAL & IMAGINARY

FALL 2021 / WINTER 2022

OCT

6-8

Environmental Armenia
The Climate Crisis, Conflict, and Activism

As a global community, we are facing an undeniable climate crisis that “unequivocally” has been caused by human activity. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change states that “every corner of the planet is already being affected and it could get far worse.” Armenia is no exception. This conference seeks to begin an interdisciplinary discussion inviting environmental scientists, geographers, policy experts, and activists to examine challenges posed by climate change and recurrent conflict, as well as present possible

solutions through policy advocacy and local activism.

This three-day conference begins with a discussion of the environmental impact of war and violence, past and present, in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh moving to a broader discussion of the effects of the global climate crisis on Armenia’s land, water, and other natural resources. The participants will discuss the issues, challenges, and current policies that seek to mitigate the problems.

Photo by Mariam Yeghiazaryan



NOV**18**

Imagined Landscapes & Crafted Worlds Spacetime and Natureculture in Medieval Armenia

Edward Hagop Noroian Inaugural Lecture

Kate Franklin

*Lecturer & Director of Undergraduate and Graduate Programs in History, Classics and Archeology
Birkbeck University of London*

Many ongoing discussions of how we might (how we must) live on a damaged planet with an uncertain future hinge on imagination. In particular, social scientists across disciplines are concerned with the problem of imagining lifeworlds of more than human kin, at timescales beyond our individual lifetimes. These challenges, of dreaming an ever-widening world and also caring about and for it, seem hypermodern; and yet, they were urgent and immediate to people living and working in Armenian cities, towns, and mountain valleys centuries ago, in the high middle ages (13th-15th centuries AD). Interdisciplinary archaeological research into the big and small politics of Armenians during this period reveals a profound concern for personal relationships with eternity, even (and especially) beyond the period of the Mongol conquest, described by Kirakos Ganjakec'i as 'the end of time.' This talk considers medieval Armenian world-making at multiple scales, from the intimacy of embodied selves to the expansive cultural world we now call the Silk Road. In particular, it will reflect on the ways that the commemoration of the self and the memory of landscape were tangled together

and how these might help us think otherwise about seemingly separate worlds of nature and culture, past and future.

Kate Franklin is an anthropological archaeologist and Lecturer in Medieval History at Birkbeck University of London. Her work is focused most closely on Armenia in the Mongol period and specifically engaged with techniques of world-making and Silk Road cosmopolitanism. Franklin's dissertation (University of Chicago, 2014) centered on excavations at the Arai-Bazarjul caravanserai in the Kasakh Valley. Prior to her position at Birkbeck she taught anthropology, archaeology, war, and history at the University of Chicago as Dumanian Visiting Professor in Armenian Studies, and at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Franklin has published on caravan infrastructure, medieval embodied politics, landscape, memory, and everyday life; her book *Everyday Cosmopolitanisms: Living the Silk Road in Medieval Armenia*, is forthcoming (in print and Open Access) in September 2021 from the University of California Press.



Kate Franklin



A view of Vayots Dzor from within the monastery of Hermon. Photo by K. Franklin

FEB**10-11**

Disposessions and Their Legacies Comparisons, Intersections, and Connections

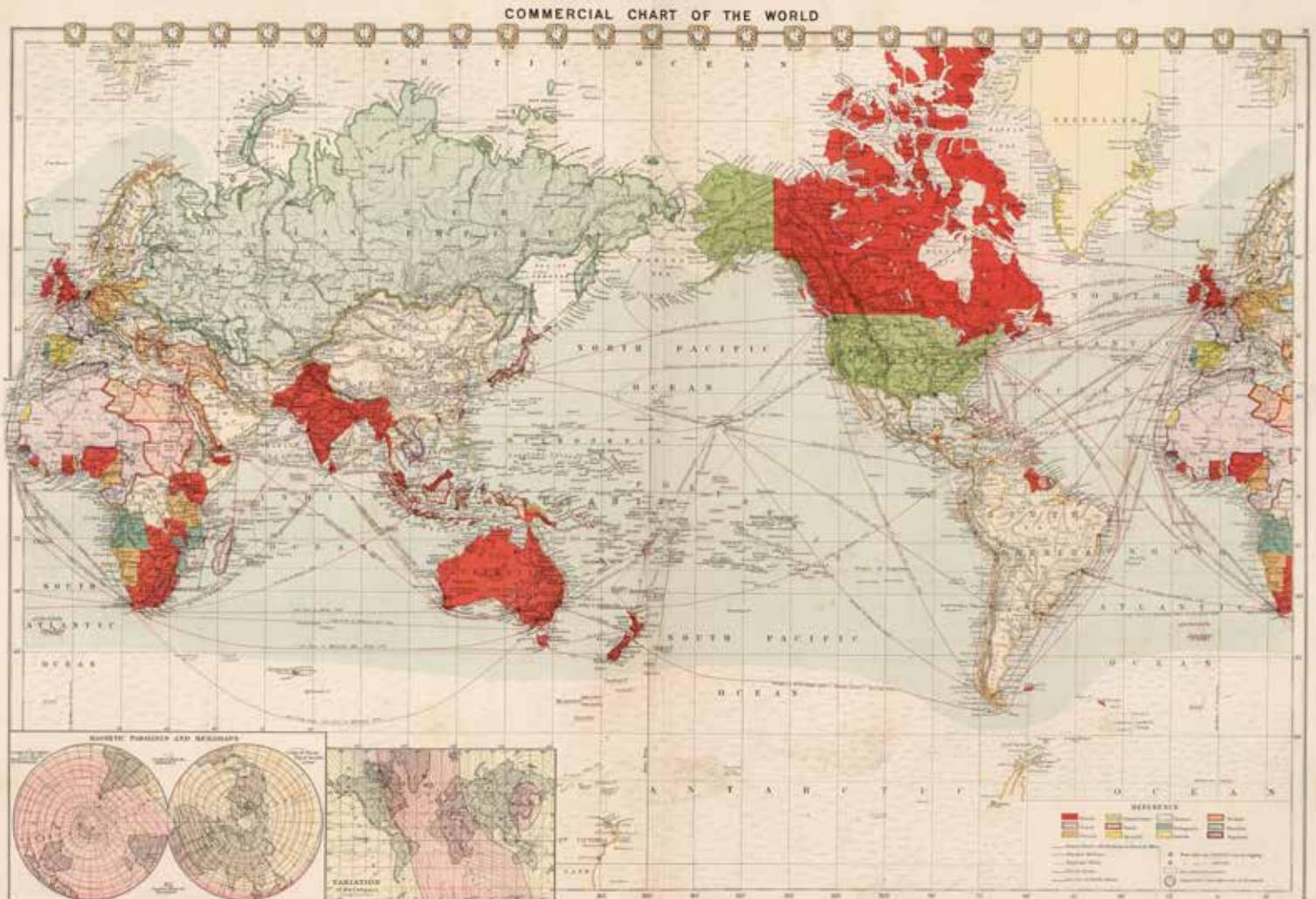
This workshop focuses on the historical and literary representations of dispossession, its violence, and its persisting legacies in the Ottoman East and the diasporas of Armenians, Alevis, Assyrians, Kurds, and others. The organizers hope to bring Ottoman and Armenian studies into conversation with other fields, including settler colonial studies, critical Indigenous studies, and global histories of colonialism and capitalism, to explore historical episodes of dispossession and their ongoing violence aftermaths. The workshop joins these fields in extending analysis to not only the Americas and Oceania but also to a broader set of geographies, including the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Invoking dispossession as a point of comparison and the framework for a discussion, the workshop joins recent work in Armenian and Ottoman studies,

which has begun to explore chains of displacement and dispossession under conditions of what some have called internal colonization. The aim is to put these works into conversation with the distinct yet inseparable fields of settler colonial and indigenous studies and ask how they might inform, learn from, and complicate understandings of territorial removal, the settler/native binary, and Indigenous transnationalisms.

Organizers:

Matthew Ghazarian and Helen Makhdoumian,
2021-22 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellows with
faculty advisor Hakem Al-Rustom, Alex Manoogian
Professor of Modern Armenian History, and
Melanie Tanielian, Director of the Center for
Armenian Studies.

Commercial chart, World. George Philip & Son, Ltd. The London Geographical Institute. Philips' Mercantile Marine Atlas. Second Edition, 1905. Courtesy of Stanford Libraries David Rumsey Historical Map Collection



MAR

17-18

The Quotidian and the Divine Gender and the Political and Sexual Economies of Monasticism in Christian Anatolia (16th–19th c.)

12th Annual International Graduate Student Workshop

Scholars of the Ottoman Empire and Middle East have highlighted the complexities of cultural and social life in the empire's provinces, yet monasticism and monastic life as a social institution remain unstudied. Though monasteries have been explored as sites of state cooperation and their leadership as agents of the state, how can studies on the social and economic life of monasteries critically reassess common themes and objects of inquiry such as piety, community, and empire?

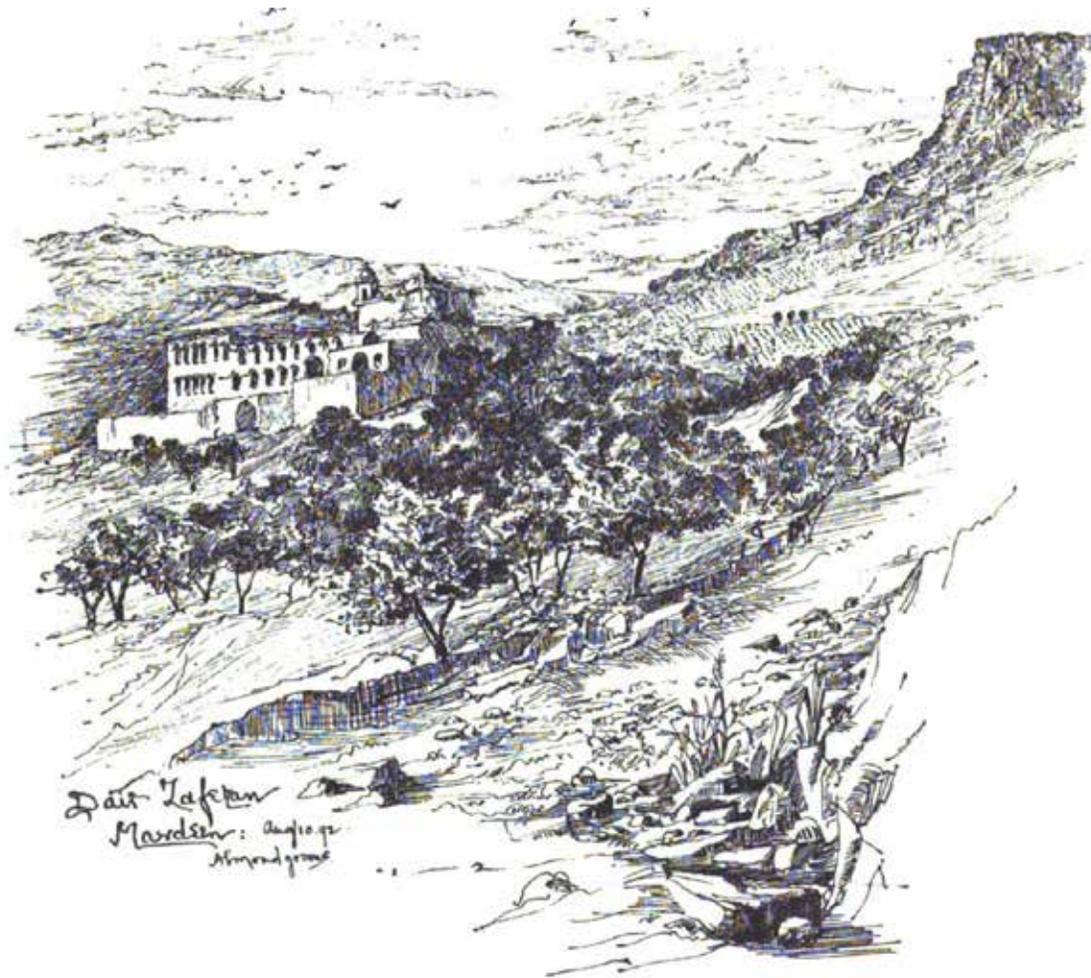
The church, in general, was an institution critical for the livelihood of Armenians and other Christian communities in Ottoman Anatolia. Monasticism existed interdependent of the church, after all monks and nuns sustained the church's labor as spiritual shepherds of their communities and material stewards of the land and holy spaces. Gendered aspects of monastic life and sociabilities, including the protocols of sexual and spiritual discipline that shaped intimacy and religious life (e.g. celibacy) in particular, offer rich vantage points

through which the social fabric of confessional communities come into view. The multiple social, sexual, and spiritual hierarchies that configured these spaces and the type of relationships it created have yet to be examined. This workshop seeks to approach such historiographical lacunae with the following questions: How was monastic life represented by the church, by laypeople, and by the Ottoman state? What did life in the monastery entail? How did the practices of monasticism change over time? What was the relationship between spiritual, material, sexual and economic life in monasteries? How did monks and nuns represent their work and networks as communal? What relationship does religion, and monasticism, in particular, have to conceptions of and claims for sacred geographies?

This international graduate student workshop invites graduate students to present their research around the themes of monasticism, gender, sexuality, religion/spirituality, economy, and community.

Drawing of Mor Hananyo Monastery in Mardin.

Parry, O.H. *Six Months in a Syrian Monastery, being the record of a visit to the head quarters of the Syrian church in Mesopotamia, with some account of the Yazidis or devil worshippers of Mosul and El Jilwah, their sacred book.* London, H. Cox, 1895.



MAR

TBA

Armenian Transformations, 1981–2021
How 40 Years of Michigan Armenian Studies Looked at
Imperial Collapse, Ethnic War, and the Rebirth of Independence
Celebrating Forty Years of Armenian Studies

From the creation of the Alex Manoogian Chair in Modern Armenian History in 1981 to the catastrophic defeat of the Armenian Republic in the second Nagorno-Karabakh war, scholars at the University of Michigan have been in the vanguard of examining and attempting to understand the experiences of Armenians in modern times. When the chair was founded Armenia was a small Soviet republic, and half of the world's Armenians lived in scattered diasporic communities. Within a decade the Soviet empire had disintegrated, and Armenia became an independent state beset by hostile neighbors. The Republic survived despite losses of population and economic distress. A thriving civil society defied the

rule of oligarchs and self-serving politicians, and in 2018 crowds marched to the capital to make a democratic revolution. Just as they rebounded from Genocide more than 100 years ago, Armenians once again must deal with loss and find a path to renewal.

Examining the recent past of Armenians in the homeland and in the diaspora, three Manoogian chairholders – Ronald Grigor Suny, Gerard Libaridian, and Hakem Al-Rustom – will present short talks on the turbulent events of the last four decades.



Ronald Grigor Suny



Gerard Libaridian



Hakem Al-Rustom

40 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION

APR

7

Performing the Archive

A Conversation on Art, Engagement, and Armenianness

2022 Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Annual Distinguished Lecture



Arsinée Khanjian
(Photo by Guilio Muratori)



Marie-Aude Baronian

Presented for the first time at the Maxim Gorki Theater in Berlin in 2015 (in the context of the centennial of the Armenian Genocide), artist Arsinée Khanjian has created the performance *Performing Memory: Auction of Souls*. This multimedial work addresses the legacy of the genocide survivor and early American cinema celebrity Aurora Mardiganian. Khanjian aims not only to pay homage to her but also to re-construct her life story based on archival materials while interrogating the artistic means to do so. By referring to Mardiganian's memoirs - *Ravished Armenia* (1918) - and to the Hollywood feature film made very shortly after it - *Auction of Souls*, Oscar Apfel - Khanjian questions the afterlife and the meaning of Aurora's female body and image in the present day through a wide range of artistic and media devices (e.g. cinema, theater, dance).

For the 2022 Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Distinguished Lecture Arsinée Khanjian, in conversation with scholar Marie-Aude Baronian, will discuss the genesis of *Performing Memory* and its various interpretative layers. They will also reflect upon broader issues such as the links between archives and memory, between art and political engagement, or between performance and Armenianness. Ultimately, this talk will stress the necessity of elaborating and including artistic practices in Armenian studies.

Arsinée Khanjian is a Canadian-Armenian-Lebanese actress, performer, producer, and civil rights activist. Throughout her career as an artist, she has extensively worked with her partner, Canadian-Armenian filmmaker Atom Egoyan, and she collaborated with numerous international filmmakers such as, a.o., Michael Haneke, Catherine Breillat, the Taviani brothers, Olivier Assayas, and Fatih Akin. Khanjian is also actively involved in several artistic and community groups: she has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Zoryan Institute for International Genocide and Human Rights Studies, of Canada's leading contemporary art gallery The Power Plant, and was Co-Chair of the renowned Canadian contemporary dance company, Dancemakers.

Marie-Aude Baronian is an Associate Professor in the Department of Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam. She has extensively lectured and written about Armenian diasporic visual arts, ethics and aesthetics, film and philosophy, media and memory, fashion/textile and visual culture, and material objects. Her most recent monographs include *Screening Memory: The Prosthetic Images of Atom Egoyan* (2017), and *Image et Mémoire: Regards sur la Catastrophe arménienne* (2013).

YEAR IN REVIEW

The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Between Diplomacy and Spheres of Influence

Territorial and political tensions over Nagorno-Karabakh have marked the relationship between Armenia and Azerbaijan for over three decades. A fragile cease-fire agreement ended the full-scale war in 1994, after nearly 30,000 people were killed on both sides. Since then, it has been simmering as a low-intensity armed conflict, with significant clashes in April 2016 and July 2020, escalating into full-scale war in October of 2020. This panel discussion organized on October 3rd, a few days into the war, placed the war in the historical context and analyzed regional implications. Professor Gerard Libaridian (Emeritus and former senior advisor to the first President of the Republic of Armenia), discussed how the war started, whether it was predictable and preventable, and the

role of the big players and other powers in ending the war. Anna Ohanyan (Stonehill College) focused on global trends of ending intrastate and internationalized conflicts that have been on the rise since the end of the cold war. The dichotomy of militarization vs negotiations in managing such conflicts may increase the cost for democratic and authoritarian players depending on which side of the scale the choice falls. Laurence Broers (Chatham House) talked about different logics to what the events can unfold, spheres of influences, and the danger of proxification of the conflict with the discrete interests of states involved in the region. Ronald Grigor Suny (U-M) moderated the discussion over Zoom voicing also the questions from the audience.



Roundtable participants

Workshop on Cultural Production in the Caucasus

The Caucasus and its adjacent regions have long been conceptualized as a meeting place of many scripts, peoples, societies, and empires. The history of the Caucasus in general, and Armenia in particular, is replete with examples of individuals and groups reworking – or resisting – artistic, social, and religious elements from their neighbors in a complex and ongoing process of cultural negotiation, transcending any single language or territory.

On October 9 and 16, 2020, Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow Alex MacFarlane (U-M), graduate student Armen Abkarian (U-M), and lecturer Michael Pifer (U-M) organized a workshop titled “Scripts, Songs, and Sounds: Mediating History in the Caucasus and Beyond.” This workshop examined the history of the Caucasus from a long-neglected site of encounter – the combination and recombination of multiple media and forms of cultural production.



Workshop Participants



Workshop Participants

Harsha Ram (University of California, Berkeley), a specialist on Georgian-Russian literary texts and relations, delivered the keynote address. He spoke on poetic texts and travelogues that concern a transitional moment in the nineteenth century which saw the South Caucasus pass from Persian into Russian hands, shedding light on the complex interplay between ethnicity, social class, political allegiances, and aesthetic form. As Ram noted, “one of the many challenges in studying the Caucasus arises from the need for a cross-cultural

and multilingual archive which asks to be read “contrapuntally,” as Edward Said would have it, to grasp the entangled nature of historical events and cultural processes.” The study of such an archive presents many challenges, including ones of linguistic training, as the Caucasus is home to a diverse array of tongues and peoples. But it also concerns a problem of selection, as certain kinds of sources are often omitted from discussions on the history of this region. And, compounding matters further, these neglected sources are not often read alongside one another, across cultural and linguistic boundaries.

Over two days, workshop participants examined the history of the Caucasus from the perspective of medieval Armenian ballads, mixed-script wonder tales (composed in Armenian but written in the Georgian script), travelogues, and multilingual filmmaking, each mediating different kinds of historical knowledge about this shared and fraught space. This workshop therefore aimed to generate critical dialogue around the creation of new cross-cultural archives, as well as how scholars might read those archives today.

From Empire to Nation-State The Ottoman Armistice, Imagined Borders, and Displaced Populations (1918-1923)

On February 18-19, 2021, the Center for Armenian Studies hosted a virtual workshop devoted to the Ottoman Armistice period (1918-1923). The end of the Ottoman Empire was catastrophic for the people living in the empire regardless of their ethnic and religious background. The organizers of the workshop, Ari Şekeryan, 2020-21 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow, U-M and Ronald G. Suny, William H. Sewell, Jr. Distinguished University Professor of History, U-M, aimed at revisiting this critical period to better understand the final years of the Ottoman Empire. In this workshop, participants explored the neglected aspects of the Ottoman Armistice such as the story of post-genocide Armenian orphans and refugees, displacement and social life in occupied Istanbul, post-WWI art and memory, genocide tribunals, and the literary responses to the collective violence that took place in Anatolia and the Caucasus.

The first day of the workshop opened with a keynote address by Ryan Gingeras (Naval Postgraduate School) in which he explored Ottoman Armenians within the context of the post-Armistice World and their struggle at a time when the imperial order collapsed and ethnic groups searched for alternative paths. The keynote was followed by the first panel, chaired by Ronald Grigor

Suny (U-M), which explored the Ottoman Armistice and the displaced population groups in Istanbul, the experiences of Armenian orphans and refugees in Anatolia and Caucasus, and the fate of the Young Turk leaders who escaped from Istanbul following the genocide. The panel opened with the presentation of Daniel-Joseph Macarthur-Seal (British Institute at Ankara), titled “Sex Work, Displacement, and Migration in Occupied Istanbul.” Based on French, British, Turkish, and League of Nations sources, Macarthur-Seal explored the challenges that women faced while working in Istanbul’s brothels in this period and the ways in which they navigated occupation. His presentation was followed by Alp Yenen (Leiden University). In his talk, “From the Ottoman Empire to the German Republic: The Young Turk Quest to Find Refuge after the First World War,” Yenen explored the political refuge experience of the Young Turk leaders who orchestrated the Armenian Genocide and escaped from Istanbul following the signing of the Armistice of Mudros in October 1918. Yenen’s presentation was followed by Ari Şekeryan (U-M). In his talk “Revisiting the 1923 Bombardment of Corfu: The Untold Story of Armenian Refugees and Orphans,” Şekeryan turned to the neglected story of Armenian Genocide survivors, particularly orphans, who were transferred to the



Workshop Participants

Greek island of Corfu, following the end of Allied occupation in Istanbul. After Şekeryan’s talk, Ayşenur Korkmaz (University of Amsterdam) gave a presentation titled “At ‘Home’ Away from ‘Home’: The Ex-Ottoman Armenian Refugees in Soviet Armenia” in which she focused on the experiences of Ottoman Armenian refugees in Soviet Armenia and the concept of *Ergir* (homeland) among refugees. The first panel was complemented by the feedback and comments of Melanie Tanielian (U-M).

The second day of the workshop opened with the panel, “Rethinking Post-WWI and Armistice Through the Lens of Literature and Art,” which was chaired by Michael Pifer (U-M). Erdağ Göknar (Duke University) gave the first talk of this panel, titled “Legal and Affective Archives of Atrocity: The Afterlives of Genocide Tribunals in Occupied Istanbul.” He explored the discursive legacies of military tribunals that took

place in Istanbul in the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide. His presentation was followed by Ararat Şekeryan (Columbia University). Şekeryan’s paper, “Against Forgetting: Response and Responsibility for the Other in Osip Mandelstam’s Poetry,” focused on Osip Mandelstam’s encounter with the memory of the violence in the making of his poetic creativity and intellectual growth in the last years of his life. Şekeryan’s talk was followed by the presentation of Gizem Tongo (British Institute at Ankara). In her presentation, “‘This Grand Slaughter’: Art, Memory, and the First World War in Occupied Istanbul,” Tongo explored the politics of cultural memory surrounding the visual representation of the First World War and the Armenian Genocide in occupied Istanbul. William Stroebe (U-M) commented on the papers. The two-day virtual workshop concluded with a roundtable discussion chaired by Ari Şekeryan (U-M).

International Graduate Student Workshop on Trauma, Memory, and the History of Mental Health in Armenian Studies

On April 8 and 9, 2021, the Center for Armenian Studies hosted its eleventh annual international graduate student workshop titled “Trauma, Memory, and the History of Mental Health in Armenian Studies Past and Present.” Chaired by Mano Sakayan (History PhD student, U-M), the history panel, “Maladies of the Mind, the Body and the Nation,” took place on the morning of April 8 during which three participants presented their papers. David Leupold (Leibniz-Zentrum, Moderner Orient) presented his paper, “Pathologies of a Fall: The Life of Late-Ottoman Armenians between National Dreams and Imperial Nightmares;” Hratch Kestonian (Graduate Center of the City University of New York) presented his paper “Knowledge, Stateless

Power, and the Medicalization of the Armenian Public Sphere, 1918-1923;” and Dzovinar Derderian (American University of Armenia) discussed “Diseases, Madness and Masturbation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Ottoman Armenian Writings.”

The history panel’s commentator Henry Cowles (U-M) lauded the papers’ convergence in addressing major themes in the history of medicine, such as boundary work, medico-scientific authority, choice, temporality, and the boundaries between the body, mind, and the self. The thematic and conceptual richness of these works convinced him as a historian of modern science and medicine focusing on the Euro-American paradigms



2021 International Graduate Student Workshop cohort

that the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) is having a moment beyond its traditional Euro-American territories. Indeed, this workshop is one of many in the recent years that have shown that STS has made its way into the field of area studies (such as Middle East and Armenian studies) and has yet to produce a substantial body of work tackling the histories of science, medicine, mental health, and trauma.

The literature panel titled “Madness in Calamity,” which took place the next morning on April 9, saw three participants present their papers: Suzan Kalayci (Oxford University) presented her paper “Fragments of Insanity: Shattered Lives after Genocide;” Jenya Vardazaryan (independent scholar) discussed “The Obstetric Embryos in the book of Intra 'Inner World' (1906);” and Anna Mikoyan (Yerevan State University) examined “The Mental Duality of the Characters in Zareh Vorbouni’s Fiction.” The panel’s commentator Renee Michelle Ragin Randall (U-M) asked the participants to flesh out the pluralities of meanings that came out of the terms, concepts, and expressions used to describe madness from diverse multi-ethnic and multicultural Ottoman, Levantine, European, and transnational

milieus. Through the adoption of a literary lens, Randall highlighted the importance of looking at the modes of relationships between words as substitutes of modes of relationships between concepts in literary and scientific sources.

During the afternoon session of April 9, the concluding remarks led by the director of the center, Melanie S. Tanielian (U-M), discussed the three layers of translation happening in our medico-scientific and literary sources: one that is happening between authors’ mother tongues and foreign languages; a second that is happening during the production of these texts coming out of the particular social and cultural repertoires of the time; and the third level of temporal translation that pertain to the varied meanings and politics that certain words hold between the past and the present. Finally, the workshop emphasized the interconnectedness of these medical discourses and the nuances of the adaptation of this knowledge within their local circumstances that marked the social and cultural milieus inhabited by our sources and their authors.



Christopher Sheklian

International Institute Conference on Arts of Devotion

The International Institute’s annual collaborative conference in March of 2021 focused on various forms of art and devotion in global contexts. This collaborative outreach effort, co-organized by the centers that make up the International Institute, aimed to bring together different voices and enlighten the university community and the public.

Christopher Sheklian, the center’s former Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow who is currently at Radboud University in the Netherlands, talked about Armenian liturgical music and explored the impact of Armenian liturgical hymns and modes in modern-day Turkey,

specifically Istanbul. Despite being tucked behind walls and hidden from view in the city of Istanbul, the sharagans of the Armenian church can be heard simultaneously with Muslim calls to prayer – a blend of liturgical hymns that rings out in harmony. Much of traditional Armenian liturgical music remains in the past, but the melody, or modes, have been taken up by contemporary composers, extending the tradition of the hymns in spirit and maintaining a minority placement within the Middle East. As Sheklian expressed, “...Resonances of Armenian liturgical music and liturgical life...bleed beyond just the context of the liturgy itself.”

Oo - rakh ler _____ soorp ye - ge - ghe - tsee kan - zee Krees - dos
Be glad holy church! For Christ,

ar - kayn yerg-neets. Ay - sor bu-sag- yats _____ uz - kez_ kha-cheevn
the king of heaven, today has crowned you with his cross.

Multidisciplinary Workshop for Armenian Studies

During the 2020-21 academic year, the Multidisciplinary Workshop for Armenian Studies (MWAS) hosted five events to provide an institutional space to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from a variety of disciplines to discuss leading-edge issues relevant to the field of Armenian Studies and conceptualize new directions for interdisciplinary research and scholarship. Although pandemic imposed restrictions moved all events to virtual space, graduate student coordinators Tuğçe Kayaal and Kelly Hannavi worked tirelessly with the faculty advisor Melanie Tanielian to deliver another productive year of multidisciplinary discussions.

The Fall roundtable discussions aimed at providing helpful feedback to graduate students to improve their dissertation chapters. Armen Abkarian, PhD Student in History who presented his dissertation chapter titled "Promoting Doctrine Through Syncretism: The Case of Nērses Shnorhali's 'I Confess in Faith'," and Özge Korkmaz, PhD Candidate in Anthropology who workshopped her dissertation chapter titled "The Strange Case of Brukis: History, Accountability, and Blame," received substantial feedback regarding the structures, analytic frames, and applications of theories to turn these works to rich and informative chapters.

The winter events focused on exploring articles written by the 2020-21 Manoogian Postdoctoral fellows, Ari

Şekeryan and Alex MacFarlane. Discussions started with analyzing the Armenian community of Istanbul between 1923-28. The group contributed in examining and seeking possible future directions for Şekeryan's next book project. During the semester, traveling back in time, the participants of the workshop reflected on a set of poems from the 14th century which were translated from Armenian to English by MacFarlane. Participants critically engaged with the content of the paper to provide valuable feedback in finalizing the article for journal publication. As a culminating event, MWAS participated in the International Graduate Student Workshop organized by the center and titled "Medicine, Madness, and Maladies of the Mind in Armenian Studies Past and Present."

Each of the MWAS workshops featured speakers who were invested in understanding the connectivity between Armenians and other peoples, whether those connections be political, social, literary, imperial, or semiotic. Alongside the diverse disciplinary background of the participants, the diversity of the locations and periods introduced participants to the temporal and spatial richness of the field. The presenters found the workshops to be helpful in terms of rethinking and improving the chapters and articles and networking with established scholars from a variety of disciplines in less formal settings.



PROFILES AND REFLECTIONS

FACULTY NEWS & UPDATES

CAS FACULTY

Hakem Al-Rustom

Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern Armenian History

Kathryn Babayan

Professor of Iranian History and Culture

Kevork Bardakjian

Professor Emeritus of Armenian Languages and Literatures

Michael Pifer

Lecturer, Department of Middle East Studies

Ronald Grigor Suny

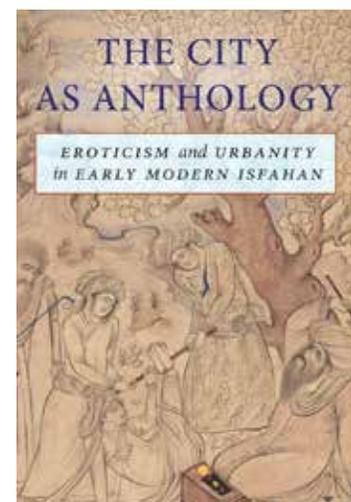
William H. Sewell, Jr. Distinguished University Professor of History

Melanie Tanielian

Director, Center for Armenian Studies; Associate Professor of History

HAKEM AL-RUSTOM has been busy this past year finishing his book manuscript on the (im)possibilities of writing the Armenian experience in the shadow of the genocide in Turkey and the diaspora. Meanwhile, he published “Internal Orientalism and the Nation-State Order: Turkey, Armenians, and the Writing of History,” a journal article that looks at the ways in which the Armenian genocide denial is framed within Orientalist discourse. Between 2012-2018, he was a member of a working group on “Regionalism and Borders” and the “Arab Jewish Engagement” housed at the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue in Vienna. The culmination of his contributions has been published in a book chapter “Returning to the Question of Europe: From the Standpoint of the Defeated” that argues that the history of violence in the Middle East needs to be situated in European history of violence and racism. Al-Rustom will continue to convene the *Global Theories of Critique* initiative at Michigan. This is a collaborative initiative between Michigan and the American University in Cairo supported by the Andrew Mellon Foundation. The 2021-22 meetings will all be virtual focusing on undisciplining knowledge and “Necro-Futures.”

KATHRYN BABAYAN has been serving as the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Middle East Studies. Recently she published her new book titled *The City as Anthology: Eroticism and Urbanity in Early Modern Isfahan* (Stanford University Press; 2021). Household anthologies of seventeenth-century Isfahan collected everyday texts and objects, from portraits, letters, and poems to marriage contracts and talismans. With these family collections, Babayan tells a new history of the city at the transformative moment it became a cosmopolitan center of imperial rule. Bringing into view people's lives from a city with no extant state or civic archives, Babayan reimagines the archive of anthologies to recover how residents shaped their communities and crafted their urban, religious, and sexual selves.

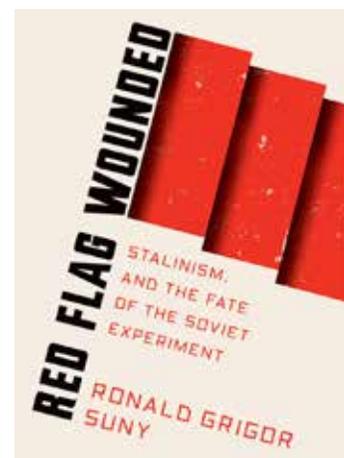
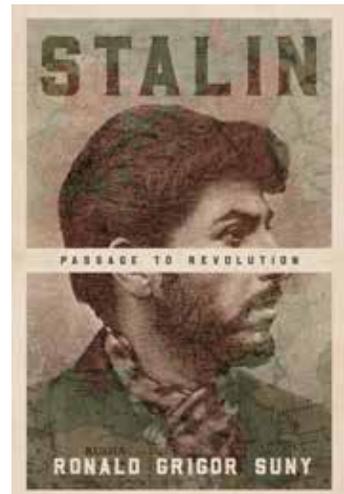


RONALD GRIGOR SUNY recently published two new books: *Stalin, Passage to Revolution* (Princeton University Press; 2020) and *Red Flag Wounded: Stalinism and the Fate of the Soviet Experiment* (Verso Books, 2020). Currently, he is writing a book called *Forging the Nation: The Making and Faking of Nationalisms*, which is a historical survey of how the ideas and forms of modern nationhood were thought about and constructed.

Stalin, Passage to Revolution is a biography of Joseph Stalin from his birth to the October Revolution of 1917, a panoramic and often chilling account of how an impoverished, idealistic youth from the provinces of Tsarist Russia was transformed into a cunning and fearsome outlaw who would one day become one of the twentieth century's most ruthless dictators. Suny sheds light on the least understood years of Stalin's career, bringing to life the turbulent world in which he lived and the extraordinary historical events that shaped him. He draws on a wealth of new archival evidence from Stalin's early years in the Caucasus to chart the psychological metamorphosis of the young Stalin, taking readers from his boyhood as a Georgian nationalist and romantic poet, through his harsh years of schooling, to his commitment to violent engagement in the underground movement to topple the tsarist autocracy. Stalin emerges as an ambitious climber within the Bolshevik ranks, a resourceful leader of a small terrorist band, and a writer and thinker who was deeply engaged with some of the most incendiary debates of his time.

Red Flag Wounded brings together essays covering the controversies and debates over the fraught history of the Soviet Union from the revolution to its disintegration. Those monumental years were marked not only by violence, mass killing, and the brutal overturning of a peasant society but also by the modernization and industrialization of the largest country in the world, the victory over fascism, and the slow recovery of society after the nightmare of Stalinism.

In the last year, **MELANIE TANELIAN** has completed an article titled "'We found her at the river': Protestant Practices of Child 'Rescue' and Sponsorship and the Shaping of Humanitarian Commercialism in the Early Twentieth Century." The article now under review analyses the work of German missionaries after the 1909 massacre. She completed an article based on the photographs of the University of Michigan's staff photographer George Swain. "Defying the Humanitarian Gaze: Visual Representation of Genocide Survivors in the Eastern Mediterranean" is a critical reading of Swain's photos of Armenian genocide survivors. In addition, she is working with Erdağ Göknaç (Duke University) and Hülya Adak (Sabancı University) on an edited volume that looks at the material, visual, and literary representations of the Armenian Catastrophe of 1915. The Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in Delmenhorst, Germany is supporting Tanelian's third project by sponsoring an international study group, with scholars from Canada, the United States, Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom, Italy, France, and the Netherlands, that meets twice a year to investigate madness, medicine, and mortalities during World War I. All the while, she is working on the research for her second monograph preliminarily titled, *Transnational Lunacy: Madness, Society, and Citizenship in a World at War, 1914-1919*.



2021-22 CONTINUING GRADUATE STUDENTS

ARMEN ABKARIAN, PhD Candidate, Department of History

Area of Concentration: The Mongol Empire, Armenian literature, Armenian historiography.

SOSI LEPEJIAN, PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology

Area of Concentration: Ethnography, comparative-historical sociology, environmental sociology, colonialism, social movements, migration, race and ethnicity, Middle East studies.

MANO SAKAYAN, PhD Candidate, Department of History

Area of Concentration: Intellectual history, cultural history, history of science and medicine, French colonial studies, Armenian history, late Ottoman history, the modern Arab world.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR RECENT GRADUATE!

Tuğçe Kayaal, PhD in Ottoman History and Culture, Department of Middle East Studies

CAS FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

Kristen Bagdasarian

BA student, Department of Middle East Studies and Anthropology

Edward Hagop Noroian Scholarship Recipient

Hello, I am Kristen Bagdasarian, a rising sophomore majoring in Anthropology and Middle East Studies with a focus on Armenian History. My academic interests lie in Armenian Genocide studies, specifically the ways in which recovered remains of genocide victims can not only provide evidence for the crimes committed during the genocide but also in how genetic research might yield some small sense of closure for the surviving family members and descendants of these victims.

My interest in Armenian studies stemmed from a single night where, after rejecting my Armenian heritage for years, I developed an unexplainable urge to look into the Armenian Genocide. I began researching Danelaw for my International Baccalaureate Extended Essay but felt an intense desire to change topics and for the first time in my life, learn about the Armenian Genocide. Once I began this research, I found myself unable to stop and quickly realized that my life calling was in this field. Subsequently, I started to teach myself about other aspects of Armenian culture and history, each day falling more in love with my heritage.

I am also incredibly blessed to be able to attend one of the best universities in the country for my fields. Here, I was able to participate in the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), where I was lucky enough to join Professor Samer Ali's team, which is currently researching Nonviolent Resistance in Islamic



Kristen Bagdasarian

Cultures: Language Insights and Peace Building. Under his guidance, I have been researching nonviolent resistance against ethnic cleansing through educational institutions in Ottoman Evereg and Fenesse, and I will continue this work in the upcoming year as a part of the Research Scholars Program.

This summer I am taking part in the Armenian Youth



Federation's Internship in Armenia Program, where I have been interning at the Institute of Molecular Biology. Recently I was able to participate in the excavation of a site near Yeghegis in the province of Vayots Dzor. There, I not only learned how the archaeological process works in the field, but how to clean and begin to identify bones and other materials in a lab setting. In addition to gaining invaluable experience in my field,

I have also been able to explore my homeland for the first time and improve my Armenian language skills through this program. I am extremely grateful to have received the 2021-2022 Edward Hagop Noroian Scholarship, which will significantly assist my education in Armenian studies at the University of Michigan. I cannot wait for the upcoming years here, and am eager to see what my future holds!

Jane Kitaevich

PhD Candidate, Department of Political Science

Haiganoosh Mengushian /Ajemian Memorial Scholarship Recipient

It has been argued that democracy's survival and consolidation depends on whether citizens embrace democratic norms and come to believe that "democracy is the only game in town". Yet, especially in the case of emerging democracies and transitional regimes, support for democracy varies within a single state and across time. How does the presence of a militarized conflict affect individual preferences for democracy? How does the perception of state accountability – especially during episodes of change in conflict dynamics– shape these perceptions? The literature on this topic produced inconclusive and often lopsided results due to its primary focus on civil wars,

with the effect being studied through the prism of the post-war settings.

Protracted rivalries, however, do not fit neatly into these parameters; they are characterized by decades of animosity and, unlike the brevity of many civil wars, become a part and parcel of everyday life.

My research project attempted to fill this gap in the literature by looking at the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to understand what is the impact of the changes in conflict on individual visions of governance. Given the scarcity of such detailed data,

Yerevan, Armenia, May 2, 2018 [Garanich/Reuters]



it is only appropriate to use a single case study to collect rich, micro-level data that would allow us to be better positioned to explore these relationships. The duration of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and its varying degrees of violence over the years offer a unique laboratory to understand the dynamics of political psychology and public opinion on governance in states with ongoing conflicts, and their impact on the lives of regular people.

This project offered me a fantastic opportunity to delve deeper into a question I would not have been able to pursue without the micro-level data that I have gathered. The Haiganoosh Mengushian /Ajemian Memorial Scholarship offered by the Center for Armenian Studies allowed me to fund my expenses to prepare the launch of the nationally-representative survey that aims to gather data on geographically diverse regions – those that have been directly affected by conflict violence more recently, those that have a history of being affected by conflict violence, and areas that largely managed to be spared from violence. Launching a survey of such scale is very costly, especially for a graduate student, and requires a significant amount of preparation, considering the scope, as well as the sensitive nature of the subject explored. Thanks to the funding from CAS, I was fortunate to have the means to offset the costs pertaining to the design of the

questionnaire (development, editing, translation), its pilot testing (launching it for the smaller sample of the population to fine-tune the wording and content of the survey), as well as the training of the enumerators (to be able to conduct survey interview competently, especially in the rural setting and when working with vulnerable populations) and the purchase of some equipment (such as a few tablets). Thanks to this funding, I was also fortunate to have the resources for hiring several research assistants to construct a sampling frame and comb through hundreds of reports to identify whether a village has been targeted by violence or not.

I am looking forward to presenting my tentative findings from this project at the American Political Science Association in September, the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in Chicago in April, the Association for the Study of Nationalities in May, and the European Political Science Association in June. I will be delighted to share my progress, as this project develops further and I am incredibly grateful for the support I received to make my research possible. Once my survey data is finalized, it will be publically available to encourage further testing of my conjecture, as well as, hopefully, inspire similar data collection in other countries.

Mano Sakayan

PhD Candidate, Department of History

Avedis and Arsen Sanjian Fellowship Recipient

The Avedis and Arsen Sanjian Fellowship that was awarded to me by the Center for Armenian Studies was a much-needed grant that helped cover my expenses as I moved from Ann Arbor, MI to Washington, DC in mid-June 2021. The plan is to embark on my archival research in the DC area after taking my preliminary exams. The research will be conducted at the National Library of Medicine (NLM) located in Bethesda, the Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives, and the Institute of the History of Medicine Library at Johns Hopkins University. What interests me at these archives and Special Collections units of the NLM are the promising material they house, such as prints, photographs, films, videos, personal papers, and correspondences that pertain to the sciences of the mind (psychology, psychiatry, and neuroscience) as well as the clinical and non-clinical encounters between medical practitioners and patients in hospitals, wards, and asylums in the first half of the twentieth century.

Additionally, over the past few months, I researched, downloaded, and compiled a wide variety of digitized primary sources through HathiTrust and other online platforms that included and complemented a variety of literary and scientific periodicals in Arabic, Armenian, English, and French published between 1850 and 1950 that I had started compiling in the summer of 2020 (such as Amerigahay Darets'ouyts'ë (The Armenian American Almanach), Dnayin Pzhishgaran (The Domestic Cure), Goch'nag, Hay Ts'eghë (The Armenian Race), Endanik (Family), and Amenoun Darets'ouyts'ë (Everyone's Alamanach)).

2021-22 EVENT CALENDAR

All our events are free and open to the public. When possible, recordings will be posted on the website after the event. Please visit ii.umich.edu/armenian for more information and register for the online events. The center is offering a mix of hybrid (in-person and online) and virtual only events.

SEPTEMBER

8
wed
Lecture | *“Let Them Taste Hunger”*: *Famine, Inequality, and Communal Belonging in the Late Ottoman Empire*. **Matthew Ghazarian**, 2021-22 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow, U-M.
5PM

22
wed
Artist Spotlight Stories | *Daniel Tahmizian and “The Wanderer”* (2017).
Daniel Tahmizian, film director, writer, and editor.
12PM

OCTOBER

6-8
w-f
Conference | *Environmental Armenia: The Climate Crisis, Conflict, and Activism*.
Time TBA

27
wed
Artist Spotlight Stories | *Nora Martirosyan and her film “Should the Wind Drop”* (2020).
Nora Martirosyan, film director and artist.
12PM

NOVEMBER

18
thu
Edward Hagop Noroian Annual Lecture | *Imagined Landscapes and Crafted Worlds: Spacetime and Natureculture in Medieval Armenia*. **Kate Franklin**, lecturer and director of undergraduate and graduate programs in history, classics, and archeology, Birkbeck University of London.
5PM

JANUARY

12
wed
Lecture | *Towards a Theorization of Nested Memory*.
Helen Makhdomian, 2021-2022 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow.
5PM

26
wed
Artist Spotlight Stories | *Diana Kardumyan and her short films - Tombé* (2018) and *Dialogues* (2013).
Diana Kardumyan, film director, and scriptwriter.
12PM

FEBRUARY

10-11
th-f
Workshop | *Dispossessions and Their Legacies: Comparisons, Intersections, and Connections*.
Time TBA

23
wed
Film Discussion | *Contrapuntal Montage in the Films of Artavazd Peleshyan*.
Daniel Fairfax, assistant professor in film studies, Goethe Universität-Frankfurt.
Time TBA

MARCH

16
wed
Lecture | *Shaping the Landscape or Invisible Landscapes? Some Medieval Armenian Monastic Complexes between Past and Present*.
Zaroui Pogossian, associate professor of byzantine civilisation, University of Florence.
5PM

17-18
th-f
Twelfth Annual International Graduate Student Workshop | *The Quotidian and the Divine: Gender and the Political and Sexual Economies of Monasticism in Christian Anatolia (16th-19th c.)*.
Time TBA

TBA
Celebrating Forty Years of Armenian Studies | *Armenian Transformations, 1981-2021: How Forty Years of Michigan Armenian Studies Looked at Imperial Collapse, Ethnic War, and the Rebirth of Independence*.
Time TBA

APRIL

7
thu
2022 Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Annual Distinguished Lecture | *Performing the Archive: A Conversation on Art, Engagement, and Armenianness*.
Arsinée Khanjian, Armenian-Canadian-Lebanese actress and producer and **Marie-Aude Baronian**, associate professor in visual culture and film, University of Amsterdam.
5PM

20
wed
Lecture | *The Geography of Genocide: Mapping Refugee Movement at the End of World War I*.
Michelle Tusan, professor of history, University of Nevada Las Vegas.
5PM

The University of Michigan's Center for Armenian Studies serves the university and community by:

- *Preparing the next generation of scholars in the field of Armenian studies.*
- *Offering a comprehensive university-level education in Armenian studies, teaching language, culture, literature, history, anthropology, international relations, and political science.*
- *Offering graduate student, postdoctoral, and visiting scholar fellowships; graduate and undergraduate student research support.*
- *Reaching out to the larger community with an intensive program of public lectures, workshops, international conferences, and film screenings.*
- *Answering student and researcher questions on Armenian history and culture from the US and throughout the world.*

Together with our faculty, graduate students, visiting and postdoctoral fellows we have combined our efforts to push scholarship in Armenian Studies in new directions. Our interventions in the study of Armenian history, literature, translation studies, and the visual arts can be gauged by a carefully curated set of initiatives we have undertaken that will have a long-term impact on the field. The Center for Armenian Studies has been there for you since its founding in 1981; we want to be there in the future and do more.