



# Armenian Studies Program

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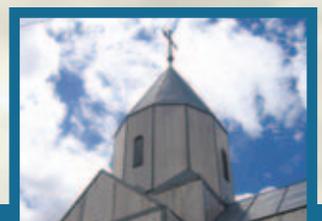
NEWSLETTER ISSUE 6, FALL 2012

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



## Year of Shared Histories

ASP Explores Armenians and Their World(s)



# The Armenian Studies Program Presents:

## Year of Shared Histories

*In what ways are far-flung Armenian communities across the planet players in both regional and global history? What is the nature of cross-cultural connectivity between Armenians and others? How does such ‘interconnectedness’ shape the development of Armenian cultural and literary production? Intellectual thought? Political policy? The Armenian Studies Program at the University of Michigan seeks to address these and other questions through a variety of public lectures, courses, workshops, and interdisciplinary seminars throughout the 2012-2013 academic year. Organized loosely around the rubric of “Shared Histories,” these events aim to deepen our understanding and particularize the many ways Armenians have been active constituents in the communities and world around them.*

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Armenian Studies Program

An Interview with Director Kathryn Babayan

by Michael Pifer

**As you embark upon your first year as director of the Armenian Studies Program (ASP), what’s got you excited about the direction the program is heading?**

There are so many possibilities now that we have such a well-run program, largely thanks to the former directorship of Jirar Libaridian and to the generosity of all our donors, in particular to the Manoogian family who planted the seeds of ASP and enabled ASP to flourish. We have a cohort of postdoctoral scholars and graduate students doing new interdisciplinary work together. We have a lecture series that foregrounds the interconnectivity of Armenians with the world around them. And we’re looking to implement some new initiatives to take ASP in unexplored directions.

**How will you integrate Dr. Libaridian’s past directorship of ASP with your own vision for the program?**

Jirar did wonders to attract emergent talent in the field

through pre and postdoctoral fellowships and organizing public lectures. He brought many scholars to Michigan to raise the bar for how we do political science and modern history in Armenian Studies. This year, one of our goals is to do the same for medieval and early modern studies. Just as importantly, we’ve encouraged our guest lecturers, postdoctoral scholars, and graduate students to engage in more interdisciplinary and even collaborative work with one another. Finally, there are resources at the university that we’ve just begun to tap, such as our extensive archival collections and our manuscripts in the Kelsey Museum and Special Collections. Together with Melanie Tanielian we are thinking about organizing an exhibit around Kelsey’s photographs of 56 portraits of “ethnic types” in Istanbul that include Armenians, Persians, Croatians, Syrians, Greeks etc. as well as Kelsey’s diaries that include Armenian involvement with the American Committee for Relief in the Near East, documenting conditions in refugee camps in Adana and Aintab after the Armenian genocide in 1915.

*Continued on p. 3*

## Interview, *Continued*

### How will you involve ASP's graduate students?

I want to empower our graduate students by inviting them to be more involved in ASP's programming. An important dimension of this is creating a space where grad students can get together and share their work, regardless of what discipline they come from or what period they're working on. It's important for us to cultivate an intellectual community here beyond the public lectures we offer. One way we're encouraging graduate students to be involved is by letting them organize and run the annual ASP workshop we hold every year, where graduate students share their work and make connections with other emerging scholars from around the globe. It really gives our students a sense of ownership of this emerging field they're helping to shape.

**Much of this year's programming, courses, and public lectures are based around this year's theme of 'shared histories,' the multicultural and even globally interconnected dimensions of Armenian experience. Why has ASP placed an emphasis on this?**

For one, that's the way to do history. I work on empires, so I think one way to understand any minority or marginal group is to view that group through a constellation of social, cultural, and political relationships. To understand a group just in and of itself is a very problematic way to do history. In this sense, ASP is breaking away from more insular versions of area studies. We're achieving this in part by speaking in a language that's palatable to other disciplines, other scholars. The idea is to generate more dialogue both within and beyond Armenian Studies. The University of Michigan is especially poised to do this kind of interdisciplinary work, and I'd like to get as many departments involved as we can. In the past, our annual graduate workshops have provided a forum for scholars from other fields to enter into dialogue with our graduate students, and this has been especially fruitful. We're working to find more opportunities to foster this kind of critical exchange.

**“I work on empires, so I think one way to understand any minority or marginal group is to view that group through a constellation of social, cultural, and political relationships. To understand a group just in and of itself is a very problematic way to do history.”**

**To what extent will ASP encourage scholars at U of M or elsewhere to engage with similar critical questions?**

I've noticed there hasn't been much institutional collaboration with other Armenian Studies programs. The goal is for what we do here at Michigan to have a kind of 'ripple effect' with other programs, and likewise to participate and learn from the kind of research that's being done elsewhere. By having our own scholars work more closely with other centers of Armenian Studies personally, as well as sharing scholars and knowledge between these centers, I think we'll be able to affect some positive change.

**What's your plan to attract new undergraduate students to the Armenian Studies Program?**

This will be part of a larger project, but ultimately we'd like to revamp the curriculum we offer. In essence, we'd like to have a more systematic approach to what we teach, and also to prepare our undergraduate majors and minors in Armenian Studies to be competitive and marketable in other areas once they graduate. We can teach Armenian Studies classes that help students to embrace not only Armenian history and literature, but to see how those histories and literatures are in active engagement with other cultures. By attuning our students not only to current discussions within Armenian Studies, but also to how those discussions intersect with broader questions in academia, we'll sharpen our students' critical thinking abilities and prepare them to become full participants of a globalized world.



Above: Professor Babayan

# Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Melanie Tanielian

Professor Melanie S. Tanielian has recently joined the History Department of the University of Michigan as Assistant Professor. She teaches courses in the History Department as well as for the Center of International and Comparative Studies (CICS), focusing on the Middle East as well as on War, Violence and Human Rights in general. She received her PhD in history from the University of California, Berkeley, under the guidance of Prof. Beshara Doumani. Her dissertation, “The War of Famine: Everyday Life in Wartime Beirut and Mount Lebanon (1914-1918)”, is a socio-economic study of daily life at the Lebanese homefront during the First World War, through the lens of famine, family, disease and medicine, as well as local, state, and international humanitarian relief. Her research has been supported by the Allan Sharlin Memorial Grant for Dissertation Research, the DAAD Graduate Fellowship, and the Sultan Fellowship from the Center of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Her research and teaching interests include the social and cultural history of WWI in the Middle East, the emergence of religious philanthropic societies and their work in times of conflict, the history of German missionaries, social Protestantism and modern humanitarianism, disease, medicine, and hospitals, the history Childhood and Youth.

“I am delighted to have been asked to serve on the Executive Committee of the Armenian Studies Program and more than welcome the opportunity to engage with faculty and

students interested in issues related to Armenian history and culture here in Ann Arbor. While my

research focuses on World War I in the Middle East in general and the Ottoman Levant in particular, the story of Armenian genocide survivors has grown overtime to be a more significant part of the project. I must say that, I have been interested in the life, education and trauma experienced by Armenian orphans in the numerous American orphanages during WWI and in the post war period for some time now. But more recently, I stumbled across some very exciting German sources dating back to 1909, which discuss the fate of Armenian orphans in German institutions. It turned out that female German missionaries traveled to Adana and its surrounding areas in the immediate aftermath of the massacres perpetrated against Armenians and ‘rescued’ a number of Armenian girls to then raise them in their orphanage in Beirut. This is a new project that I am working on at the moment and I hope will be published in the near future.”



## ASP Visiting Lecturer Arsène Saparov Specializes in the Caucasus



Professor Arsène Saparov, a visiting lecturer for ASP and the History Department, currently teaches “Armenian History from Prehistoric Times to the Present” and “The Caucasus Between Empires, 18th and 19th Centuries: Understanding the Origins of Modern Conflicts.” This latter course seeks to encourage students to engage with difficult questions such as: why was the Russian Empire unable to conquer the North

Caucasus for decades while it quite easily captured the South Caucasus? Were relations between Georgians and Abkhaz, Georgians and Ossetians, Armenians and

Azerbaijanis always tense as contemporary conflicts seem to suggest? Are modern conflicts in the region an inheritance of some deliberate Soviet policies? In so doing, Prof. Saparov’s course aims to offer students a deeper understanding of the causes of contemporary conflicts in the Caucasus usually unavailable in the English language literature.

Next semester, Prof. Saparov will continue to offer ASP students innovative programming by teaching “Russia in the 20th Century: War, Revolution, and Reform” with Prof. Ron Suny. In addition, Prof. Saparov will also teach a course on “Conflict and Diplomacy in the Caucasus” during the Winter 2013 term, which examines militarized conflicts (Nagorno Karabagh, South Ossetia and Abkhazia) and latent ones (such as Ajara and Javakheti) in the South Caucasus as well as diplomatic efforts at conflict resolution in the last decade.

## Meet ASP's 2012-2013 Manoogian Simone Foundation Post-doctoral Fellows

### Hakem al-Rostom

Manoogian Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow Hakem al-Rostom received his PhD in social anthropology from the London School of Economics (LSE). His dissertation titled "Anatolian Fragments: Armenians Between Turkey and France," investigates the past of the Armenian population that remained in Anatolia after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty in 1923 and their subsequent migration to France in the 1970s. His research and teaching interests lay in the intersection between anthropology and history in examining political and historical ethnographies, ethnographies of the state and settler colonialism. Geographically, his research focuses on post-Ottoman states – Anatolia, the Middle East, and the Balkans – where he has researched nation-state building; sectarianism in everyday life; racialization of religious identity; and the politics of 'minorities' / 'majorities' in



governing population diversity. Hakem has published and lectured on topics that include alternative approaches to the study of Middle Eastern societies, international treaties and classification of populations, Armenian diaspora, Arab Jews, Christians in Middle East, and Muslims in Europe. His research on the intellect of Edward Said, orientalism, 'clash of civilizations', and knowledge production led to the publication of *Edward Said: A Legacy of Emancipation and Representation* which he co-edited in 2010. Hakem has taught social anthropology at the American University in Cairo and at the LSE, and was a visiting scholar at Columbia University in New

York and Sciences Po in Paris. As the Manoogian Simone Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow, he will teach one course on anthropological and historical approaches to studying post-Ottoman societies in winter 2013.



### Murat Cankara

*Manoogian Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow Murat Cankara was born in Smyrna in 1976. He studied physics and mathematics for two years. After majoring in theory and history of theater, Cankara received his Ph.D. in Turkish literature from Bilkent University in 2011, with a dissertation titled "Empire and Novel: Placing Armeno-Turkish*

*Novels in Ottoman/Turkish Literary Historiography". Cankara's research focuses on the novels written by Armenians in the Turkish language using the Armenian script, specifically those from the second half of the nineteenth century. His particular area of interest is in the literary culture of the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century in which Armenians play a prominent role. Cultural interactions between Ottoman Armenians and Muslim/Turks, the appropriation of Turkish by Armenians and the historiography of Ottoman/Turkish literature are also areas of interest.*

"It is not easy for one to learn Armenian in Ankara. I did not have much time to make progress on my own, so I began with the script and worked on novels written in Turkish at the beginning of my research. It was a great experience to

decipher the beautiful letters of the Armenian alphabet, to see how they were used to produce sounds in Turkish, and eventually to read novels which I know few people have read. I had to learn the letters on my own using Hasmik Stepanyan's bibliography of Armeno-Turkish publications, which gives the titles of printed works both in Armenian and Latin scripts. It was like solving a puzzle.

After I rid myself of the burden of writing my dissertation, I really began to concentrate on the Armenian language itself. I can now read with the help of a dictionary, and this has opened up an amazing and very rich written culture for me. Now that I am a Manoogian Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow, I have the opportunity I was dreaming for while doing research for my dissertation. People have been very helpful here in the Armenian Studies Program and University of Michigan. I am surrounded by experts and learned graduate students. I can find texts, read them, ask questions and get answers! Next semester I will even teach a course on Armeno-Turkish texts, and this is very exciting. On the other hand, I am editing two Armeno-Turkish texts and preparing two articles for publication. I am also planning to revise and expand some parts of my dissertation using the sources I have found at U of M, and to focus more on Ottoman Armenians' appropriation of the Turkish language. There is much work to be done, and I am grateful to be doing it here."

## Ohannes Kiliçdagi selected as 2012-2013 Manoogian Simone Foundation Pre-doctoral Fellow



Ohannes Kiliçdagi was born in Istanbul, Turkey. After following Armenian community schools during primary and high school education he gained his double major degree in Sociology and Political Science at Bogaziçi University in the same city in 1999. Through studying on the late Ottoman period and writing his MA thesis titled ‘The

Bourgeois Transformation and Ottomanism among Anatolian Armenians after the 1908 Revolution’ he formally added history into his academic interests. He is

currently working on his PhD dissertation at the history department of Bogaziçi University about Ottoman Armenians between 1908 and 1914. He is especially interested in the political projects, projections, and hopes of the Ottoman Armenians just after the 1908 Revolution when a constitutional regime was founded after 33 years of autocracy. He also works on the present social and political problems of Armenian community in Turkey. As a product of this study he wrote, as co-author, a report named ‘Hearing Turkey’s Armenians: Issues, Demands and Policy Recommendations’ published by Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation which is one of the prominent civil society institutions of Turkey.

## ASP Sponsors UM Filmmaker in Yerevan Through Ajemian Memorial Student Travel Award

Recently, ASP sponsored 22-year-old filmmaker Alexander O’Dell, a graduate of the University of Michigan in 2012, to make a film in Yerevan, Armenia. Through a creative fiction and non-fiction approach, O’Dell’s film seeks to examine the complex and multifaceted experience of life in Armenia. ASP will screen Alexander’s film upon its completion.

**Describe your film in a bit more detail. What did you hope to capture? How did you hope to represent Yerevan?**

I’m working on a short film that takes place in Yerevan. The story is about a 15-year-old named Erik. He walks around during the week near Hraparak Square in an awkward orange house costume, handing out advertisements for bank loans. The film is a small window into his life, a combination of fiction and documentary -- a balance of the absurd and profound of everyday life.



Above left: Filmmaker Alexander O’Dell

The entire film was improvised, and written as it evolved. I would bring in more characters to the story as I met them. I think the honesty of this process is reflected in the film. It’s one small glimpse into this vastly complex city.

**How did the Armenian Studies Program help you to reach your goal?**

This film would never have happened without the Armenian Studies Program. They were a great knowledge resource for the preparation of this project, and also offered their help to screen the film in Ann Arbor when it’s complete. That’s pretty cool. Yerevan is an amazing place, and I can’t wait to share this film with people.

**What future plans do you have for your film? What’s the next step?**

I made two short films in Tbilisi, Georgia back in September. In a week, I will be going on towards Istanbul. I’m traveling alone across the South Caucasus area making short films collaboratively with children. If we are to consider how we will educate future generations, then perhaps we should begin by considering the way in which we perceive childhood. The films will be released online for free viewing, along with a print book of photographs and writings documenting the process. I’m not trying to make a Steven Spielberg flick -- just a collection of these small portraits. I’ll keep going until I feel the project is finished, or I’m forced to stop.

You can reach Alexander O’Dell at [alodellumich@gmail.com](mailto:alodellumich@gmail.com). To find out more about the project, supported in part by the Armenian Studies Program, visit [www.cargocollective.com/childhoodproject](http://www.cargocollective.com/childhoodproject).

## ASP Graduate Student Profiles and Reflections on Research

**Richard Antaramian** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History. As a winner of a Fulbright-Hays fellowship, he spent the 2009-2010 year studying in Armenia and working on his dissertation, which focuses on the history of social and political relations in 19th century Ottoman or Western Armenia. He continued his research in London and Istanbul during 2010-2011, and is currently writing his dissertation. Richard is a recipient of an ASP Ajemian Memorial Student Travel Award.

**Ali Bolcakan** is a Ph.D. pre-candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature. His interests include Ottoman and Armenian Studies, Turkish-Greek minority literatures, literary theory, and continental philosophy.

**Semi Ertan** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Semi was selected as one of the 2009 Turkish Cultural Fellows for his paper, "Urban Cosmopolitan Coexistence in 17th Century Istanbul/Constantinople through the Intellectual Life of Eremya

Chelebi Komurcuyan." He is the recipient of an ASP/Ajemian Memorial Student Travel Award, and is currently writing his dissertation.

**Jeremy Johnson** is a Ph.D. candidate in Anthro-History and currently is conducting research in Tbilisi, where he has spent extensive time in the archives of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic. He has been designated as a Manoogian Simone Foundation Graduate Student Fellow, and he is the recipient of an ASP/Arsen K. Sanjian Fellowship.

**Allison Vacca** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies. She focuses on the Arab period in Armenian history in both literature and art. Alison currently is finishing her dissertation, which she expects to complete by the end of the academic year. She is the recipient of an ASP Agnes H. and R. A. Yarmain Summer Research Fellowship.

**Vahe Sahakyan** is a PhD candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies and a Manoogian Simone Graduate Student Fellow. He specializes on diasporic cultures and the preservation and transmission of identities in diasporic communities, with a particular focus on the Armenian Diaspora. Since May 2012, Vahe has been conducting his fieldwork research in several towns in Lebanon and France. He has spent a few months in Beirut and Bourj Hammoud (Lebanon), one month in Marseille, France, and in October-November 2012 he will be in Paris while interviewing representatives of various active Armenian diasporic organizations. He aims to understand the ways in which diasporic organizations define and transmit identities and how these practices change from one country to another,

from one generation to another. During his fieldwork he also plans to visit several towns and cities with significant Armenian diasporic population in the United States and Canada.

"While crossing the bridge on Rue Arménie from Beirut to Bourj Hammoud, three things capture curious eyes immediately: the sign "Welcome to Bourj Hammoud," the Armenian tricolor on one of the tallest buildings of the town, and several domes of Armenian churches. As part of the Lebanese confessionalism, Armenians constitute one of the eighteen religious communities officially recognized by the state, and their presence there is highly visible."

*Continued on p. 8*



## Student Reflections, cont.

**Etienne Charriene** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature from Geneva, Switzerland. He is currently working on Greek and Armenian prose fiction in the late Ottoman Empire.

“Due to my background in literary studies, I am usually most comfortable working with the tools of close-reading and textual analysis. Over the past few months, however, I found that injecting a certain amount of quantitative methods into my work was actually very useful to my dissertation project on the emergence of novel writing and novel consumption in Armenian, Greek and Ottoman-Turkish during the nineteenth century. At this point of my research, I have to spend a considerable amount of time away from the texts themselves, compiling lists of translations of foreign novels in all three languages in order to better understand who read what and when in nineteenth-century Constantinople. I was surprised to find that, by trying to represent my findings visually with the use of graphs (something largely outside of my comfort zone!), I was able to discover, in those seemingly mundane long lists of bibliographical entries, an entire network of subtle correspondences and similarities between the three main ethno-religious communities studied in my project, a sort of shared literary landscape extending across cultural boundaries.”

**Dzovinar Derderian** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Near Eastern Studies. Her research focuses on 19th- and early 20th-century Ottoman history and the relations between Kurds and Armenians.

“This summer at the end of my six-week study at the Ottoman Language Summer School on the island of Cunda in Turkey, the students of the program were asked to transform a contemporary Turkish newspaper article into an Ottoman article as a final project. This was surely a different assignment, as we had been transliterating Ottoman texts into the Latin script and translating them into English throughout the program. Thus, I was wondering how we would benefit from this new exercise. Whilst my friend and I were performing the very unusual, yet entertaining translation, we came across the word ‘culture’, which in today’s Turkish is usually simply translated as *kültür*. As we plunged ourselves in the dictionaries: I in the Armenian-Ottoman dictionary from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, my friend in the Arabic ones, we could not find the word culture in any of the dictionaries, in either of the languages. What was supposed to be an exercise of translation took us to a different conversation and forced us to question the development of the notion of culture among the Armenians, Ottomans and Arabs.”



Above: the cover of *Hayastani Ashkhatavoruhi* (Armenian Worker-Woman), a periodical which Jeremy Johnson is researching as part of a larger project on women’s organizations during the early Soviet Union.

**Michael Pifer** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature. His research focuses on the problem of literary ‘interaction’ across cultures in medieval and early modern poetry.

“This summer, an ASP Ajemian Memorial Student Travel Award allowed me to work at the Matenadaran, the Armenian manuscript library, in Yerevan. I spent most of each day reading late medieval and early modern *tagharans*, or songbooks, to gather evidence for how premodern Armenian poetry developed in light of other literary traditions. Sometimes I came across notes from scribes at the beginning of a song, indicating that what followed was written “in the language of the people,” or in “two tongues” or sometimes explicitly mentioning that the song was written in Armenian, Turkish, and Persian. It was clear that the readers of such works were quite comfortable consuming – or composing – works in other languages and styles. At the time, I was staying with a host family, and I’d often come home at the end of the day to find my friend Yerjo, a small man in his early seventies, listening to the radio in Russian. Once I mentioned to him that I found a snippet of something in Persian, and he responded seamlessly in Farsi, “I was born in Iran!” It wasn’t hard to find examples of how Armenians were and continue to be active participants in other societies and cultures, whether I was at the Matenadaran or at home.”

## Shared Histories, Shared Geographies: Announcing the Fourth Annual ASP International Graduate Student Workshop

Over the last three decades, scholars of the Middle East have raised new questions and developed methodologies which have revitalized and altered the landscape of Near Eastern Studies. Such major interventions include, but are not limited to, critical interrogations of modernization theory and the provenance of the nation-state form. However, while accounts exclusively based on Armenian, Kurdish, Syrian, or missionary sources have emerged in the context of Ottoman Studies, the historiography of the Ottoman East has largely been concerned with governmentality studies. Welcome as these changes may be, the respective turns have had little impact on the study of the Ottoman Empire's eastern 'borderlands.'

The fourth annual international graduate workshop of the Armenian Studies Program seeks to address this problem and make a contribution to how we understand Ottoman borderlands and frontier zones. The workshop, titled *Shared History, Shared Geography: The Ottoman East*, is organized by University of Michigan graduate students Richard Antaramian, Dzovinar Derderian, and Ali Sipahi under the guidance of faculty advisor Prof. Kathryn Babayan. The workshop, which will take place from April 18-19, seeks to bring together young scholars whose research covers the Ottoman East during 1839-1950. Emphasizing an interdisciplinary and connected approach, workshop participants will cover a wide range of issues, including Ottoman tax collection, land issues, cosmopolitanisms, the circulation of people, money, and ideas, trans-imperial networks and agents, inter-communal relations, centers and peripheries, and finally social geographies.

The workshop also represents another first in the history of ASP, as Antaramian, Derderian, and Sipahi are the principal architects and organizers of the workshop. While ASP's faculty have traditionally taken on this role in the past, allowing graduate students to take ownership of the workshop affords them valuable experience not only in organizing an international scholarly event, but also allows ASP's students to shape the field of Armenian Studies themselves through new critical inquiries.

In the case of the workshop, the graduate student organizers aim to make a contribution even beyond Armenian Studies. Contemporary historians and politicians have largely viewed the Ottoman East as a periphery of the greater Ottoman enterprise centered in the imperial capital and western Anatolia. These accounts arguably marginalize the eastern 'borderlands' (defined roughly as the area bounded by Ankara, Mosul, and Kars). As a result, the fourth annual ASP graduate workshop will attempt to provincialize the center in an attempt to understand the Ottoman East on its own terms.



*Left to right: Dzovinar Derderian, Lilit Harutunyan, Sona Tajiryan, and Alison Vacca at the 3rd Annual International Graduate Student Workshop.*



*ASP and Near Eastern Studies faculty and graduate students participate in spirited exchange during the 3rd Annual International Graduate Student Workshop.*

## ASP Graduate Students Found New Interdisciplinary Workshop

The Armenian Studies Program (ASP) at the University of Michigan is one of the largest and most prestigious academic institutions dedicated to advancing Armenian Studies outside of Armenia itself. As a result, the program has attracted a large body of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and scholars who are either directly working in Armenian Studies or who are invested in the intersections between Armenian Studies and a wide array of other fields. While academic interest in Armenian Studies is arguably greater than ever thanks to ASP's organization of conferences and public lectures, until recently there has been no institutional space for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and scholars to meet regularly, discuss their own research, and engage in productive intellectual exchange.

Recently, ASP graduate students Alison Vacca (Near Eastern Studies) and Michael Pifer (Comparative Literature) have tried to address this problem. "We wanted to create a forum which would allow those interested in Armenian Studies to meet formally and informally to share their work," Pifer said. "At the same time, we wanted to include the greater UM academic community in these meetings as much as possible."

Thanks to a generous grant from the Rackham Graduate School, Vacca and Pifer have recently founded the Multidisciplinary Workshop for Armenian Studies (MWAS). Professor Kathryn Babayan, the new director of ASP,

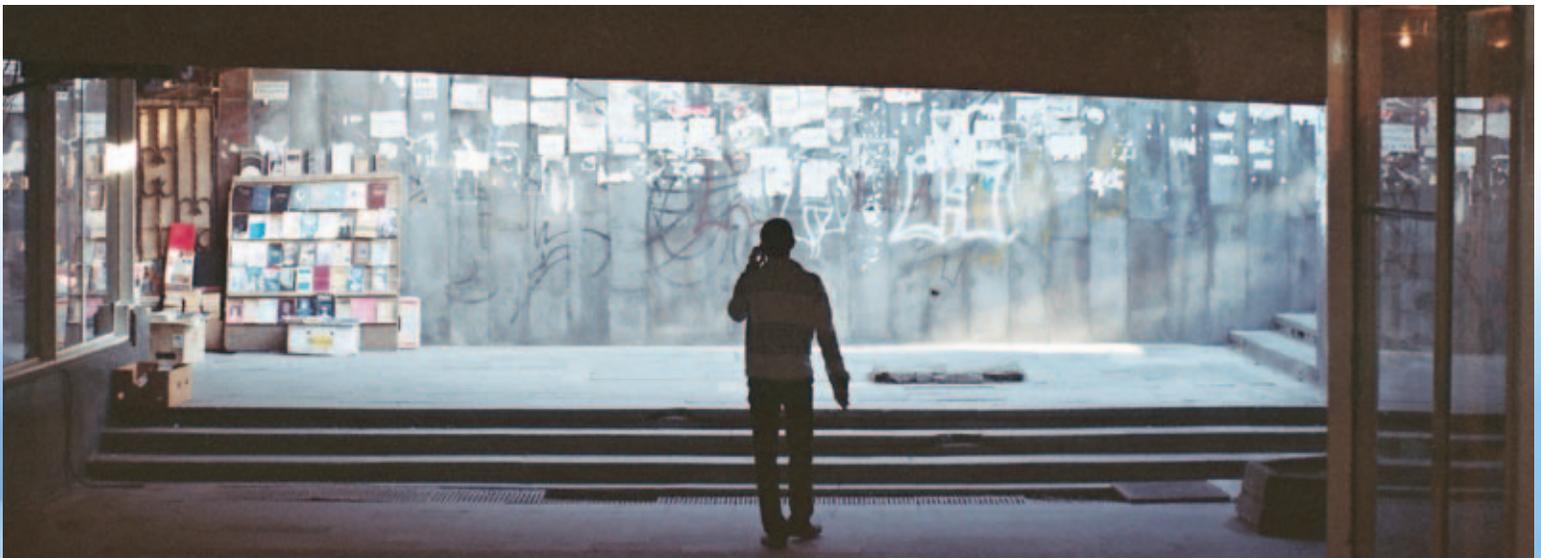
has agreed to serve as the faculty sponsor of the new interdisciplinary group. While MWAS is not directly related to ASP, it seeks to complement the programming that ASP offers in different ways as well as provide new opportunities for scholars to collaborate on campus.

**“ We wanted to create a forum which would allow those interested in Armenian Studies to meet formally and informally to share their work. ”**

Perhaps most importantly, MWAS will encourage graduate students to write regularly and workshop their dissertation chapters, conference papers, works-in-progress, and article drafts in a supportive atmosphere. MWAS will also help graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to enrich their own multidisciplinary vocabularies while discussing cutting-edge articles and monographs from a variety of perspectives, thus breaking down the disciplinary insularity which exists within Armenian Studies.

Finally, MWAS will invite scholars who utilize Armenian sources in their own scholarship, yet who are traditionally considered beyond the realm of Armenian Studies, to present their own research in public lectures and graduate student-run workshops. As a result, MWAS aims to enrich the research and scholarship of local students and scholars within Armenian Studies, while at the same time broadening the field of Armenian Studies by including new voices in these discussions, and, consequently, bringing Armenian Studies to wider critical discussions in the greater academic community. Vacca and Pifer hope the workshop will make a positive contribution to the intellectual community at U of M for years to come.

## Picture Perfect



Above: a still from Alexander O'Dell's film about life in Yerevan (see page 6), which is sponsored in part by ASP and currently in post-production.

## 2012-2013 Calendar of Events

All events will be held at the International Institute in room 1636 from 4-5:30pm and are open to the public unless otherwise noted.

### Fall Events

- Sept 19** Lecture. "A Predicament Beyond Rights: Becoming a Residual Armenian in Turkish Anatolia." Hakem al-Rustom, Manoogian Simone Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow.
- Oct 10** Lecture. "The Language of One, The Script of the Other: Early Armeno-Turkish Novels and Ottoman/Turkish Literary Historiography." Murat Cankara, Manoogian Simone Foundation Post-doctoral Fellow.
- Nov 7** Lecture. "Modernity and Genocide: The Armenian, Rwandan, and the Darfuran Cases." Bedross Der Matossian, University of Nebraska/Lincoln.
- Dec 12** Lecture. "Re-reading the Crusades: Armenian Sources." Tamar Boyadjian, UCLA. 4 PM, 1636 International Institute.

### Event Highlight: Feb 15 Workshop on Armenians in Ottoman Istanbul

The workshop will be the first gathering to mark the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Marie Manoogian Chair in Armenian Language and Literature, which has been held by Professor Kevork Bardakjian since 1987. "We are making good use of our pre and postdoctoral scholars, who are all working on issues within this region, along with graduate students in our program," Prof. Bardakjian noted. "Each presentation will shed light on hitherto little explored aspects of Armenian life in Constantinople."



Above: Bedross Der Matossian at his lecture on genocide in the Armenian, Rwandan, and Darfuran cases.



Above: Hakem al-Rustom speaks on the problem of human rights and the act of history writing in contemporary Turkey.

### Winter Events

- Jan 16** Lecture. "Protecting the Innocent": Humanitarian Child Transfer in the Aftermath of the Adana Massacres (1909)." Melanie Tanielian, UM. 4 PM, 1636 International Institute.
- Feb 15** Workshop. "Armenians in Ottoman Istanbul." Convenor: Kevork Bardakjian, Near Eastern Studies, U-M. Participants: Murat Cankara, Hakem al-Rustom, Ohannes Kiliçdağı, and Ali Bolcakan. 2609 International Institute.
- Feb 20** Lecture. "Women, War and Social Change in Armenia during the Mongol Domination." Zara Pogossian, John Cabot University (Rome). 4 PM, 1636 International Institute.
- Mar 13** Berj H. Haidostian Annual Distinguished Lecture. "Finding Nemesis." Eric Bogosian, playwright, novelist and actor. 7 PM, Helmut Stern Auditorium, University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 S. State, Ann Arbor.
- Mar 25** ASP Roundtable. "Disputed Pasts, Troubled Presents: Exploring the Entwined Histories of Armenians, Kurds, and Turks. A Century in Diarbakir." Conveners: Ronald G. Suny, History, U-M. Participants: Ayhan Aktar, professor, Institute of Social Sciences, Istanbul Bilgi University; and Leyla Neyzi, professor, Sabanci University, Istanbul. 4 PM, 1636 International Institute.
- Apr 18-19** Fourth Annual International Graduate Workshop. "Shared Histories, Shared Geography: The Ottoman East." Conveners: Kathryn Babayan, ASP Director, Near Eastern Studies/History; Richard Antaramian, Dzovinar Derderian, Ali Sipahi, ASP graduate students. U-M. 1644 International Institute.

## The State of Armenian Studies Project Prepares Report

The “State of Armenian Studies” has been a special project undertaken by the Armenian Studies Program since 2008 that aims at an assessment of the field outside Armenia. Ambitious in its scope, the State of Armenian Studies Project has sought to provide a forum for scholars to understand the evolution of Armenian Studies over the last half century. Previously, the project has assessed the general publishing trends of the field in French, German, Farsi, English, Spanish, Turkish, Italian, and Russian publications. In addition, the project has brought to light all of the graduate courses that have been offered in Armenian Studies over the last decade in order to better grasp how the next generation of scholars is being trained, and to make recommendations regarding what kinds of courses need to be offered in the future. The continuing relationships between Armenian Studies as it stands in the university system and other institutions outside of that system – such as archives and cultural organizations – were also surveyed, discussed, and analyzed.

The goal of the project was to gain a more complete understanding of recent advances in scholarship relevant to the field as well as to survey avenues for future research, to discuss the relationship between Armenian Studies programs and the general public, to brainstorm how to attract both established professors already in the university as well as new students, and to ensure that scholars in Armenian Studies continue to produce work that is cutting-



*Dr. Libaridian, the recently-retired former director of ASP, has overseen the State of Armenian Studies Project since its inception in 2008.*

edge in terms of recent methodological and theoretical developments within greater academia.

Currently, the project is in the stages of preparing a report which will include a quantitative presentation of chairs, programs, libraries, museums, organizations, and books published in a variety of languages. This report will also present a qualitative analysis of advances made, gaps in research, and issues that should be addressed.

Assisted by two workshops with the participation of scholars from around the world, and co-sponsored by the Society for Armenian Studies and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, a large number of scholars have contributed to the project which has been under the direction of Professor Gerard Libaridian, the recently retired director of the ASP. Graduate students Vahe Sahakyan and Naira Tumanyan have been instrumental in gathering the massive information and preparing a preliminary draft of the report. Professor Libaridian has agreed to bring the project to its logical conclusion by preparing a second draft of the report and having it reviewed by participants of the two workshops and other colleagues before preparing a final draft. The project has been supported by the Harry Ardashes Paul Memorial Fund of the ASP with the kind and strong support of Dr. Ara Paul and Shirley Paul.

## ASP Announces New Courses

In addition to our faculty offering annual courses on premodern and modern Armenian history, premodern and modern literature, Armenian culture and identity, modern Western Armenian, Eastern and Classical Armenian through independent studies, and a wide variety of graduate seminars, ASP is pleased to announce two new courses for the 2013 Winter term: “Historical Ethnographies of Post-Ottoman Societies,” taught by postdoctoral fellow Hakem al-Rustom, and “Introduction to Armeno-Turkish” taught by postdoctoral fellow Murat Cankara. Continued support from donors allows ASP to attract rising stars in Armenian Studies whose cutting-edge research is changing and enriching the development of the field.



*Above: “History Through a Peephole.” A view of the 11th century Vahramshen Church through the walls of the 7th century Amberd fortress. Photo by Michael Pifer.*

## Atom Egoyan Delivers the Berj Haidostian Annual Distinguished Lecture

The Armenian Studies Program at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, recently invited internationally renowned writer, director and filmmaker Atom Egoyan to deliver the 2012 “Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Distinguished Annual Lecture” on campus on March 19, 2012.

With fourteen films and related projects to his credit, Atom Egoyan has won numerous internationally recognized awards including five prizes at the Cannes Film Festival, two Academy award nominations, eight Genie Awards as well as major awards at film festivals in Hamburg, Tokyo, Jerusalem, Reykjavik, Las Palmas, Hong Kong, Cairo and Athens.

In his lecture titled “Ararat: Ten Years After,” Egoyan revisited the making and trajectory of his 2002 film “Ararat,” which offers unique insight into the Genocide of the Armenians by the Young Turk government of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. The film explores the intersections between art, representation, cultural memory, and history.

“I think we have to find a way to be able to stop talking about this as a film of the Armenian Genocide,” Egoyan said during his lecture. “It’s a film about living with the effects of the denial of that event into the present.”

Egoyan further drew parallels between “Ararat” and other films at the time, such as James Cameron’s “Titanic,” which depicts history in a more straightforward and, as Egoyan suggested, problematic way.

The “Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Distinguished Annual Lecture” was established by the family of the late Dr. Berj H. Haidostian, a prominent and devoted physician, in honor of his long relationship with the University of Michigan and the Armenian Studies Program. Recent Haidostian Distinguished Lecturers have included Dr. Gerard Chaliand of Paris, Dr. Fiona Hill of the Brookings Institution, Mr. Thomas de Waal of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Dr. Vartan Gregorian of the Carnegie Foundation, Armenia’s Ambassador to the US Arman Kirakosian, and the US Ambassador to Armenia, John Evans.



Above: Atom Egoyan.

## University of Michigan Devotes an Evening to Yeghishe Charents

The Armenian Studies Program at the University of Michigan recently organized an evening devoted to the poet Yeghishe Charents. The event began with the showing of a new film by Shareen Anderson on Charents and continued with Professor Azat Yeghiazarian of Yerevan, one of the foremost experts on Charents, who gave a lecture on the poet's life and works.



"Yeghishe Charents became known in Armenian literature as a poet of revolution," Yeghiazaryan stated, arguing that while the October revolution and civil war factored into Charents' poetics, the poet's conception of 'revolution' went far deeper. "In the worldview of Charents and a great number of writers of his generation in Russia and other countries, revolution was not only a solution of social problems, but a beginning of a new humanistic civilization. This aspect was more essential than social problems," added Yeghiazaryan. "He hated the past. He was not interested in present so much. But he dreamed about the future as something bright and beautiful for all men."

From 1999 to 2008 Professor Yeghiazaryan was Director of

“.....  
**He dreamed about  
 the future as  
 something bright  
 and beautiful for  
 all men.**  
 .....”

the M. Abeghyan Literature Institute of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences. Since 2008 he has been serving as Head of the Armenian language and literature chair, Slavic University of Armenia. His most recent publications include Charents and History, Academy of Sciences, Yerevan, 1997, Poetics of the Epics "Sasna Tsrer" (Daredevils of Sassoun), Academy of Sciences, 1999; Armenian Literature of 20-th Century: Personalities and Problems, Academy of Sciences, 2002; Modern Armenian Literature.

The lecture has been recorded and is available, like all ASP events, for viewing on the website of the Armenian Studies Program ([www.ii.umich.edu/asp](http://www.ii.umich.edu/asp)).

## Azerbaijan's Former Vice-Premier Discusses Azerbaijan After Independence

On Tuesday January 31, 2012, the Armenian Studies Program (ASP) hosted Mr. Hikmet Hadjy-Zadeh, a National Endowment for Democracy Reagan Fascell Democracy fellow in Washington, DC. Hadjy-zadeh gave a retrospective on the state of Azerbaijan since independence. Briefly giving an outline of the history, ethno-demographic, religious composition, and strategic importance of the country, he then elaborated on the evolution of domestic politics since the fall of the Soviet Union.

Using the analogy of succession of power from father to son, Hadjy-zadeh raised the question of democracy and analyzed domestic and international developments, as well as the impact of the oil boom in Azerbaijan not only from the perspective of a former opposition party leader,

but also as a citizen and member of society. He argued that the flow of oil money was not used to promote and support democracy in the country, but rather it helped to strengthening the non-democratic/authoritarian elements of the regime, returning "Back in the USSR".

Mr. Hikmet Hadjy-Zadeh is a National Endowment for Democracy Reagan Fascell Democracy fellow in Washington, DC. He is also co-founder and president of the Far Centre for Economic and Political Research, a Baku-based think tank aimed at deepening democracy in Azerbaijan. He previously served as Azerbaijan's vice-premier, ambassador to Russia, journalist, political party leader, and creator/webmaster of Democracy House ([www.kitabxana.org](http://www.kitabxana.org)), the first online library of the social sciences in the Azeri language.

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Audio and video recordings of programs organized by ASP are available on our website; videos are available on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/user/aspnichigan](http://www.youtube.com/user/aspnichigan). We live-stream many of our events; visit [www.ii.umich.edu/asp](http://www.ii.umich.edu/asp) for details.

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The Armenian Studies Program 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, including undergraduate majors, M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, and post-doctoral studies
- Teaching language, culture, literature, history, anthropology, international relations, and political science
- Reaching out to the larger community with an intensive program of public lectures, workshops, and international conferences
- Answering student and researcher questions on Armenian history and culture from the US and throughout the world

The Armenian Studies Program at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, has been there for you since its founding in 1981; we want to be there in the future and do more.

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