



ORPHANED *Picturing Armenian Landscapes* FIELDS





On the Cover: Hundreds of silkworms feed on mulberry leaves in the room of a house in Ağaçlı, Turkey.

Photo by Kathryn Cook

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Notes from the Director

Several ASP long-term projects are coming to fruition this year. I am thrilled to announce that our Alex Manoogian Chair in Modern Armenian History, Hakem al-Rustom, has now joined our faculty in the Department of History. We are looking forward to the expertise and energy he will bring to our community.

The original State of Armenian Studies (SAS) project funded by Dr. Ara and Mrs. Shirley Paul and designed by Gerard Libaridian in 2006, sought to shed light on a glaring lacuna of the field: namely, what the field's institutional footprint has been historically, what kinds of projects Armenian Studies scholars are invested in, and what kinds of students the field is producing will be published online this fall. These materials include three panoramic essays, by Marc Mamigonian, Dickran Kouymdjian, and Ara Sanjian, on the institutional makeup of Armenian Studies programs around the world, a comprehensive list of Armenian Studies chairs/programs/organizations outside Armenia (updated in 2011), and a comprehensive bibliography of Armenian Studies monographs (1983-2010). Our intention in publishing these materials online is to make this information as widely available and free of charge as possible. This report, although quantitative in nature, represents the first attempt to bring the field of Armenian Studies in line with the contemporary practice in many disciplines to publish reports on the state of the field. By publishing this report, we will situate the Armenian Studies Program at the University of Michigan at the vanguard of the push to assess and rethink the major directions of the field for a new generation of scholars.

A new, qualitative phase of the SAS project, also supported by the Harry Ardashes Paul Memorial Fund, will feature the publication of a volume—*Words and Worlds: Armenians of the Mediterranean and Beyond*—of essays by young scholars who have been nurtured, in varying degrees, by the Armenian Studies Program at U-M. This project is a collaborative effort I am undertaking together with Dr. Michael Pifer, a former graduate of ASP and the department of Comparative Literature, as well as a recent Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow at U-M (2014-2015). We argue this new cohort of scholars forms a distinctively Michigan School of Armenian Studies.

Last but not least I would like to welcome our 2016–17 Manoogian Post-doctoral fellows, Yasar Tolga Cora and David Low, as well as Vahe Sahakyan, our Manoogian Visiting Lecturer in Near Eastern Studies. Yasar Tolga Cora works on the social history of ethnic and religious groups in the Ottoman Empire, with a particular focus on Armenian communities before the Genocide. He received his PhD in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago in 2016. David Low explores the role of photography in Armenian history, and the way in which images have shaped the vision of 'Armenia' in the West. He received his PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London in 2015. Vahe Sahakyan received his PhD in Near Eastern Studies from the University of Michigan in 2015 and will be teaching courses on the experiences of Armenian, Arab, and Jewish immigrants in America at the turn of the century, and on the reforms and revolutions in the Ottoman and Russian Empires.

I hope you will join us in the series of lectures and workshops that will showcase our Manoogian Fellows around this year's theme of Orphaned Fields: *Picturing Armenian Landscapes*, neglected directions they are taking in the field of Armenian Studies.



Kathryn Babayan

ASP Faculty

Hakem Al-Rustom

Alex Manoogian
Professor of Modern
Armenian History

Kathryn Babayan

Director, Armenian
Studies Program;
Associate Professor
of Iranian History
and Culture

Kevoork Bardakjian

Marie Manoogian
Professor of Armenian
Language and Literature

Ronald G. Suny

William H Sewell, Jr
Distinguished University
Professor of History

Melanie Tanielian

Assistant Professor
of History



Faculty News and Updates



Al-Rustom

Hakem Al-Rustom has joined the Department of History and the Armenian Studies Program as the Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern Armenian History. He earned his PhD in anthropology from the London School of Economics. Before joining the University of Michigan community, Al-Rustom was an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the American University in Cairo. He is currently working on his book manuscript on ethnographic silences and indigenous politics in Turkey. Professor Al-Rustom's work is situated in the intersection between social anthropology and history where he focuses on the ruins of undocumented histories, ethnographic silences, memory, and nation-state building in the Middle East and the Balkans, or what he prefers to call "post-Ottoman societies."



Suny

Kathryn Babayan & Michael Pifer are co-editing *Words and Worlds: Armenians of the Mediterranean and Beyond* that will be submitted to the Mediterranean Series at Palgrave Macmillan this fall. *Words and Worlds* represents the most radical and collective reimagining of Armenian Studies in the last century. This intervention in the study of Armenian history, literature, and the arts explicitly reflects an ongoing institutional effort made by the U-M Armenian Studies Program. To continue in the spirit of fostering a new dialog on Armenians in the Mediterranean world, *Words and Worlds* resists conventional periodization and frameworks based on the nation state as a unit of analysis. The two editors, have chosen to organize the volume around a series of theoretical frames that span across the medieval, early modern, and modern eras. These frames, adapted to the heterogeneity of Armenian experience, are meant to broadly engage with contemporary scholarship in frontier studies, connected to world history, trauma theory, memory studies, diaspora studies, visual studies, Post-Ottomanism, ethnography, and political science. *Words and Worlds* not only rethinks Armenian Studies as a field, but also makes our theoretical approaches accessible to a diverse audience across the disciplines.

Kevoork Bardakjian, Marie Manoogian Professor of Armenian Language and Literature, continues his research on Armenian literature for a handbook to be published by Brill and for an article on *Christian-Muslim*

Relations, a Bibliographical History 1500–1900, for a University of Birmingham project. In addition, he resumed his research on Eremia Komurjian, Armeno-Turkish writer, and Grigor Daranaghtsi, seventeenth century Armenian historian. During the 2015–16 academic year Professor Bardakjian presented several papers on Armenian languages, historiography, and literature at international conferences and was invited to deliver lectures on modern Armenian writers and Armenian theater in Constantinople.

Ronald Grigor Suny was named the William H. Sewell, Jr. Distinguished University Professor of History. Together with Valerie Kivelson he completed a book, *Russia's Empires*, which is now in press at Oxford University Press. The book looks at the Russian and Soviet history through the lens of empire, devoting much discussion to Armenia and the Caucasus. Professor Suny has been busy lecturing on his recently-published book, *"They Can Live in the Desert But Nowhere Else": A History of the Armenian Genocide* (Princeton University Press, 2015), and is currently on scholarly activity leave in Europe, moving between Germany, Russia, France, and Turkey. In October 2016, the Department of History hosted a *Festschrift* Conference for Ronald Suny, organized by his friends, faculty colleagues, and former graduate students.

Tamar M. Boyadjian, Assistant Professor of English and Medieval Literature, Michigan State University, edited a volume entitled *Explorations in Translation Theory and Armenian Literature*. Drawing on theories pertaining to literary translation, the critical objective of this volume is to introduce Armenian into the larger dialogues and recent trends in the interdisciplinary field of Translation Studies by including essays which deal with the translation, translating, and translatability of Western and Eastern Armenian texts. Contributions will also discuss the challenges of translating Armenian to and from other languages, and how translations serves as witnesses and testimonies to the literary culture of the original language and the language of translation. As a field that has not seen much scholarly attention, this volume will be the first of its kind, which interrogates notions of translation as it applies to Armenian.

Nina Katchadourian's "Bonus Grandmother" and her New Project

Tell us about your decision to honor Lucy (Lucine Katchadourian) during your visit at U-M?

Lucy was my "bonus grandmother," orphaned during the Armenian Genocide when she was only a few years old. She was eventually taken into my father's home by my grandparents, before my father was born, when Lucy was about twelve years old. She had been living in an orphanage in Aleppo, where the girls were taught various domestic skills that were hoped to make them more likely to find employment in the future. Lucy was particularly skilled at needlepoint and embroidery as a young girl. Although she came to my grandparent's home with virtually nothing, two or three small needlepoint "samplers" survived. They are like a CV of a skill set that might make her useful in someone's life. The most elaborate of these samplers has a variety of stitched patterns in the cloth as well as edge work in lace. It is clear how hard she has worked on these; the fact that they have survived at all speaks to Lucy's own awareness that they were important. They are one of the only artifacts from her early life. Working with this object is a way to pay homage to Lucy, who spent her entire life taking care of other people—sewing, mending, knitting, crocheting, cleaning and cooking for them. I want to honor her skills, her concentration, her care, and her survival, all of which are all materialized in this object.



What was the process through which you replicated Lucy's embroidery sampler? How did your print work at Signal Return Press in Detroit, tracing her every stitch connect you to Lucy and her story?

I have been working closely with Lee Marchalonis to find a way to duplicate this object in a way that is not merely a photographic reproduction. We began by making a life size color photocopy of the sampler. Then, we placed a piece of clear plexiglass over the color copy. Using a variety of etching and engraving tools, I "traced over" every one of Lucy's stitches to replicate all the different patterns she was practicing. This was a very time-consuming process. As someone who is not a printmaker, it was also very challenging to learn how to use the tools correctly. In a sense, the plexiglass sheet became a sampler of another kind, recording my tentative marks as they gradually grew more practiced and fluent.

Nina Katchadourian's
"Accent Elimination"
Exhibition, March 16, 2016.

Year in Review

International Conference in Leipzig

Within and Beyond Ethnicity: Negotiating Identities in Modern Armenian Diaspora

May 9–10, 2016

Vahe Sahakyan

*Lecturer, Department of Near Eastern Studies
and Armenian Studies Program*

In May 2016, the Leipzig Center for the History and Culture of East Central Europe (GWZO) hosted an international conference entitled *Within and Beyond Ethnicity: Negotiating Identities in Modern Armenian Diaspora*, sponsored by the GWZO, the Armenian Studies Program of the University of Michigan, the Research Academy and the Center for Area Studies of Leipzig University, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the German Ministry of Education and Research.

The organizers of the conference—Dr. Vahe Sahakyan, 2015-16 Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow, and Hakob Matevosyan, PhD student at the Graduate Centre Humanities and Social Sciences, Leipzig University—invited scholars and researchers from leading universities in various countries to discuss the Armenian Diaspora in the light of current theoretical and methodological discourses on ethnicity, diaspora, and identities. The goal of the conference was to identify the problems related to the concepts of “ethnicity” and “diaspora” by exploring the negotiations of diasporic spaces and identities, the impact of global and local processes on internal developments within Armenian diasporic communities, and

the perceptions of homeland among Armenians settled in Armenia and in the Diaspora.

In the first session, Hakob Matevosyan, Konrad Siekierski (University of Warsaw, Poland) and Heitor Loureiro (University of Sao Paulo, Brazil) presented papers on the activities of Armenian diasporic institutions and organizations in Hungary, Romania and Brazil, emphasizing the impact of the dynamic social and political conditions of these countries on the formations of diasporic identities and diverse expressions of Armenianness. During the second session, Sevan Beukian (University of Alberta, Canada), Nanor Karageozian (University of Oxford, UK) and Hamazasp Danielyan (Yerevan State University) examined the concepts of homeland, identity and belonging among Diaspora Armenians who settled in Armenia and in the diaspora in general. In the final session, Ulrike Ziemer (University of Winchester, UK), Brigitta Davidjants (Estonian Academy of Music and Theater, Estonia) and Nicolette Czézár (Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany) discussed the formations and negotiations of Armenian identities in Southern Russia, Estonia and Hungary. Stefan Troebst, Monika Wohlrab-Sahr and Bálint Kovács from Leipzig University, Hratch Tchilingirian from the University of Oxford and Jo Laycock from the Sheffield Hallam University served as panel and round-table discussants.

The organizers are planning similar discussions in the future where they can create a platform for situating Armenian diaspora studies in a comparative and theoretical framework within and beyond the field of diaspora studies.



International Conference:
*Within and Beyond Ethnicity:
Negotiating Identities in
Modern Armenian Diaspora*,
May 9–10, 2016

Seventh Annual International Graduate Student Workshop
**Translating Armenians, Armenians Translated:
 Rethinking Methodologies for Armenian Studies**
 April 22–23, 2016

*Organizers: Ali Bolcakan and Etienne Charrière,
 PhD candidates in the Department of Comparative
 Literature, U-M.*

**How do you see “translation” as playing a role in the field of
 Armenian Studies?**

We think that many issues and debates in Armenian Studies are eminently transnational. Translation served as a critical engagement and as a practice in Armenian political, social, and cultural history, and paved the ways for encounters within and across national, regional, and communal boundaries in all stages of Armenian history (classical period, Middle Ages, late Ottoman period, 20th-21st centuries). Therefore, we think that translation is both a paradigm and a methodology that can help “open up” the field to comparative discussion and could serve as a gateway to bring Armenian studies scholars from diverse fields with a wide range of interests.

**Tell us about the thematic and conceptual frames of the
 International Graduate Student workshop you organized?**

We wanted to continue the lively discussions on translation begun at last year’s graduate workshop *Challenging Entrenched Categories: Re-Exploring Approaches to Armenian Literature*. Given the centrality of the notion of translation in the Armenian experience through the ages, the workshop set out to chart the significance of

such a powerful vehicle for cultural mediation while emphasizing the transnational, transregional, and transcommunal interactions that have shaped Armenian intellectual history. Our goal was to approach translation not only as the transposition of meaning from one linguistic code to another but more broadly as a discursive practice, as a critical engagement, as a cultural practice, as an ethos, and as a methodology. An emphasis on the last element, that of methodology is particularly crucial to a workshop, conceived as a forum for young scholars to present their research experience and challenges while reflecting together upon the present and future theoretical and practical articulations of the field at large.

**What impact do you think the workshop could have for the
 field? What are the lacunae that remain to be addressed?**

With this topic, we hope that we were able to create a forum for young scholars from different fields to talk to one another, and to increase interdisciplinarity within the field. One major issue for instructors of Armenian studies is the general availability of texts composed in Armenian, which remains a big hurdle for especially literature scholars. There is still a lot of work and brainstorming that can be done to increase the visibility of Armenian literature in translation, and to create more translations. A forthcoming issue of *Absinthe: A Journal of World Literature in Translation*, edited by the organizer of last year’s workshop and moderator of our last panel, Tamar Boyadjian, is an important step in this regard.



Seventh Annual International Graduate Student Workshop, April 22-23

Translation Workshop

Explorations in Translation Theory and Armenian Literature

February 19–20, 2016

Organizer: Tamar Boyadjian, Assistant Professor of English and Medieval Literature, Michigan State University

This workshop explored conversations surrounding the interdisciplinary academic field of Translation Studies as it pertains to the transcultural analysis and translation of Armenian Literature. Seeking to move beyond purely prescriptive applications of translation, interpretation, and the localization of national literatures—and the mere translation of a “minor” literature into a major language—this workshop asked invited participants to explore questions pertaining to their translations of Armenian literature, under the umbrella of larger, non-compartmentalized cultural and theoretical frameworks and disciplines such as comparative literature, Mediterranean studies, Post-colonial and Diaspora studies, across all periods.

Opening and closing the workshop was the two-part lecture by the distinguished Professor Marc Nichanian entitled *The Witness and the Translator*. How do cultural nuances translate and transform across different types of mediums? One of the ways in which this workshop examined this question was through Walter Benjamin’s notion of *translatability*—as he defines it, the essential quality of certain works, that specific significance inherent in the original manifests itself in its own ability to be translated. As such, a session entitled *untranslatable*:

Crafting a Translation explored questions of what it means to translate intent or works that are deemed “untranslatable.” A second session entitled *Translating Genre Beyond Nation* considered how semiotic and cultural translations move across national boundaries and genre—the novel, epic, and drama—and how linguistic, political, and national mediums become deconstructed (and potentially reframed) in the process of translation. Professor Marc Nichanian’s lecture invited us to consider how translations become witnesses to cultural memory, and how literary works (and their translations) serve as testimonies to individual and communal experiences, particularly in cases of trauma and genocide.

Though translation studies—and theories and approaches to translating literary material—is a recent and growing field, Armenian language and literature has not seen much scholarly attention in this respect. This workshop was groundbreaking in that it invited participants, scholars, and translators to begin to think about the way in which translating Armenian literature could contribute to larger global conversations on translation and translatability, especially in the case of a “dying language” such as Western Armenian.

This workshop opened new doors and posed exciting questions and collaborative enterprises for not only Armenian literary studies and Translation Studies, but across multiple disciplines as well. Just as translations are believed to expose the silences of the original work, this workshop allowed for the lacunas in translation and Armenian studies to surface and function as possible palimpsests.



ASP workshop: Explorations in Translation Theory and Armenian Literature, February 19–20, 2016

Meet the Manoogian Fellows

Yaşar Tolga Cora

2016-17 Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow

Tell us about your research interests. How do you see your year at ASP as a Manoogian post-doctoral fellow will contribute to your project? What goals have you set for yourself?

As a Manoogian post-doctoral fellow I plan to undertake two projects. First, I will be turning my dissertation entitled *Transforming Erzurum/Karin: the Social and Economic History of a Multi-Ethnic Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century* into a manuscript. The dissertation examines the ways in which the new imperial order (Tanzimat) of the Ottoman Empire was built in the borderlands of the empire in close cooperation with local Armenian power brokers during the long nineteenth century. By making ethnicity both the object of the study and an analytical lens, the book will examine the contemporaneous projects of creating an imperial ethnicity (*Osmanlılık*) and an equality of different ethno-religious groups in the empire. These were enterprises with asymmetrical power relations which resulted in social and political tensions. I will also continue my research on the social history of Armenians in the late Ottoman Empire, particularly focusing on the history of Armenian immigrants (*bantukhds*) in Istanbul and Armenian female labor both in the imperial capital and in the provinces.

What course will you teach during your fellowship?

In Winter 2017, I will teach a course on Ottoman Armenians. It will focus on the social and cultural history of Armenian communities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which was abruptly disrupted by the Genocide. It will trace their achievements before their destruction during World War I, and the experiences and strategies of survivors in Republican Turkey. It will explore the Armenian experience in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey to think about relations between self, community and the society in our contemporary world.

David Low

2016-17 Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow

Tell us about your research interests. How do you envision your year at ASP as a Manoogian post-doctoral fellow will contribute to your project?

My work is concerned with still largely unwritten history of Armenian photography. While it retains in part a traditional interest in photographic studios and iconic images, it endeavors to ask wider questions about the photographic medium. My research looks at the visions and ideas, aims and aspirations that were at play behind the construction, deployment and consumption of images. It looks at the camera less as a means of picturing history and more as an instrument used to shape the world, with photographs active agents within social and political processes. My current project examines the images and imaginings of Western travellers in the Near East. It pays particular attention to HFB Lynch and uses him as a central figure.

As a Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow, I plan to extend my remit by studying the image responses of US travellers and their links to British counterparts. I will be considering the way in which photographs constructed and promoted an image of Armenia while also mediating and articulating international social networks. Above all, I look forward to working alongside Armenian specialists.

What goals have you set for yourself?

The central aim of this year is the writing up of recent research undertaken in Armenia, Turkey and Georgia. With the assistance of a fieldwork grant from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, I am in the process of retracing HFB Lynch's 1893-94 journey through the Russian and Ottoman Armenian provinces. This is done with the aim of exploring both the manner in which Lynch constructed an idea of a place and the way in which the region and particular sites have been reimagined since his time.

What course will you teach during your fellowship?

In winter 2017 I will teach a course on photography in the Near East, paying particular attention to the Armenian experience and the role of photographic images in Armenian lives. It aims to operate in the space between photographic history and Armenian history, with each serving as the means by which the other might be approached and comprehended.



Yaşar Tolga Cora



David Low



ORPHANED FIELDS

Picturing Armenian Landscapes

Photography at the Nexus of Armenian Studies and Visual Culture

Saturday, February 11, 2016

Organizers: Kathryn Babayan, Armenian Studies Program Director, David Low and Yaşar Tolga Cora, Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellows.

This workshop is the first in a series of discussions about photographs as objects with which to trace the Armenian past and present. How do we read photographic images? How can photographs be deployed as autonomous sources for reading the past, rather than as props for written texts? How can they be used as a way to think about material production? We will reflect on how photography complements the study of Armenian history at the same time as it enriches and questions the field of visual culture. The notion of witnessing and rendering legible objects of photographs will be interrogated. What do photographs hide and what do they reveal? How can we read the internal tensions that photographs visualize productively to write about trauma and violence?

Rockefeller Archive Center, The Near East Foundation Collection, Photos, Box 145

Rescue or Internment? Orphans of the Armenian Genocide

Friday, March 17, 2016

Organizer: Melanie Tanielian, Assistant Professor of History, 1644 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

By the end of World War I, an estimated number of 150,000 children were orphaned as the direct result of the Armenian Genocide. From Egypt to Greece, Syria, Turkey, and into the Caucasus, the child survivors became the subject of local, national, and international 'rescue' missions. This workshop seeks to highlight the multi-faceted experience of orphans during and after the war, expanding on the discussion of Nora Nercessian's new book, *The City of Orphans: Relief Workers, Commissars, and the 'Builders of the New Armenia' Alexandropol/Leninakan 1919–1931*. Nercessian diligently and meticulously researched the history of one of the largest orphanages near Alexandropol (now Gyumri).

The workshop will use the unique case of the City of Orphans to open a broader discussion addressing the utility of orphans and orphanages as subjects of historical analysis. How may we use the study of orphans and their institutionalization to challenge otherwise linear narratives of post-war nation-building and rehabilitation? If practices and processes internal to the orphanages were to forge proper citizens, how was citizenship understood, defined and negotiated? How did adults mitigate the rift between experiences of trauma and war, with hopeful narratives of the future? What were the mechanisms of making sense of the violent past? How does 'childhood' survive in spaces of confinement that serve ideologically informed state, society or international benevolent projects? Were orphanages places of rescue or of internment, and how do we comprehend the historical agency of the 'rescued' and/or 'interned'?"



Eighth Annual International Graduate Student Workshop

This workshop will initiate a conversation on Gender & Sexuality in the field of Armenian Studies. We will be inviting graduate students working on gender and sexuality as objects of analysis in Armenian Studies to discuss both the challenges and the opportunities this turn in the field affords. Drawing on the rich and diverse body of literature produced in the fields of gender and sexuality we invite graduate students working in history, literature, cultural studies, political science, visual arts, sociology and anthropology to submit abstracts of their work that take the categories of gender and sexuality as critical frames of analysis. As a collective we anticipate the workshop to open up new ways of thinking about Armenian subjects. We will discuss methodologies and strategies that can be productively deployed to give meaning to Armenian landscapes and contribute to critical studies and the historiography of gender and sexuality.

For more information about the Annual Graduate Student Workshops, and to view the deadline and the call for papers, visit: <http://ii.umich.edu/asp/news-events/all-events/workshops.html>.



Hayastani Ashkhatavoruhi [Worker Woman of Armenia], 83, No. 3 (1931).

Multidisciplinary Workshop for Armenian Studies

Graduate Students Create a Vibrant Intellectual Community

During the 2015-16 academic year, the Multidisciplinary Workshop for Armenian Studies (MWAS) had three primary objectives: 1) to provide an institutional space where scholars, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows from a variety of disciplines could meet to discuss cutting-edge issues relevant to the field of Armenian Studies; 2) to provide a supportive environment wherein graduate students could showcase their own research and workshop dissertation chapters; and 3) to break down the insularity of Armenian Studies by inviting scholars from beyond the field to help conceptualize new directions for interdisciplinary research and scholarship. MWAS pursued those goals by hosting twelve events throughout the fall and winter semesters where current graduate students and post-doctoral fellows presented their chapters and articles. The 2015-16 MWAS guest speaker was Edhem Eldem, Professor of History at the Boğaziçi University and Mellon Visiting Professor at Columbia University. He delivered a public lecture and participated in the workshop on Ottoman Vernacular Photography where the group discussed the practices and impact of photography in the nineteenth century Mediterranean. The 2015-16 events sponsored by MWAS successfully provided an opportunity to graduate students to network with established scholars from a variety of disciplines, in both formal and informal settings.

In the 2016-17 academic year 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. The aim of these workshops is to enrich the research and scholarship of community, 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 bringing Armenian Studies to wider critical discussions in the greater academic community.



Profiles and Reflections

ASP Fellowship Recipients

Ali Bolcakan

PhD candidate, Department of Comparative Literature

Recipient of the Yarmain, Agnes, Harry and Richard, Fellowship

I am grateful to the Armenian Studies Program and to the generous Yarmain, Agnes, Harry and Richard, Fellowship, which granted me the opportunity to continue working on my research during Summer 2016.

Working with Armenian, Greek and Turkish texts and histories, my dissertation explores shifting notions of political, cultural and linguistic belongings from the late Ottoman Empire to early years of the Republic of Turkey. Focusing on the language reforms enacted by these three communities before and after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, I show how new relationships with language informed concepts of community, citizenship, and religious identity. I came to realize that some of the issues (such as the exclusive canon-formation practices) that I have been trying to explicate are merely symptoms of a larger and a more fundamental problem. I believe in the context of emerging nationalism and modernization in the Ottoman Empire, that belonging, religion and language form a nexus that bring all of my research questions together, and as such, they are essential theoretical frameworks.

Informed by and continuing my research from last summer, I have been gathering more material on the activities and life of Agop Martayan/Dilâçar (1895–1979). Dilâçar is among the first people to inspire Mustafa Kemal Atatürk to undertake a comprehensive linguistic change as part of nation-making process. As such, he is a seminal important figure for the Turkish language reforms, and deserves an in-depth study to highlight the multilingual and multiethnic aspects of a decidedly monolingual enterprise. The figure of Dilâçar is contrasted with Zaven Biberyan (1921–84). Biberyan was a socialist writer who was critical of both the Turkish state and also of the Armenian community in Istanbul. In his writings he attested to the transformation of post-genocide Constantinople/Istanbul from a multicultural and cosmopolitan space to a repressive, homogenous space.

The main goal of this summer research project was to fill in the gaps of the tumultuous lives of these two figures. By finding the corresponding archival documents and by talking to their friends, family and colleagues, I was aiming to explain their work and circumstances, which would culminate in a dissertation chapter.

Etienne E. Charrière

PhD candidate, Department of Comparative Literature

Recipient of the Haiganoosh Mengushian/Ajemian Memorial Student Travel Award

The Haiganoosh Mengushian/Ajemian Memorial Student Travel Award allowed me to travel to Istanbul, Turkey in November of last year to attend the 2015 Hrant Dink Memorial Workshop, organized by Sabancı University in collaboration with the Istanbul Policy Center and Anadolu Kültür Merkezi (Anatolian Culture Center). The theme for this edition of the workshop was *Genocide of the Ottoman Armenians in Art, Theater, Cinema, and Literature*, and was part of the centennial commemorations of the 1915 Armenian Genocide. The event brought together scholars, as well as performers and human rights activists from Armenia, the Middle East, Western Europe, and the United States. At the workshop, I had the opportunity to present a paper entitled ‘*Later, in Yerevan: Robert Guédiguian and the Representation of the (Post-)Genocide in French Cinema*’. In this paper, I took the work of French-Armenian director Robert Guédiguian as a starting point to an exploration of the politics and aesthetics at play in the (non-) representation of the Armenian Genocide in film.

While none of his films during the past decade directly represent the Armenian Genocide, opting instead for an indirect, mediated treatment of the topic, which switches the focus from the events of 1915 themselves to the post-1915 period, their common engagement with the lingering impact of the events in Armenia and in the Diaspora highlights Guédiguian’s investment with questions of trauma, memory, and post-memory. Working within a comparative framework, my paper argued that Guédiguian’s Armenian-themed films and their avoidance of a direct representation of the Genocide must be read in articulation with debates within French film scholarship which has

repeatedly questioned the representability of genocide in fiction films, and has often championed an ethos of indirect figuration.

This paper was the first I presented on an Armenian topic not directly related to my primary area of research, which is the nineteenth-century Western Armenian novel. I received great feedback during the workshop and truly enjoyed the opportunity to explore new topics within the field of Armenian Studies at large. I also had the opportunity to meet with a large number of scholars working on related topics, and I took advantage of my time in Istanbul to establish contacts that proved very useful for the organization of the Seventh International Graduate Student Workshop in Armenian Studies at the University of Michigan in April of this year. For this opportunity, I am immensely grateful to the Armenian Studies Program and their generous donors for their invaluable support.

Dzovinar Derderian

PhD Candidate, Department of Near Eastern Studies

Recipient of the Agnes, Harry and Richard Yarmain Fellowship

The Agnes, Harry and Richard Yarmain Fellowship covered my travel to the Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA) annual conference in Denver, Colorado, where I presented a paper entitled *Crossing and Drawing Boundaries: Ottoman and Armenian Marriage Petitions, 1840s-1870s*. I also co-organized and participated in a panel entitled *Crossing Local and Global Boundaries: Networks of Representation in Ottoman Empire and Contemporary Turkey*. Writing this paper and presenting at MESA was crucial, as it received important feedback and questions during the Q&A, which will help me to develop my paper into a dissertation chapter. Furthermore, throughout the conference I discussed my dissertation project with various scholars and other graduate students, which always helps me flesh out the ideas that I have. Finally, I attended numerous round-table discussions and panels that dealt with Ottoman subjecthood and law, which make up the two themes that are important for my dissertation.

Jeremy Johnson

PhD candidate, Interdepartmental Program in Anthropology and History

Recipient of the Haiganoosh Mengushian/Ajemian Memorial Scholarship

The Haiganoosh Mengushian / Ajemian Memorial Scholarship supported my research in three different European archives, and made possible my workshop and international conference participation during the summer of 2016. This funding was particularly important because it allowed me to fill significant gaps in my dissertation related to international organizations' work in the South Caucasus in the early 1920s. My work in the *Save the Children's* archive in Manchester, England and the *League of Nations* archive in Geneva, Switzerland revealed much about the on-the-ground experiences of humanitarian actors working in early Soviet Armenia. I was particularly interested in better understanding the role of education in the activities of the humanitarian actors working with Armenians in the Soviet Union, and the ideas these humanitarians espoused about different languages and dialects of refugees. I was also fortunate to participate in a workshop on ordinary life in extraordinary times in the South Caucasus. This rare gathering of young scholars who work on all three Caucasus countries took place at the University of Winchester, and was organized by scholars Ulrike Ziemer (Winchester), Jo Laycock (Sheffield Hallam University), and Laurence Broers (Editor, *Caucasus Survey*). Using this funding I was able to also visit Lviv where I explored the historic Armenian community and presented a paper at the ASEES/MAG conference, which brought together over 500 area studies specialists from around the former Soviet Union. My paper focused on language ideologies in the twentieth century Armenia and explored the various ways people have historically talked about language. I also participated in a round table about doing research in the Caucasus which brought together social scientists from multiple disciplines to discuss the particular effective strategies for doing work in this complex region. The work I completed this summer will help me finish my dissertation and further my academic career.



Dzovinar Derderian



Jeremy Johnson



The view from the 'sacred mountain of non-Muslims,' as the locals would call it. 2016, Silvan, Diyarbakir

Ozge Korkmaz

PhD student, Department of Anthropology

Recipient of Haiganoosh Mengushian/Ajemian Memorial Scholarship

During the 1990s, as a part of counter-insurgency operations, the Turkish military evacuated approximately 3,000 villages in Turkey's Kurdistan. My dissertation project, based in Diyarbakir Province, examines the corollary phenomenon of Kurdish villagers' return to their homes (*köye dönüs*), which I refer to as *village revitalization*. I began this research with the premise that return-movements as such register a rethinking of the ways in which Kurds relate to and understand their history. I argue that one important consequence of such re-evaluations is the emergence of an alternative historical consciousness that enables Kurds to critically grapple with the histories of their old neighbors, Armenians, who previously inhabited the very same villages and/or landscape before the 1915.

I learned about the emergence of such awareness among Kurds during my previous field visits in 2014 and 2015. Among the many observations that drew my attention to the significance of the Armenian history and people, the one that struck me the most is the villagers' efforts to restore names of Armenian places and preserve the remaining old Armenian churches and graveyards as they continue re-building their villages. Such attention to the material culture often goes hand in hand with narratives and memories of an Armenian past that is both implicated in *and* hidden beneath the *shared* landscape. It is in this vein that this research indexes the deep intertwinings between the Armenian

past and the Kurdish present, and seeks to document the ways in which such connections are reflected on and negotiated through myriad moments of revitalization.

During the summer of 2016, with the support of the Armenian Studies Program, I had the chance to conduct research on two clusters of questions that constitute a critical part of my preliminary studies: 1) the history of Diyarbakir and its peoples, 2) the history of the displacement and mass-killings of Armenians in Diyarbakir between mid-1890s to 1915. While most of my data come from archives and previous research done on this issue, I also had the chance to collect oral histories. I interviewed 18 people, mostly elders, living in four villages and the town center of the Kulp district of Diyarbakir, where a significant Armenian population used to reside before the 1915. This summer research significantly contributed to the methodological approach I am planning to undertake as I had the chance to see the different ways in which archival research and oral history/ethnography can inform and challenge one another. I also had invaluable field-encounters with families and individuals, and travelled with informants, some of whom are nomadic Kurds in rural Kurdistan, which helped me to better understand the rural life and the manners in which people dwell in such localized and historical landscape. My inquiry into the Kurdish historical imaginations, eventually, directed me toward a critical reading of interconnections between different temporal frameworks that shape and affect the relations amongst persons, groups, and multiple historical agencies implicated in the constitution of Kurdistan as a geographical and political entity.

2016–17 ASP Graduate Students

Ali Bolcakan

PhD candidate, Department of Comparative Literature

Area of concentration: Armenian, Greek, and Turkish language debates and literatures in the late Ottoman Empire and early Republican Turkey

Dzovinar Derderian

PhD candidate, Department of Near Eastern Studies

Area of concentration: 19th-century Ottoman social and cultural history

Jeremy Johnson

PhD candidate, Interdepartmental Program in Anthropology and History

Area of concentration: Soviet history, languages of the Caucasus, gender

Tuğçe Kayaal

PhD candidate, Department of Near Eastern Studies

Area of concentration: Childhood history and the history of Armenian orphans during the late 19th and early 20th century

Interview with our 2016 Graduate

Etienne Charrière, PhD

*Area of concentration: 19th-century prose fiction,
Greek and Armenian novels in the late Ottoman Empire*

How did you become interested in Armenian Studies? How has your experience at ASP enhanced your own research? Tell us about the ways you were able to bridge your course of studies at the Department of Comparative Literature with the ASP?

My initial involvement with Armenian Studies largely happened by accident. I do not have any Armenian heritage, and I had virtually no contact with Armenian culture growing up. I did spend some time in the South Caucasus (in fact, probably more time in Georgia than in Armenia) when I was in my late teens, and I suppose that it played a part in my decision to take some Armenian language classes (first *krapar*, then Modern Western Armenian) as free electives, and then declare a minor when I was a freshman at the University of Geneva (Switzerland). I must admit that at the time, the fact that very few other students were enrolled in these classes was also part of the appeal for me! Over time, it became increasingly clear to me that there are many ways for me to combine the study of Armenian with that of Modern Greek, which was and still is my primary field of study.

As I gradually oriented myself toward the study of nineteenth-century prose and the discipline of Comparative Literature, I started to realize that because of the many different ways in which the history and cultural production of Greeks and Armenians have intersected over centuries, there were many opportunities for exciting comparative projects involving both communities. It was precisely the possibility of studying both languages within the framework of a Comparative Literature program that brought me to the University of Michigan for my graduate studies.

As a student affiliated with the Armenian Studies Program, I have not only benefited from a very generous financial and institutional support, but I have had the opportunity to work with exceptional scholars, both the ASP faculty and my fellow graduate students working in Armenian Studies, many of whom have become close friends. Being part of such a vibrant community and having so many chances to share your work with colleagues and receive their feedback makes all the difference in giving a strong sense of purpose to one's research project. I will definitely miss this sense of community a lot after I leave Michigan and the ASP!

What were the highlights of your studies? How do you see your dissertation contributing to the fields of Armenian Studies and Comparative Literature?

I would definitely say that being a co-organizer of both the Multidisciplinary Workshop in Armenian Studies and the Annual International Graduate Student Workshop in Armenian Studies during my last year at the University of Michigan have offered me invaluable opportunities to grow as a scholar and to get a better sense of the exciting work currently happening in the field.

In my dissertation, I examine the trans-communal emergence of novel culture in the late Ottoman Empire by looking from a comparative framework at the rise of prose fiction in the main communities of the Empire (Armenians, Greeks, Sephardic Jews, and Turks). I believe that situating Western Armenian literary production within the broader context of the late Ottoman Empire can shed new light on the major contributions of Armenians to the important mutations of the cultural field at large that take place in the second half of the century in the largest urban centers of the Empire. In parallel, my dissertation ambitions to show how the coexistence of so many communities in the late Ottoman period can contribute to discussions currently happening in the field of Comparative and World Literature by offering new insight on questions related to transnational literary communities or the global rise of novel culture in the long nineteenth century.

What are the next steps in your career?

Starting in September of this year and until the summer of next year I will be a Post-Doctoral Fellow at the Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations (RCAC/ANAMED) in Istanbul. I am particularly excited for this opportunity to spend time in Turkey working in a number of Armenian, Greek, Ottoman, and Jewish archives and conducting additional research for the purposes of my book project, which will expand upon the findings of my dissertation.



Our Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals for their generous contributions from September 2015–September 2016. A special thanks to donors of books to the ASP library. Lastly, we extend a very warm thank you to the Manoogian Simone Foundation and Alex and Marie Manoogian Foundation.

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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, MA and PhD 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. Please use the envelope inserted in this newsletter to make your tax-deductible contribution.



2016-17 Event Calendar

Tuesday, Sept 13, 6-7:30PM

Lecture

'Grasping the Constellations': On the (Im)possibility of Writing Armenian History

Hakem Al-Rustom, Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern Armenian History, U-M. Multipurpose Room, U-M Museum of Art, 525 S. State St.

Friday-Saturday, Oct 7-8; 3-6:30PM, 9AM-5:30PM

Conference

Nationalism, Genocide, and Revolution: A Conference Inspired by Professor Ronald Grigor Suny

1014 Tisch Hall, 435 S. State St.

Wednesday, Oct 12, 6-8PM

Film Screening

Thank You, Dad

(Directed by Hrach Keshishyan; 2014). Video Viewing Room, 1500 North Quad, 105 S. State St.

Wednesday, Nov 16, 4-5:30PM

Lecture

'It Seems to Belong to Dreamland Rather than Reality': HFB Lynch and the Making of 'Armenia'

David Low, Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow, U-M. 1636 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Wednesday, Dec 14, 4-5:30PM

Lecture

Men of the New Order: Armenian Provincial Notables in the Age of Ottoman Reforms

Yaşar Tolga Cora, Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellow, U-M. 1636 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Wednesday, Jan 18, 4-5:30PM

Lecture

Immigrants into 'Ethnic'— Americans: Negotiating Race, Language, Religion and Belongings

Vahe Sahakyan, Lecturer in the Department of Near Eastern Studies, U-M. 1636 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Saturday, Feb 11, 10AM-6PM

Workshop

Photography at the Nexus of Armenian Studies and Visual Culture

Organizers: **Kathryn Babayan**, Armenian Studies Program Director, **Yaşar Tolga Cora** and **David Low**, Manoogian Post-doctoral Fellows. 1644 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Wednesday, Feb 22, 6:30-8PM

Film Screening

Havresc: Stand On Courage

(Directed by David Ritter; 2016). 1636 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Thursday, Mar 16, 7-9PM

Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Annual Distinguished Lecture

From Orphan to Citizen: The Debate over Education at the City of Orphans.

Alexandropol/Leninakan, 1919-1929

Nora Necessian, PhD, faculty and administration of Harvard University (1981–2005), and Advisor to the Board, The Children of Armenia Fund (COAF). East Conference Room, Rackham Graduate School, 915 E. Washington St.

Friday, Mar 17, 2-4PM

Workshop

Rescue or Internment?

Orphans of the Armenian Genocide.

Organizer: **Melanie Tanielian**, Assistant Professor of History, U-M. 1644 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Friday, Mar 17, 4:30-6PM

Film Screening

After this Day

(Directed by Nigol Bezjian; 2015). 1644 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.

Friday-Saturday, Apr 21-22, 10AM-6PM

Eighth Annual International Graduate Student Workshop

Gender and Sexuality in Armenian Studies

Organizers: **Jeremy Johnson**, PhD candidate in Interdepartmental Program in Anthropology and History, and **Kathryn Babayan**, Armenian Studies Program Director. 1644 International Institute, 1080 S. University Ave.



University of Michigan
1080 S. University Ave., Suite 3663
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1106

734.763.0622
armenianstudies@umich.edu
ii.umich.edu/asp

Unidentified ruins
and the church of
St Gregory of Tigran
Honents, Ani, Turkey,
August 2016
Credit: David Low

