Dear Colleagues:

It is hard to believe that it has been just five years since ARISC incorporated and received our not-for-profit status! Today we have 18 member institutions as part of the consortium as well as many individual and student members. ARISC has sponsored symposia and workshops both in the US and the South Caucasus, granted nine research fellowships for graduate students and two Collaborative Heritage Management grants for Armenia. Local representatives in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia have helped innumerable visiting scholars both with logistics and with introductions to local specialists, as well as organizing lecture programs, training sessions, and book groups. All this has been done on a shoestring budget together with an enormous amount of volunteer effort from ARISC officers, board, and other members, held together by our amazing Executive Director, Talin Lindsay.

ARISC’s mission is to encourage and support scholarly study of the South Caucasus states in all fields from the earliest times to the present. Although the South Caucasus is a small geographical area with altogether about 17,000,000 people, its geography, prehistory and history are complex, fascinating, and relatively unknown in the United States. The rich possibilities for exciting and innovative scholarship that lie in the South Caucasus are reflected in the subjects of study by the scholars who have received ARISC grants: from endangered languages to the material culture of the 4th millennium BCE to 20th century CE political history. Read the rest of this absorbing newsletter for details of these and other ARISC-supported projects!

Going forward, ARISC is striving to expand our programs and services. In these straitened times, finding funds is challenging. We aim to create programs in Azerbaijan and Georgia to complement the Collaborative Heritage Management Grants for Armenia that have been funded by Project Discovery! ARISC is distinguished from other American programs in the South Caucasus by its emphasis on the humanities and related social sciences. Increasing the study of and knowledge about the South Caucasus here in America can only enrich our understanding about the world and broaden our knowledge of the deep history of the region.

As noted below, the activities of ARISC are detailed on our website www.arisc.org and at our Facebook page http://www.facebook.com/AmericanResearchInstituteoftheSouthCaucasus. As an American Overseas Research Center in three countries abroad, with a far-flung membership here in the United States, we would likely be a much smaller and less active organization without the internet. I encourage you all to keep up-to-date about ARISC through these resources. We even gain members and raise money electronically through the website. As the world becomes more electronically focused, we are striving to broaden ARISC’s web presence. Check out ARISC on greatnonprofits.org, “like” the organization, add the badge to your blog and website and otherwise help spread the word about ARISC’s important work!

Karen S. Rubinson
Lyssa Stapleton and Dr. Pavel Avetisyan

“Long-term Preservation of Artifacts from the Site of Areni-1, Armenia”

Plant remains and artifacts composed of organic material are rarely preserved in prehistoric archaeological contexts but have been found in abundance at the cave site of Areni-1 in Armenia. The rarity of these materials makes their long-term preservation particularly important. To address the challenge of protecting the woven organic material from this site, I created the Long-term Preservation of Artifacts from the Site of Areni-1, Armenia project. This project provided supplies and training to the Armenian conservation staff responsible for the woven artifacts. Together with Elena (Lena) Atoyants, the Senior Restorer at the National Museum, I re-housed, re-packed, and labeled these objects and provided the conservators with supplies specifically for the storage of...
Week of the project, I introduced my work in the laboratory during the third week of the project in the future. It is impossible to predict how much cultural material will be excavated from Areni-1 cave in the future, however, my experience working with the woven material leads me to believe that further assistance in the future will be necessary in order to preserve the precious artifacts from this site. At present, we are considering the continuation of the Long-term Preservation of Artifacts from the Site of Areni-1, Armenia project; future goals will be discussed during the 2012 field season. It is a certainty that other preservation projects will arise as excavation continues.

Lyssa Stapleton is a doctoral student at the UCLA Cotsen Institute of Archaeology. Her research interests include cultural heritage law, ancient textiles, museum studies, mortuary ritual and material culture, gender and archaeology. Dr. Pavel Avetisyan is the Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Armenia.
“Cohesion, Coercion, and Compromise: Parties of Power in the South Caucasus, 1988 - Present”

I spent six weeks in Georgia as an ARISC Fellow beginning in May 2010 during which I continued qualitative and quantitative data collection that I had begun in an earlier period of research on Georgia’s two ruling parties: the Citizens’ Union of Georgia (CUG) 1993-2003, and the United National Movement (UNM) 2004-present. Using Georgian and Russian-language materials from the National Parliamentary Library of the Republic of Georgia, I completed a database of newspaper articles that chronicle political developments within Georgia’s ruling parties. I gathered state budgetary data and biographies of politically prominent Georgians from sources available only in Georgia. At the State Historical Archive, I collected results for certain legislative votes in the 1990s and obtained similar data from the Organizational Department of Georgia’s Parliament. At the Communist Party Archive of the Republic of Georgia, I attempted to collect the names and dates of service of Communist Party and Komsomol First Secretaries from the late 1980s and early 1990s, but was unsuccessful; apparently documents from this period have been lost. The Central Election Commission of Georgia provided complete candidate lists for the 1995 parliamentary elections which were not published in full in newspapers at the time. I also gathered several reports from the Office of the Public Defender and the Georgian Human Rights Centre in order to broaden my analysis of the level of political repression over the past 20 years in Georgia.

In addition to this archival work, I conducted approximately 20 interviews with past and present members of the UNM and CUG, which included members of Parliament, former ministers, and officials from Georgia’s regional administration. I discussed developments within Georgia’s ruling parties with journalists, political scientists from local universities, and analysts from think tanks and international organizations, as well as human rights defenders.

The research I conducted with the ARISC Graduate Fellowship allowed me to develop more complete measures of cohesion within the CUG and UNM, which I have been using to compare ruling parties across the South Caucasus. Through anecdotal accounts, I had already assessed cohesion within these two parties as lower than in ruling parties in Armenia and Azerbaijan, but now have the data to prove this: incumbency on the entire 200-member candidate lists for the CUG and 2 UNM ranges from approximately 30% in the mid-1990s to 10% in the early 2000s to 20% in the late 2000s. This is significantly lower than the 50-70% incumbency rates on comparable lists of the Armenian Pan-National Movement, Armenia’s first ruling party, and the 30-50% incumbency rates of the Republican Party of Armenia, the country’s second ruling party. The New Azerbaijan Party’s 50-70% incumbency rates reflect cohesion comparable with the APNM.

The ARISC Graduate Fellowship also gave me the opportunity to explore other measures of party cohesion in Georgia. Data on legislative votes provided by the Organizational Department of the Parliament of Georgia will make it possible to demonstrate the level of voting discipline of ruling party members over time. I expect discipline levels within the CUG to decrease over time, and that levels within the UNM will increase over time, reflecting the cohesion trajectories of the two parties. Also, complete candidate lists provided by the Central Election Commission of Georgia will allow me to compute levels of incumbency on party
lists across all parties that have competed in Georgia for public office in the last 20 years. This data will be crucial in determining whether cohesion levels vary across the South Caucasus at the level of individual parties, or whether entire countries demonstrate varying levels of turnover/incumbency. Conclusions from these data appeared in a preliminary form in a paper on elite networks and ruling parties in Georgia and Armenia that I presented at the 2011 Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) Annual Convention and continue to develop as I make progress on my dissertation.

Certain challenges I faced during data collection gave me new perspectives on my research question. After comprehensive searches of newspapers and internet media outlets, I was unable to find detailed lists of party leadership structures and summaries of party congress proceedings. During interviews, prominent figures from within the CUG and UNM reported to me that formal structures and party congresses played a minor role in the management of their parties because theirs were not parties in the traditional sense. UNM officials stressed that they were part of a “movement” and that they were not trying to recreate a large formalized party like the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Similarly, the CUG was a “union” which linked, often unsuccessfully, disparate political groups, and for this reason these parties did not preserve or publish detailed accounts of internal structures or party congresses. In comparison with the ruling parties of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia’s were the most under-institutionalized and the most fractious.

Interviews with CUG and UNM officials have raised questions for me of how to classify Georgia’s ruling parties, and how best to compare them with those of neighboring Armenia and Azerbaijan. Informants have insisted that the parties they created and led are not actually parties; subsequently, I have explored further the issue of appropriate typologies for these organizations. Up to this point, I have considered any political organization a “party” if it carries out the fundamental function of political parties: establishing a political group that competes for elected office. As my research has progressed, I continue to treat the UNM and CUG as parties but have remained sensitive to differences between ruling parties, niche parties, and other movements which continue to form in Georgia.

Beyond the issue of typologies, the CUG and UNM have raised deeper questions for my research about the relationship between intra-party institutionalization, intra-party cohesion, and internal party competition. Georgia’s parties are the most internally fractious, by some arguments the most competitive, and also the least internally institutionalized. The CUG collapsed because major factions within the party competed over the formation of party lists and candidacy for succeeding President Eduard Shevardnadze, but they competed informally and in a way that ultimately destroyed the party. On the other extreme, the New Azerbaijan Party has been the most cohesive and most institutionally formalized ruling party in the South Caucasus, but also the least competitive. By all accounts, party structures exist as rubber stamps that provide Azerbaijan’s dynastic regime with a veneer of formal democracy. Uncontrolled informal competition presents significant challenges to party development, but so do overly formal and overly structured competition. I continue to explore these issues in my dissertation and other ongoing projects.

A Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Political Science at the University of Michigan, Eli Feiman has been conducting field research on political party development in the South Caucasus. His research interests include the formation and consolidation of political institutions, patronage and clientelism, informal politics, and durable authoritarianism.

Melissa Gayan
“The Forgotten Revolt: The 1956 Pro-Stalinist Protests in Soviet Georgia and its Cold War Implications”

I was ecstatic to return to Tbilisi in the summer of 2011, three years after my first unforgettable stay in the summer of 2008. During my work in the city, I was met with overwhelming support for my dissertation which focuses on the anti-Soviet yet pro-Stalinist protests in the Soviet Republic of Georgia in March 1956 and the impact that this largely ignored event had on the Cold War. The protests ignited when the third anniversary of the Georgian-born Stalin’s death, March 5, 1956, went unrecognized. This lack of recognition was in stark contrast to the Soviet tradition of revering its dead leaders. This seeming lack of respect resulted from Nikita Khrushchev’s denunciation of Stalinist excesses and the cult of personality in the “Secret Speech” of February 25, 1956. This speech, along with the disregard for Stalin’s memory, toppled the nearly thirty years of centrally-prescribed discursive meaning for both Soviet citizens and Communists around the world. There were other incidents in 1956, such as the decolonization movements in Africa and Asia and political unrest within the Soviet Union, its Eastern European satellites, and communist China, which challenged Soviet global hegemony.

The dearth of scholarship surrounding these Tbilisi protests reveals that the impetus for the Georgian events was student anger at the failure of the Communist Party to commemorate the third anniversary of Stalin’s death. There is no consensus about how the protests escalated before Soviet forces violently dispersed the crowds after midnight on March 10th, killing an unknown number of people. I am also interested in the reactions, or lack thereof, from the Soviet Union and the Western world. As
points of comparison I will also examine how the Soviet Union and the Western world responded to two other anti-Soviet protests that occurred in the Soviet satellites of Poland (June 1956) and Hungary (October 1956).

During my 2011 visit to Tbilisi, I became acquainted with a strong “freedom of information” movement which is spearheaded by the Institute of the Development of Freedom of Information (IDFI), which is a non-governmental organization. The IDFI, in conjunction with the Archive Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia (the KGB archives), have collaborated to make annotated primary source documents available on the Internet in an effort to stimulate intellectual discussion about one of the least discussed events of Georgia’s 20th century history. I became aware of the group’s work only shortly before leaving for Tbilisi. I was able to work with one of the IDFI’s directors who provided me with additional materials and support for my project. From these sources, I have discovered arrest records of Georgian participants in the protests, as well as documents from the Georgia Communist party sources and Georgian language newspapers.

This ARISC-funded trip allowed me to garner a new perspective on my dissertation which led me away from how these events affected the Cold War and into the realm of memory. I was most struck by the connection, or in my case disconnection, between many Georgians and the 1956 protests. While theoretically aware that these events did not receive much attention due to the Soviet efforts to suppress it, while the international world became fixated on unrest in Poland and Hungary in the same year, I was fortunate to witness this disconnection firsthand. For example, I found a marked difference between the public memories of the 1956 protests and further unrest which occurred in April 1978, when Georgians took to the streets of Tbilisi demonstrating against a new draft constitution which would take away the Georgian language’s constitutionally protected status in the republic. In the case of the language protest, Soviet officials rescinded the offending clause without any bloodshed.

There are many parks and squares dedicated to historical events in Tbilisi; the April 9th Park, dedicated to those who participated in the 1989 protests, a park memorializing the 1924 revolt against the Bolsheviks, and one named the Rose Revolution Square are three examples. At the “March 9th Park,” located near the Dry Bridge Market, I discovered a small, weathered monument there with an inscription which was fading away, becoming difficult to read. Across the street from the March 9th Park was the Deda Ena (mother tongue) Park created to honor participants of the 1978 protests. A statue honoring the Georgian language, which is in much better condition than the marker for the March 1956 protests, is located in the Deda Ena Park. While I was unsuccessful in trying to determine what year the Deda Ena statue was built, I found the lack of concern over the state of the
1956 marker a significant sign about how Tbilisi remembers, or prioritizes, its history.

Going beyond the memory provided by the March 9th Park, the 1956 unrest is not included in the Museum of Soviet Occupation which chronicles Russian/Soviet actions in the country from 1921-1991. The museum does focus on other anti-Soviet events, including the unrest in 1924 and 1978, as well as the April 9, 1989 massacre. My discussions with many Georgians have revealed that this event was not taught in schools, either. Reflecting on this latest research trip, I am convinced that my project is fertile ground to test the theories of public memory.

Melissa Gayan is a doctoral candidate at Emory University in the History Department. Her research interests include Modern Europe, Soviet Union, Georgia and the Caucasus; nationality and ethnicity.

Tamrika Khvtisiashvili
“Documentation of Khinalug”

My research took place in the village of Khinaliq in Azerbaijan, where I worked with Khinalug native speakers. Both Russian and Azeri languages were used as a contact language. I had two main data collection goals during this fieldwork: (i) to collect free speech by collecting texts and (ii) to begin gathering specific grammatical structures of Khinalug language. I worked with five different informants, which were chosen by the fact that they spoke Russian fluently and were available to work. For free speech/text acquisition informants were simply asked to retell stories, legends, historical events or old traditions of Khinaliq village in Khinalug language. For the grammatical structure elicitations standardized questionnaires were used and best practices as agreed upon by the linguistic community followed. International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) together with Khinalug alphabet will be utilized once the full transcription takes place.

I am planning two more fieldtrips to Khinaliq over the following two years at which point I should have enough data for full grammatical analyses of Khinalug language. This first and initial fieldtrip this year gave me the necessary foundation to develop material and questionnaires for the second and third years. As the result of this year’s fieldtrip, some of the basic grammatical features of Khinalug language have been established. They will need to be analyzed further in the next few months and checked during the following fieldtrip. Khinalug texts that have been collected have been 70% translated into Azeri and 40% into Azeri and English.

I have learned much from this fieldwork about Khinalug language as well as about Khinalug culture. It has also been important to spend time in Azerbaijan in general to see the influence of the dominant culture on smaller indigenous populations. As the result of the cultural and linguistic perspectives gained in the summer of 2011, I can be ready for even more prepared fieldwork in the following few years.

Another result of living in Khinaliq is that I was able to visit many surrounding villages. Most of the surrounding villages speak languages other than Azeri language. Although general genetic linguistic relationships have been established between those languages, the place of Khinalug is still in question within North East Caucasian Languages. This placement needs to be examined and determined for certain.

Tamrika Khvtisiashvili’s research interests include the documentation and revitalization of endangered and indigenous language, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. She is a Ph.D. Candidate in Linguistics at the University of Utah, and speaks Azeri, Georgian and Russian.
2011-12 Collaborative Heritage Management in the Republic of Armenia Grant

This is the second year we have awarded the Collaborative Heritage Management Grant, whose purpose is to support collaborative teams in the preservation and conservation of the Republic of Armenia’s archaeological and historical heritage. One award of $3,000 was made to the team of Dr. Alexia Smith (University of Connecticut, USA) and Dr. Ivan Gabrielyan (Institute of Botany, Armenia) for their project, “Establishing a Botanical Reference Collection for Archaeobotanical Studies in Armenia.” The goal of the project is to collect comparative material to enable identification of archaeobotanical remains.

Graduate Fellowships

In our third year of awarding Graduate Fellowships, three awards of $1,500 were made to graduate students enrolled in degree-granting programs in the US. The aim of these awards is to help cover travel to and/or living expenses in the Southern Caucasus. Several highly qualified applicants applied. Awards were made to the following projects:

- Middle Paleolithic Lithic Technology and Behavior in the Hrazdan River Gorge, Armenia (Beverly Schmidt, University of Connecticut).
- Archaeological Landscapes of Highland and Steppe Zones in Northwestern Naxçıvan, Azerbaijan (Emily Hammer, Harvard University).
- State Formation and Property Relations in Georgia: A Case Study of IDP Housing (Caitlin Ryan, University of Colorado Boulder).

ARISC members can look forward to reports on these projects in forthcoming newsletters.

ARISC sends its best wishes to the awardees for a fruitful research season!

ARISC In Appreciation

ARISC would like to thank all our 2011-12 country representatives for their tremendous work. In Armenia, Yurik Avetisyan and Varvara Gasparian have been assisting; Maryam Jabarova and Samira Balabayova have been the ARISC Representatives in Azerbaijan; and in Georgia, ARISC was represented by Giorgi Bedianashvili.

Sevinj Mammadova and Nargiz Alakbarli of the US-Educated Azerbaijani Alumni Association have assisted with coordinating events in Azerbaijan, as have Timothy Blauvelt (American Councils) and Ben Sweeney in Georgia, and Pavel Avetisyan, Haykuhi Mkrtchyan, and Alexander Markar in Armenia.

We are also very grateful to the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), especially Hans Gutbrod (Regional Director), and Country Directors Heghine Manasyan (Armenia), Gursel Aliyev (Azerbaijan) and Koba Turmanidze (Georgia), for their support of our activities in the South Caucasus.

And many, many thanks to everyone at the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) for all their assistance and guidance.

Donations

ARISC is very fortunate and thankful to have received generous donations from Lusin Arakelyan, Houry and Avedis Boyamian, Margaret and Sahag Dakesian, Levon Der Bedrossian, Rose and John Hagopian, Valerie and Carl Narsasian, Mrs. Erika and Dr. Allen Odian, and Toros Shamlian Jr. in support of our projects in Armenia. Thank you!
New Programs

2011-2012

ADDITIONAL GRANT FROM PROJECT DISCOVERY!

ARISC was awarded an additional grant of $7,500 from Project Discovery!, an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to the discovery and preservation of the archaeological and cultural legacy of ancient Armenia.

With this grant and several additional donations, ARISC has established and can continue the Collaborative Heritage Management Grant in the Republic of Armenia. The call invited proposals from collaborative teams in support of the preservation and conservation of the Republic of Armenia’s archaeological and historical heritage. This ARISC program, generously funded by Project Discovery!, seeks to foster joint work between American and Armenian scholars and institutions dedicated to the proper curation of heritage materials such as artifacts, sites, and manuscripts.

ARISC aims to establish similar grants for Azerbaijan and Georgia.

ARISC’s 2012 recipients of the Collaborative Heritage Management in Armenia competition, with a grant of $3,000, are Alexia Smith (University of Connecticut) and Ivan Gabrielyan (Institute of Botany) for their project, “Establishing a Botanical Reference Collection for Archaeobotanical Studies in Armenia.”

The final report of our first recipients, Lyssa Stapleton (University of California, Los Angeles) and Dr. Pavel Aветисян (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia) “Long-Term Preservation of Artifacts from the Site of Areni-1, Armenia” appears on page 2 of this newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP IN CAORC

ARISC has been admitted to the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) as a Member in Developing Status (www.caorc.org). Founded in 1981, CAORC is a private not-for-profit federation of independent overseas research centers that promote advanced research, particularly in the humanities and social sciences, with focus on the conservation and recording of cultural heritage and the understanding and interpretation of modern societies.

CAORC fosters research projects across national boundaries, encourages collaborative research and programmatic and administrative coherence among member centers, and works to expand their resource base and service capacity.

We thank Dr. Adam T. Smith for all his work on the proposal!

FACEBOOK

Would you like to stay informed of ARISC activities and various other information about the South Caucasus? If you haven’t yet “liked” us, take a moment to check out our page, https://www.facebook.com/AmericanResearchInstituteoftheSouthCaucasus and feel free to contribute to the postings of the online community!

GREATNONPROFITS.ORG

We’re working hard to get noticed! We recently created a profile with Great Nonprofits. Check us out at http://greatnonprofits.org/organizations/view/american-research-institute-of-the-south-caucasus and post a review of our organization!

JSTOR

Access to the humanities, social science, science and business research tool JSTOR is available in Baku, Tbilisi and Yerevan for the scholarly community through the support and cooperation of the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC).

JSTOR provides electronic access to past and current volumes of many scholarly journals including those on the lists found at http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/archives/collections.jsp.

All three CRRC library hours are from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM and their locations are available on the ARISC website (www.arisc.org).

Be sure to inform the librarian that you heard about the resource through ARISC.

TRAVELING ABROAD?

ARISC has representatives in each of the South Caucasus countries who are available to assist with the logistics of your research. Need to find a mid-term place to stay before heading into the field? Would you like to rent a bus to take your students to various sites? Want to know which internet service to subscribe to? Contact our reps!

ARISC co-sponsors events both in the US and the countries of the South Caucasus to further knowledge about the area in the US, share recent scholarship and create links with local scholars. As a relatively new organization, we rely on the assistance of our members to make this possible. If you will be traveling to any of the South Caucasus states, please email info@arisc.org to let us know where and when you will be going. In the past, many of our members have used this opportunity to give talks on their ongoing research or fieldwork and even co-presented their lectures with local scholars.

We would very much appreciate your help!
EVENTS

WiP - “Security Sector Reform, State Building and Social Consequences in Georgia”

This presentation laid out the plan for Ms. Hough’s dissertation research through which she hoped to explore how the security sector reforms following the Rose Revolution dramatically impacted the daily lives of Georgian citizens, particularly the freedom of movement of women and business prospects for local entrepreneurs, in Tbilisi and Svaneti.

Leslie Hough
PhD Candidate in Political Science
Yale University
February 29, 2012
6:15pm
CRRC-Tbilisi, Georgia

WiP - “‘Zhiviom, ra?’: Affective Registers of Russian Language Use in Contemporary Georgian”

This project investigated the social contexts in contemporary Tbilisi in which Russian language acts as a resource for affectively-charged Georgian utterances. Despite appearing “Russian”, speakers treat loanwords in aesthetic rather than political terms, semantically refiguring Russian terms in Georgian social practice. In this talk Dr. Sherouse presented examples from several different contexts and briefly discussed the historical links that speakers perceived for various parts of the Russian-influenced lexicon. Additionally, he discussed the category of speech designated by Georgians as "zhargoni" and the analytical problems it poses. One of the main goals of this project was to describe how modes of linguistic and cultural practice are passed on outside of educational institutions.

Perry Sherouse is a Ph.D. candidate in Linguistic Anthropology at the University of Michigan. He is currently conducting his dissertation research in Tbilisi, Georgia.

This talk was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC), American Councils and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).

WiP - “Zero Tolerance Schooling: Crime and Education in Georgia”

In this presentation, Dr. Slade discussed his research on the Georgian school system, specifically the institution of the mandaturi, or uniformed officers patrolling the schools.

Dr. Slade graduated from the University of Oxford, UK with a PhD. He first came to Georgia in 2002 where he conducted his PhD research over the past few years. His interests are criminological in focus and include: organized crime and state responses to it, penal subcultures, and prison and police reform in the post-Soviet space.

This talk was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC), American Councils and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).

“The Prehistory of Agriculture in the South Caucasus”

Dr. Roman Hovsepyan is a Research Scientist in the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Yerevan Armenia. He was a Fulbright Scholar in 2011-12 at Ohio State University where he was collaborating on a research project centered on the early history of agriculture in the Caucasus region. With support from ARISC, Dr. Hovsepyan delivered a public lecture at Cornell University entitled “The Prehistory of Agriculture in the South Caucasus”. Many members of the Cornell community, including both students and faculty were in attendance. Dr. Hovsepyan also set aside time to meet with some of the graduate students at Cornell.
EVENTS

WiP - “Political Control in the 3rd and 4th Century Caucasus”

Marco Bais
Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome
February 8, 2012
6:15pm
CRRC-Tbilisi, Georgia

This presentation examined (or reexamined) the changes in the political control over the Eastern Caucasian coast, according to some written sources (particularly Armenian, Iranian and Classical sources), laying stress on the emergence, the development and the collapse of the Kingdom of the Mazk’ut’k’ (to use the ethnic name we find in Armenian sources) between the 3rd and the 4th c. A.D.

Marco Bais is Associate Professor of Ancient Armenian Language (grabar) at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome. His main interests are the history of Caucasus in Late Antiquity, particularly the missionary activity within Caucasus and the history of Caucasian Albania. Another line of his research focuses on the Mongol conquests and domination as depicted by Caucasian (Armenian and Georgian) sources. One of his desiderata is writing a study on the shaping of Caucasus as a physical and cultural region throughout the history of European culture.

This talk was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC), American Councils and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).

WiP - “The Diversification of Post-Soviet Cultural Spaces”

John Schoeberlein
Harvard University
February 1, 2012
6:15pm
CRRC-Tbilisi, Georgia

This was the 1st talk of the Spring 2012 Works-in-Progress Series, co-sponsored by American Councils, the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), and American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).

WiP is an ongoing academic discussion series based in Tbilisi, Georgia, that takes place every Wednesday at the International School of Economics (ISET) building (16 Zandukeli Street). It is co-organized by CRRC and the American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS and ARISC.

The purpose of the WiP series is to provide support and productive criticism to those researching and developing academic projects pertaining the Caucasus region.

For more information, please visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/358813616610/

WiP - “Creating Brand Identity for the Georgian National Museum and New Opportunities to Join the International Museum Network”

Natalia Shelegia
Director of Communications Department
Georgian National Museum
December 21, 2011
6:15pm
CRRC-Tbilisi, Georgia

This presentation examined American and European museum culture, explored the methodologies that are used to create the brand identities in museums, studied Western communication paradigm transformation; discovered new trends affecting museum activities, examined Georgian museums concept and what is most important, adopted the researched materials and knowledge to modern Georgian museum model.

The ultimate goal of the empirical study is to describe the brand identity building process and analyze the branding methodologies, in order to broaden the knowledge about museum branding and to deliberate a set of recommendations for the Georgian National Museum. The data obtained with the qualitative research could assist museums in creation of effective branding tools for transforming Georgian museums into living and interesting, vital community resource and educational center, devoted to diffusion of knowledge and understanding in society.

Natalia Shelegia is the Director of Communications Department at the Georgian National Museum and is currently pursuing her PhD at Tbilisi State Academy of Arts. She has extensive experience in PR, communications, and marketing as well as being an artist. Her website is www.natalia.ge.

This talk was part of the Works-in-Progress (WiP) series and was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), American Councils for International Education, and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).
This presentation addressed the findings of the first phase of fieldwork in the MYPLACE (Memory, Youth, Political Legacy and Civic Engagement) Project. MYPLACE is a four-year international project employing a combination of survey, interview and ethnographic research to provide new, pan-European data that not only measures levels of civil participation of the young people (aged 16 to 25), but also captures the meanings young people attach to it.

Dr. Tinatin Zurabishvili has been coordinating the CRRC Caucasus Barometer survey since 2007 and the MYPLACE project since 2011. Since 1999 she has taught BA and MA courses in sociology, focusing on research methods, at Tbilisi State University and at the Center for Social Sciences of Tbilisi State University, where she was a Civic Education Project (CEP) Local Faculty Fellow (2001-2003) and Academic Fellowship Program Returning Scholar (2005-2006). Since 2010, she has been teaching at the Georgian Institute of Public Affairs (GIPA). Prior to teaching in Georgia, between 1999 and 2001 Dr. Zurabishvili served as a junior researcher for Yale University’s Poverty, Ethnicity and Gender in Eastern Europe during Market Transition project. Dr. Zurabishvili also worked for five years as a sociologist at the Russian Center for Public Opinion and Market Research (now the Levada Center), where she worked on the Russian Public Opinion Monitor.

Tamuna Khoshtaria is a research associate at CRRC. She holds a BA and MA in Social Sciences from Tbilisi State University. During her MA study she was awarded a scholarship to study at Humboldt University in Berlin, where she spent a year conducting qualitative research in family sociology.

This talk was part of the Works-in-Progress (WiP) series and was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), American Councils for International Education, and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).

This presentation highlighted the results of a “matched-guise” experiment in language status conducted on a large sample of young people in Tbilisi, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli in 2010. This experimental design isolated the cognitive mechanism of language status in the minds of the respondents, which made it an ideal technology for studying the status of various languages in contemporary Georgia as well as the incentives and costs for assimilation of minorities into the Georgian majority. This project was partially funded by CRRC.

Timothy Blauvelt has a PhD in Political Science from the State University of New York at Buffalo, and has been working in the region for more than a decade. He has been Country Director in Georgia for American Councils since 2003, and is Associate Professor of Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies at Ilia State University. He was a Visiting Fulbright Professor in Georgia in 2002-3, and in 2006-2011 he lectured on Soviet political history at Tbilisi State University. He has published numerous articles on Soviet politics, clientalism, nationality policy, and ethnic mobilization in Europe-Asia Studies, Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Kritika, War & Society, and Nationalities Papers.

This talk was part of the Works-in-Progress (WiP) series and was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), American Councils for International Education, and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).
“Xinaliq Documentation Project, in process”

Tamrika Khvtisiashvili
PhD candidate in Linguistics, University of Utah
ARISC Fellow

September 6, 2011
6:30pm
Caspian Business Center
Baku, Azerbaijan

Xinalug language (alternately Khinaliq) is a language isolate within the Northeast Caucasian language family spoken in only one village of the high mountains of Azerbaijan. Although there are some materials available on this language, the sources are limited. It is the goal of this documentation project to create a descriptive grammar and dictionary of Xinalug language in English. It is also our intent to document the ancient traditions and history of this unique population before it is too late.

Tamrika Khvtisiashvili is a Ph.D. candidate in Descriptive Linguistics at the University of Utah, U.S. Her dissertation will be based on the grammar of Xinalug language that she intends to finish within the next 3 years. She loves the Caucasus and its cultural/linguistic diversity, thus she has chosen it to be her goal to make the U.S. more aware and educated about this region, through her own work and work of her colleagues.

This talk was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC), the US-Educated Azerbaijani Alumni Association and VolkswagenStiftung (Volkswagen Foundation) in affiliation with Frankfurt University in Germany.

“Medieval Archaeology at the Crossroads: Excavations at the Arai Caravansera”

Kathryn Franklin
PhD candidate in Anthropology
University of Chicago

September 2, 2011
2:00pm
Institute of Archaeology & Ethnography NAS RA
Yerevan, Armenia

This presentation provided an early summary of results from summer 2011 excavations at the Arai Caravanserai site. This caravanserai or road-inn was a node in the late medieval world trade network, which intersected the Armenian Highlands and connected Europe and the Far East. Local sites such as the Arai caravanserai are interesting because they connect this large scale trade with questions of local politics and social life during the medieval period.

Kathryn Franklin is a senior graduate student at the University of Chicago in the Department of Anthropology. For the last four years she has worked in Armenia in connection with the joint American-Armenian Project for the Archaeology and Geography of Transcaucasian Societies (ArAGATS). Kathryn’s research focuses on political economy of the late medieval period, specifically the links between local highland perceptions of politics and long distance trade. This research is fueled by a wider interest in trade as a cultural practice, and in the history of the Armenian highlands.

This event was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC), the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography NAS RA, Project ArAGATS, and the Wenner-Gren Foundation.
EVENTS

“Uncovering the 1956 Georgian Protests and Their Memory”
Melissa F. Gayan
PhD candidate in History, Emory University
ARISC Fellow
August 3, 2011
5:00pm
Ilia University
Tbilisi, Georgia

This presentation introduced Ms. Gayan’s dissertation project which examined Georgian reaction to Khrushchev’s February 1956 “Secret Speech.” The project focused on the multi-leveled contested cultural nature of national identity in the Soviet Union. Ms. Gayan placed this event in the current historiography, spoke about methodology and source problems, and explained why this topic is still relevant to scholarship. Finally she shared how her project has turned to questions of how these events have been remembered or forgotten.

Melissa Gayan is a history Ph.D. candidate at Emory University specializing in Russia and the former Soviet Union with a focus on the Caucasus. Ms. Gayan’s dissertation topic is on the 1956 Georgian pro-Stalinist, anti-Soviet protests which took place after Nikita Khrushchev’s February 1956 “Secret Speech.” She also holds a Master’s Degree in History from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where her thesis examined Russian influence in Georgia during the first ten years after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ms. Gayan has been a teacher for many years in both public schools, institutes, and universities.

This talk was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus and Ilia University, and also made possible by a Russian and East European Studies Graduate Travel Grant from Emory University.

“Cohesion and Coercion in the Ruling Parties of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan”
Eli Feiman
PhD candidate, Brown University
ARISC Fellow
June 30, 2011
6:00pm
Ilia University
Tbilisi, Georgia

This talk addressed the formation, growth, and in some cases collapse of the ruling political parties of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. By examining cohesion among party elites and by examining the various other tools which parties use, Mr. Feiman presented the different trajectories of the parties over the past 20 years. His dissertation addresses the issues of democratization and the consolidation of political institutions, and examines these topics in the South Caucasus where these processes are still underway. This talk drew from interviews with political actors, election returns, internal party documents, and archival research.

Eli Feiman was a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Political Science at Brown University, and is now at the University of Michigan. In 2011, he was an ARISC Graduate Fellow in Georgia and was conducting field research for a dissertation on political party development in the South Caucasus. He received an MA in Political Science from Brown University (2008) and holds a BA in Slavic Languages and Literature from Yale University (2002). He research interests include the formation and consolidation of political institutions, patronage and clientelism, informal politics, and durable authoritarianism.

This talk was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC) and Ilia University.

“Bridging Two Continents: Archaeology at Samtavro in the Central Caucasus”
Antonio (Tony) Sagona
University of Melbourne
June 21, 2011
7:00pm
Ilia University
Tbilisi, Georgia

The talk provided an overview of three years of renewed excavations (2008-2010) at the important cemetery site of Samtavro in central Georgia. A collaborative Project between the Georgian National Museum and the University of Melbourne, the excavations have provided new and intriguing information for the period between 100 BC and AD 500. The talk presented a range of evidence from a diversity of mortuary practices through social customs to tantalizing hints of possible connections with Europe at the end of the Roman Empire.

Antonio Sagona is a professor of Archaeology at the University of Melbourne. His research interests have centered on ancient Turkey and the Caucasus. He is an elected Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities and an elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, London. His latest book, co-authored with Paul Zimansky, is Ancient Turkey, A Survey from the Earliest Settlements to the End of the Iron Age.

This talk was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC), Ilia University, the Georgian National Museum, the University of Melbourne and the Australian Research Council.
“Pencils and Erasers: Harmonizing Georgian Chant in the Early 20th Century”

John A. Graham
Princeton University Graduate School

March 16, 2011
6:00pm
CRRC-Tbilisi, Georgia

Faced with the task of organizing thousands of rough-draft chant transcriptions, three monks labored diligently during the period 1912-1915 to harmonize unfinished chants. It is well known that Ekvtime Kereselidze commissioned master-chanter Razhden Khundadze to harmonize more than one thousand chant melodies, but recent research on three manuscripts (National Centre of Manuscripts Q687, Q688, Q689) reveals that his harmonizations were later erased and rewritten. Stylistic differences point to a mysterious third chanter who contributed significantly to the way chant is harmonized and performed today.

This talk was part of the Works-in-Progress (WiP) series and was co-sponsored by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), American Councils for International Education, and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).
ARISC’s Representatives
The people who make everything happen abroad

Caucasus Mountains. Photo by Giorgi Bedianashvili.

Samira Balabayova

In 2005 I graduated from Azerbaijan University of Languages with a bachelor’s degree. While I was at AUL, I interned at the Foreign Affairs Ministry, translating at meetings and doing office work.

In 2010, I entered Khazar University for a master’s in European Studies, and am on the way to graduating this year. I’m planning to work on my own profile in the future. As a student I took part in several conferences and political simulation games held by European and other foreign scholars at our University.

Although I am a student of Political Science, my research interests are gender issues, democracy and human rights in the South Caucasus. Therefore, I am a supporter of integration to the Euro-Atlantic region. Moreover, I maintain the idea of stabilization and peace building in the South Caucasus, meaning more communication, socio-economic cooperation, and cultural exchange within Caucasus states.

The ARISC Baku Representative position will be a chance for me to challenge my skills and abilities, to meet with scholars, and to learn new things for my future.

ARISCBaku@yahoo.com

Giorgi Bedianshvili

I obtained my master’s degree at the Sorbonne University. In 2006-2008 with the professional scholarship of the Ministry of Culture of France, I worked on the Caucasian archaeological collections stored at the National Archaeological Museum of France. And in 2010-2001 I was a Carnegie Fellow at Purdue University.

Currently I work for the Georgian National Museum as an archaeologist. I have authored of a number of articles on Georgian Archaeology and have more than eight years of fieldwork experience in Georgia and abroad. My research interest is in Late Bronze/Early Iron Age of Caucasus.

For several years I have been conducting salvage excavations at the Treligorebi settlement in northern Tbilisi. I was involved in the Samtavro Project realized in cooperation with the Georgian National Museum and Melbourne University. I also conduct research on the interactions among Late Bronze/Early Iron Age communities in the Caucasus, particularly among archaeological cultures known as Colchis (Western Georgian) Koban (Northern Caucasus) and Samtavro (Central Part of Georgia) cultures.

ARISCTbilisi@yahoo.com

Varvara Gasparyan

A native of Armenia, I have been living in the US for more than 20 years during which I have graduated from the American Public University with a Bachelor’s Degree in History. I then graduated from Kaplan University with a Master’s Degree in Higher Education. Soon I will be completing my master’s thesis at the American Public University program in Ancient and Classic History. I love history and am interested in teaching history through distance learning using technological innovations. Nowadays people of all ages are learning a new or second profession by distance learning, allowing them to better organize their time and enhance their education. This practical case for the US population has potential to be popular in the South Caucasus as well.

Being an ARISC Yerevan Rep is very interesting work; it allows me to be acquainted with academics from US and Armenia, and helps me to be involved in the scientific projects of our scholars.

In this picture, I am embracing 300+ year old clay pitchers (karas) in a village in the Ararat Valley, Armenia. These vessels were used for making wine, or for preserving agricultural products.

ARISCYerevan@yahoo.com
Become A Member of ARISC

How to Become a Member

1. Determine your level of membership.
2. Complete the appropriate form and email to info@arisc.org or mail to the address below. Institutional Members will need to submit a hard copy of their membership form.
   Professor Ian Lindsay
   Department of Anthropology
   Purdue University
   700 W. State Street, Suite 219
   West Lafayette, IN 47907
3. Submit annual membership fee.
4. Memberships run from September 1st through August 31st.

Membership Levels

Institutional Membership
Any generally recognized academic or educational institution in the United States or Canada, or any association of such institutions, may become an Institutional Member of ARISC. Annual institutional membership dues are $500.

Individual Membership
Anyone may become an Individual Member of ARISC, upon application and acceptance by ARISC. Annual individual membership dues are $50.

Student Membership
Any undergraduate or graduate student currently seeking a degree at an accredited university may be admitted as a Student Member, upon application and acceptance by ARISC. Student Members will have all rights and privileges of Individual Members, and they will elect one Student Director to the board. Annual student membership dues are $20.

Corporate Membership
Any public or private corporation that is not entitled to Institutional Membership may participate in ARISC as a Corporate Partner. Corporate Partners may be recognized at the discretion of the Directors upon submission of an application. Interested corporations should send inquiries to info@arisc.org.

Membership Forms
All membership forms are available online or you may send your request to info@arisc.org.

Membership Payment Options
You may also pay by check, or by credit card by visiting the ARISC website www.arisc.org. ARISC uses the PayPal system to collect online membership fees.

Benefits of Membership
ARISC members receive access to an online discussion group and an annual newsletter. Members can get in-country support for the logistics of conducting research and access to other scholars of the South Caucasus.

Giving to ARISC
ARISC welcomes your gift contributions to support its mission! Checks can be made payable to The American Research Institute of the South Caucasus or ARISC and mailed to:
   Professor Ian Lindsay
   Department of Anthropology
   700 W. State Street, Suite 219
   West Lafayette, IN 47907
You may also use a credit card at our website, www.arisc.org. We use the PayPal system for online contributions. ARISC is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, academic organization. Donations to ARISC are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

CONTACT US
The American Research Institute of the South Caucasus
c/o Ian Lindsay
Department of Anthropology
Purdue University
700 W. State St., Suite 219
West Lafayette, IN 47907
info@arisc.org
http://www.arisc.org

OFFICERS
PRESIDENT
Karen S. Rubinson
VICE-PRESIDENT
William Fierman
SECRETARY
Lauren Ristvet
TREASURER
Ian Lindsay
REP. TO CAORC
Adam T. Smith
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Talin Lindsay

INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS
Brown University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Indiana University
Inst. for Aegean Prehistory (INSTAP)
Mount Holyoke College
New York University
Purdue University
Stanford University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Connecticut
University of Illinois
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
University of Pennsylvania
University of Texas, Austin
University of Washington

Waterfalls at Vandam, Azerbaijan. Photo by Leah Feldman.