Dear Colleagues:

This past year has been very exciting for ARISC. Soon after last year’s newsletter went to press, we learned that the US Department of Education issued a call for proposals for their American Overseas Research Centers program, previously cancelled in 2011. ARISC prepared a proposal on 2 months’ notice and learned 2 days before the beginning of the current fiscal year that we had been awarded one of 10 grants!

Receiving these funds has been challenging and rewarding; we have been able to expand our programming, have hired local representatives in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, have initiated a new and innovative grant program, and begun to establish our first office abroad in Yerevan.

The new activities and responsibilities include the hiring, and now oversight, of ARISC’s Resident Directors: Nina Iskandaryan in Yerevan, Leyla Rustamli Jabir in Baku, and Medea Turashvili in Tbilisi.

The new ARISC Graduate Student, Postdoctoral, and Junior Faculty Research Fellowship, funded by the Department of Education, was awarded this year to 2 junior faculty members and 1 advanced graduate student. These fellowships have a mentoring component that fosters ties between American and South Caucasus researchers and provides an avenue to communicate cutting-edge scholarly approaches, as can be seen in the reports in this newsletter.

These grants were in addition to the ARISC graduate student fellowships, this year 1 each for research in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, using on-going operating funds, and a Collaborative Heritage Management in Armenia Grant, funded by Project Discovery! and many individuals; those reports are herein as well.

Next April, ARISC will host a conference “Caucasus Connections,” also funded by US Departments of Education, in conjunction with the Sinor Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies at Indiana University, Bloomington.

The interdisciplinary conference will focus on the institutions, languages, cultures and histories that connect (as well as divide) the various places and peoples of the South Caucasus.

Curriculum materials based on the presentations will subsequently be prepared to support study of the South Caucasus in community colleges, as well as other higher education institutions.
EVENTS

News and Events from the past year

Archaeological Landscapes of Highland and Steppe Zones in Northwestern Naxçıvan

Emily Hammer
New York University, ARISC Fellow
August 3, 2012
18:30 pm
US-Azerbaijan Education Center, Caspian Business Center — Baku, Azerbaijan

The talk presented preliminary results from a new archaeological survey in Şərur Rayon. Our primary goals were to look for the remains of ancient settlement in the area surrounding a fortress site that had been excavated by the Naxçıvan Archaeological Project since 2008. In particular we had been looking for traces of other, smaller ancient fortresses and the campsites of nomadic herders.

Emily Hammer has just completed her PhD in Archaeology in the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University, with a dissertation on the archaeology of pastoral nomads of the Ottoman period in southeastern Turkey. Beginning in September 2012, she was a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University. Her general interests are Near Eastern landscape archaeology, especially the use of survey and satellite imagery to examine ancient settlement patterns, roads, and irrigation networks. In addition to her research in Turkey on pastoral nomads, she is actively involved in several archaeological excavations in the Emirate of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.

For more information, please visit:
https://www.facebook.com/events/249657191818881/

This talk was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC), Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University, the American School of Prehistoric Research, and the US-Education Azerbaijani Alumni Association (AAA).

New Technologies and Methods for the Online Publication of Archival and Museum Collections, and for Integrating Them into Studies of History, Social Sciences, and the Humanities

Dr. Paul Michael Taylor
Smithsonian Institution, USA
October 8, 2012
16:00 pm
CRRC— Yerevan, Armenia

This talk examined methods that are used to present historical, archeological, and ethnographic information online, in contrast to print publication, considering how new media enhance the presentation of data and interpretation but also present new challenges for scholars in these fields. Examples included Dr. Taylor’s large online publications of source materials and interpretations of data such as the records of the joint Dutch & American expedition of 1926 to New Guinea (www.sil.si.edu/expeditions/1926); the book and accompanying website about discoveries along the BTC-SCP pipelines from the Caspian to the Mediterranean (www.agt.si.edu); and the expeditions of Chokan Valikhanov as an introduction to Kazakhstan (www.valikhanov.si.edu). Such digitization/publication projects have often arisen through international partnerships, so Dr. Taylor and his research team from the Smithsonian also briefly outlined the Smithsonian’s activities in this area, with information on internships, fellowships, and other potential opportunities for collaborative research.

Paul Taylor, a research anthropologist at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, is Director of that museum’s Asian Cultural History Program, and serves as Curator of Asian, European, and Middle Eastern Ethnology. He has written numerous books and scholarly articles on the ethnography, ethnobiology, languages, and art (or material culture) of Asia, especially Indonesia. Most recently, he and his co-authors published the books Past and future heritage in the pipelines corridor: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey (Smithsonian, 2011; English/Georgian and English/Azerbaijani editions), and Turkmenistan: Ancient Arts Today (Smithsonian, 2011).

This talk was co-sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC), Caucasus Research Resource Center (CRRC) – Armenia, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Embassy of the United States of America in Armenia.

WiP: Endurance of the Soviet Imperial Tongue: The Russian Language in Contemporary Georgia

Timothy Blauvelt
February 6, 2013, 18:15 pm
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

A summary of the author’s forthcoming article in Central Asian Survey, this project examined the role of the Russian language on the periphery of the post-Soviet space using multiple sources of data, including original matched-guise experiments, to examine the language situation in contemporary Georgia. Among the former Soviet republics, Georgia was one in which the use of the titular language was most intensively institutionalized and that most ardently resisted Russification, and one that today for various reasons has been most eager to escape the legacy of its Soviet past and to embed itself in the global community. In Georgia the cultural and political influence of the former imperial center had been greatly reduced, and Russian had been challenged in functional roles by the new international lingua franca of English. The direction that the Russian language took in a place like Georgia might be a useful bellwether for such transformations elsewhere in the post-Soviet periphery.
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**WiP: A New Chance for Georgian Democracy?**

Charles Fairbanks  
Ilia State University and the Hudson Institute  
February 20, 2013  
18:15 pm  
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

Charles H. Fairbanks Jr. is a Professor at Ilia State University in Tbilisi and a Senior Fellow of the Hudson Institute. He was previously a research professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins/SAIS and a director of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute. He has served as a deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of State and member of the department’s policy planning staff. He was a foreign policy adviser to the Reagan campaign in 1980 and the Bush campaign in 1988. Fairbanks has served on the political science faculty of both Yale University and the University of Toronto.

This talk was based on Prof. Fairbanks’ recent article in the *Journal of Democracy* on the Georgian Parliamentary Elections in October 2012.

**WiP: Evolving Perceptions of the West in the Societies of the South Caucasus States**

Giorgi Mchedlishvili  
University of Georgia  
February 27, 2013  
18:15 pm  
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

In this talk Giorgi briefly considered the main strands and aspects of Western engagement in the South Caucasus, comparing the individual three republics. He explored how the very concept of the “West” had been evolving in the course of the past two decades. His main goal, however, has been studying the dynamics of the attitude towards the Western actors on the part of the societies in the three South Caucasian states.

Giorgi Mchedlishvili has a PhD in World History from Tbilisi State University and a Masters of Education from Harvard University. He is Associate Professor in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Georgia, and also lectures at the Center for Social Sciences at Tbilisi State University. He has also worked in the Policy Planning Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and from June 2013 will be a fellow of Chatham House in London.

**WiP: The Role of the Orthodox Church in the Formation of the Georgian Identity**

Tatia Kekelia, Elene Gavashelishvili, Kote Ladaria and Irene Sulkhanishvili  
Ilia State University  
March 6, 2013  
18:15 pm  
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

A team of four PhD students from Ilia State University, supervised by Professor Sergo Ratiani, implemented a research project in the framework of a joint grant from Ilia State University and the Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN). The research took place during the period of September 2010 — September 2012. The outcome of the project was a book entitled, *The Role of the Orthodox Church in the Formation of Georgian Identity* (with a special focus on the processes taking place in the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st). The authors tried to objectively describe the state of the social institutions, while emphasizing the challenges facing these institutions today.

**WiP: Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Urban Areas of Georgia – A New Way of Spatial Segregation?**

Prof. Joseph Salukvadze and David Sichinava  
Tbilisi State University  
March 13, 2013  
18:15 pm  
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

This presentation aimed to shed light on the impact of the state program of resettlement on the lives of the IDP population in Georgia and its effects on the integration of IDPs into the mainstream urban society of the country. The proposed hypothesis suggested that the artificial spatial clustering of the newly created IDP settlements, along with the collective centers created earlier, had negative consequences on the level of integration of the relocated populations. The analysis was based on data gathered in the framework of a research project entitled “Coping with marginality – can IDP communities successfully integrate into mainstream urban societies in Georgia?”, launched by the Department of Human Geography of Tbilisi State University and supported and financed by the Academic Swiss Caucasus Network (ASCN).

About the authors: Joseph Salukvadze is a full professor at Tbilisi State University. David Sichinava works for CRRC as a GIS and database analyst and is a PhD candidate at the Department of Human Geography at Tbilisi State University.
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**Seminar on Modern Botanical Collections as a Basis for Comparative Analysis of Paleobotanical and Archaeobotanical Findings**

Ivan Gabrielyan
Institute of Botany
March 19, 2013
18:00 pm
LJAEAS — Yerevan, Armenia

Dr. Ivan Gabrielyan, Senior Researcher with the Institute of Botany, presented the results of the work he did within the framework of an ARISC project to compile a collection of modern Armenian fruits, seeds and flora, which could be used for the comparative study of paleobotanical and archaeobotanical samples. ARISC Resident Director in Armenia Nina Iskandaryan presented the programs of ARISC that enable the joint activities of academic bodies and researchers from the U.S. and the South Caucasus.

**WiP: Elections in de facto states: Abkhazia, Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh**

Dr. Donnacha Ó Beacháin
Dublin City University
March 27, 2013
18:15 pm
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

While the post-Soviet space contains many states that fix elections, recent elections in de facto states (2011-12) have been noteworthy for the fact that voters and analysts could not with certainty predict the outcome. Moreover, unlike many of the successor states of the USSR, Abkhazia and Transnistria have already witnessed a post-election transfer of power from government to opposition. In the small but increasing literature on de facto states the post-Soviet unrecognized states are usually examined exclusively in the realm of conflictology, international relations or geopolitics. Assessments or analyses of elections are virtually nonexistent.

This presentation charted the development of electoral politics in post-Soviet unrecognized or partially recognized de facto states, namely Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and Transnistria. In particular, it examined presidential elections in Abkhazia (August 2011), Transnistria (December 2011) and Nagorno-Karabakh (July 2012) with a complementary focus on parliamentary elections in Abkhazia (2012). This research provided an assessment of the dynamics of electoral politics within these three unrecognized or partially recognized post-Soviet states.

The analysis was framed by scores of interviews conducted within Abkhazia, Transnistria and Nagorno-Karabakh during repeated visits throughout 2011-2012 as well as in those states from which they have separated. The presentation benefited from two major research grants awarded to Dr. Ó Beacháin. During 2011-12 he was a recipient of an 18 month major research grant from the IRCHSS and Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs Conflict Resolution Unit to lead a research team to examine the role of the OSCE and EU in the post-Soviet protracted conflicts. In January 2012 Dr. Ó Beacháin received an additional commission from the IRCHSS/Department of Foreign Affairs to conduct field research in Abkhazia and Transnistria and wrote two reports evaluating electoral politics in these two unrecognized states.

Donnacha Ó Beacháin is a faculty member of the School of Law and Government, Dublin City University, where he lectures on post-Soviet politics and Irish foreign policy. Recent and forthcoming books include: The Colour Revolutions in the Former Soviet Republics: Successes and Failures (co-editor, Routledge, 2010), Destiny of the Soldiers: Fianna Fáil, Irish Republicanism and the IRA, (Gill and Macmillan, 2011), Life in Post-Communist Eastern Europe after EU Membership (co-editor, Routledge, 2012), Political Communication in Ireland (co-editor, Liverpool University Press) and The Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Conflict: The Politics of Partition (Manchester University Press).
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**WiP: Coverage of Political Subjects in the News: Major Findings of Television Monitoring during the 2012 Parliamentary Elections**

Mariam Kobaladze  
April 3, 2013  
18:15 pm  
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

This presentation reflected on the coverage of political subjects in television news before and after the parliamentary elections of 2012. The presentation was based on a 7-month monitoring project funded by UNDP. This project covered the main news programs of seven television channels (GPB Channel 1, Rustavi 2, Imedi, Kavkasia, Maestro, Channel 9, and Real TV) from May 11 to November 30, 2012, and showed the polarization of the Georgian media during this period. Mariam Kobaladze is a researcher at CRRC. She has been working on media monitoring projects since 2010.

**WiP: From War to Conflict and Back: Borderland Violence in ‘Post-Conflict’ Abkhazia**

Anastasia Shesterinina  
PhD Candidate, University of British Columbia  
April 24, 2013  
18:15 pm  
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

In the two decades following the termination of the 1992-93 Georgian-Abkhaz war, what emerged as the border area between Georgia and Abkhazia as a result of the war has been characterized by multiple, diverse forms of post-war political violence. This area stretching from the heights of the Caucasus Mountains to the Black Sea along the Inguri River – a natural line that separates the Georgian- and Abkhaz-controlled territories – was relatively peaceful before the war and was barely touched during the months of the war. As the war ended, however, it became the epicenter of organized collective political violence in Abkhazia, including a protracted period of clashes and continuous low-level guerrilla activity and warlordism, or “nut racket,” in the lowlands of the Gali region and repeated episodes of fighting with heavy weaponry in the highlands of the Kodori Gorge.

This paper focused on the post-war political violence situation in Abkhazia immediately following the 1992-93 war. Drawing on a variety of sources, I argued that the borderland post-war violence reflected the localized continuation of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict by violent means. This violence was facilitated by the complex, embedded social structure established as a result of the war among the key groups of actors engaged in the area. The local population on the Abkhaz side of the Inguri, in Gali, and the displaced persons on the Georgian side, in Zugdidi, were positioned “between two fires” – the Abkhaz forces and the Georgian armed groups presented at the border. This positioning allowed both armed factions to variously involve the local population in the violence and prolong the conflict.

Anastasia Shesterinina is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Department of Political Science and Liu Scholar at the Liu Institute for Global Issues at the University of British Columbia in Canada. She specializes in international relations and comparative politics. Her fieldwork-based doctoral dissertation research explores the patterns of organized collective political violence in the “post-conflict” case of Abkhazia, a breakaway territory of Georgia. Anastasia has presented her work at major political science conferences in Canada, the United States, and Europe. Her research has been supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada, the Security and Defence Forum Program, and the Liu Institute for Global Issues.
WiP: The Informal Post-Socialist Economy
Abel Polese, Tallinn University
May 3, 2013
18:15 pm
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

The main goal of the research was to demonstrate the significance and dynamics of informal economic practices in post-socialist spaces, not only as survival strategies but also as phenomena that persisted and outlived economic transition. It did so by comparing case studies from different categories of people in a wide range of post-socialist realities.

Most accounts of informality, from a variety of scholarly traditions, were based on exclusive explorations of 'losers of transitions', assuming that this was a phenomenon restricted to lower-income segments of society and adding to the literature on 'survival strategies'. Such accounts often met and merged with the vast literature on corruption to either see informal economic practices as an evil to eradicate, or alternatively, in an effort to advocate the existence of several contextual moralities, they tended to adopt a double standard: whilst justifying the survival strategy adopted by the 'losers of transition', who needed informal transactions to survive, they condemned similar actions performed by 'winners of transitions', who used them to accumulate wealth and influence, sometimes on an unimaginable scale.

Our findings challenged the view that informal economic practices related solely to poverty/economic status. Whilst the way informal practices were performed, produced and maintained might depend on the economic status of a country, they also reflected phenomena that could not be grasped through an exclusively economic or rational individualist approach. In this respect we argued, and our case studies demonstrated, that informal practices were also expressive of sociality embedded in a given context and alternative ways of engaging with the production of the political by strata of the population that might be excluded from core political processes. Such practices could express a desire to participate in economic processes but also to make up for the lack of attention a state had devoted to social issues and self-realization of its citizens.

A key innovative feature of the project book was the use of ‘composite informants’ throughout the whole volume. The informant for each chapter had been constructed from the material collected during years of fieldwork from many informants. Alternatively, it was a real informant that the author had deemed representative of a category and the comparison with other people or similar categories was presented in a way that was more immediate, vivid and compelling than in traditional ethnographic accounts.


WiP: Openness in State Universities in Georgia
Tamar Iakobidze, IDFI
May 8, 2013
18:15 pm
ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

This talk presented an overview of openness of the Georgian state universities based on extensive use of public information requests (submitted in 2010-2013) within the framework of the “Public Information Database” project funded by the Open Society Institute. The changed legal status of some state universities and implications of this for the autonomy and openness of universities were also touched upon. Further, some comparative insights were drawn from the international experience.

Tamar Iakobidze has been an analyst at IDFI since September 2011. She holds a BA in Political Science from Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (2010) and an MSc in Policy Studies from the University of Edinburgh (2011).
This project investigated the impact of foreign aid that had been pledged by international donors after the 2008 conflict with Russia. While the literature examined both economic and political implications of increased aid inflows, this project focused on effects on the latter: the political regime in Georgia. Since independence, the country was a regular recipient of the Official Development Assistance (ODA). In 2008, however, the amount of aid more than doubled that received during the previous years. The reason was the conflict with Russia. International donors pledged over 4.5 billion USD to support development and post-conflict recovery. This money was distributed over 5 years. Therefore, from 379 million USD in 2007, the amount of aid money increased to about 887 million USD in 2008, and to 907 million USD in 2009. Throughout the following years, it remained higher than in the pre-conflict period, but lower than in the 2008-9. Therefore, these two years will be crucial for this research project.

Concern over the high amount of aid flows and additional wind-falls of aid was expressed by various critics. They pointed to sub-Saharan Africa and other aid-dependent countries, and argued that due to its high share in countries’ economies, low-income countries were not able to absorb such aid. Therefore, by analyzing panel data from those countries, they pointed out the negative impact of aid on the developmental outcomes and questions the very essence of the aid – its effectiveness. Elliot Berg, for example, suggested that aid begins to have negative effects on local institutions when aid flows reach 5 percent of GDP, which would mean that in 2008 (7%), 2009 (8.5%) and 2010 (5.5%) Georgia crossed this threshold. On the other hand, proponents of the foreign assistance acknowledged these problems and suggested dealing with them through ‘conditionality’ and ‘selectivity’. This research project challenged these views by analyzing Georgia’s national data on the macro level in order to try to show that there was neither positive nor negative impact on political regime development. On the other hand, it also suggested that the aid helped the government to maintain power.

Levan Tsutskiridze is an MA student at the Tbilisi State University in the Transformation and Political Regime Dynamics in Post-War Georgia program that was administered by the Center for Social Sciences. He is an MA student at the Tbilisi State University in the Transformation and Political Regime Dynamics in Post-War Georgia program that was administered by the Center for Social Sciences.

This project described how the fields of politics and social media intertwine in Georgia, and raised the question of whether politics governed the media or the media govern politics in the Georgian reality. It was often conjectured that given the current social media boom and the accompanying emergence of citizen journalism, social media possess a real potential to influence politics.

Moreover, scholars spoke of the epoch of Mediocracy that was the “colonization of politics by the logic of the media” (Meyer, 2002). It was also suggested that the media, and especially social media, had become such an important agent in political games that we were experiencing a “rationalization of persuasion” (Mayhew, 1997), implying that political actors tried to find and utilize effective means of persuasion using the media. But what was the situation in Georgia? Based on in-depth interviews with media-experts in Georgia, it appeared that here we encountered a colonization of the media, including the social media, by politics and not the other way around. However, this colonization was accomplished not in an aggressive way, such as through direct censorship, but rather in a “soft” manner, such as through co-opting bloggers. One oft-cited example was the organization of informal meetings with bloggers by the prime-minister or other government ministers. As a result, it seemed that after such meetings politicians divided cyber space in two camps: “ours” and “theirs,” inviting the “friendly” bloggers to subsequent meetings to write indulgent rather than critical posts for their readers.

In this context, the concept of “media-framing” (based on E. Goffman’s conceptualization) became crucial, as it highlighted how the media, in this case social media, represented politics and how politicians responded to it. Based on media-experts’ evaluations, in Georgia the politicians used their power to prevent social media from moving from the “front region” to the “back region” (Goffman, 1955), which appeared to be one of the ways in which the interaction of politics and media in Georgia differed from that in Western democracies.

Lia Tsuladze is Associate Professor of Sociology in the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences of Tbilisi State University. She is Director of the Program of Applied Social Research at the Center for Social Sciences (CSS).
Her research interest involved youth culture in modern Georgia, focusing on the construction of youth identities in the context of “glocalization.” Her recent comparative research (supported by the Volkswagen Foundation and New Europe College) dealt with youth perceptions of Westernization-Europeanization in the New European countries (the cases of Romania and Poland) and the margins of Europe (the case of Georgia). She has been leading a project on social media development trends in Georgia supported by the Academic Swiss Caucasus Net (ASCN), in the context of which the present research project has been undertaken.

**WiP: Addressing Past Injustices: How to Deal with Georgia’s Painful Past?**

Medea Turashvili

ARISC

May 29, 2013

18:15 pm

ISET/CRRC — Tbilisi, Georgia

The past is the most disputed aspect of Georgia’s conflicts, yet the most overlooked one as a tool of conciliation. The aim of this research project was to explore “Dealing with Past” (DwP) mechanisms relevant for the Georgian-Abkhazian context by mapping groups which had suffered as a result of the conflict, the losses and violations they had experienced, and the available options to restore justice. The author sought to explore how DwP mechanisms can contribute to conflict transformation in the short and medium terms.

Medea Turashvili is an analyst and researcher focusing on conflicts, human rights and security issues. She has been the ARISC Resident Director for Georgia. She previously worked for International Crisis Group and the European Centre for Minority Issues. She is also a board member of the Georgian Political Science Association. Medea holds an MA in Conflict Studies and Human Rights from Utrecht University, Netherlands (2008). This research project was made possible by the support of Conciliation Resources (UK).

View of landscape from the mouth of Areni.

*Photo by Ivan Gabrielyan and Alexia Smith*
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Collaborative Heritage Management Grant in the Republic of Armenia

Ivan Gabrielyan and Alexia Smith

Establishing a Botanical Reference Collection for Archaeobotanical Studies in Armenia

Archaeobotany, the study of human use of plants in antiquity, has huge potential to address a wide range of questions regarding food use, food procurement, and the role that plants played in changing societies in the past. Plant remains routinely preserve on archaeological sites and, once recovered, can be identified based on morphological similarities with modern-day plant parts and seeds.

Lists of the number of plant species and plant parts present at a site can be analyzed to determine crop preferences, the nature and extent of crop processing or wild plant use, the ritual use of plants, or can be examined to assess spatial differences in plant use that relate to task-specific areas or social status. Combined this information can contribute to a deeper understanding of ancient economy, trade, resource exploitation, landscape use, and palaeoenvironment.

In order to identify plant remains accurately, archaeobotanists require access to a high-quality, securely identified modern botanical comparative collection containing a diverse range of species. The goal of this project was to establish a botanical comparative collection of modern Armenian flora that can be used by multiple archaeobotany specialists working on archaeological sites within Armenia.

Funding was provided by ARISC to collect specimens from 100 different species. All specimens were collected in triplicate and identical collections are now housed at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Yerevan, the Institute of Botany in Yerevan, and the Archaeobotany Laboratory at the University of Connecticut in the United States. The replication of the collection enhances its availability to researchers worldwide.

Pressed specimens and associated seeds from 100 plant species were collected across Armenia by Ivan Gabrielyan (a Senior Researcher at the Institute of Botany in Yerevan) between May and December of 2012 and were curated in Yerevan with the assistance
of Tamara Bagoyan (a botany and archaeobotany doctoral student at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography). Curation and management of the collection stored at the University of Connecticut was undertaken by Alexia Smith.

Within the field, plants were observed in their natural habitat and once they were deemed to be yielding mature seeds, comparative material was collected in triplicate. For each species, three healthy plants were selected and collected in their entirety for pressing. Associated seeds were gathered in the field and stored in labeled paper bags.

Collecting seeds is particularly important since they are the most frequently preserved plant part encountered on archaeological sites. Detailed information on the location, ecology, and associated flora of the collection spot was also recorded to thoroughly document the collection.

Since the accuracy of any identification of archaeobotanical remains rests upon the accuracy of the comparative collection, ensuring that comparative material is correctly identified (and that identifications can later be verified by associated pressed specimens) is of utmost importance. The collection of modern pressed specimens along with seeds was essential, therefore, and allowed for the creation of a herbarium-vouchered seed collection. Identifications of all species were verified at the Institute of Botany in Yerevan to ensure accuracy.

The number of seeds collected per specimen varied, depending upon the number of seeds that each species naturally produces. For members of the Prunus (plum) and Amygdalus (almond) genera, for example, 25 endocarps or stones were typically selected per plant for each of the three collections. In contrast, members of the Asteraceae family typically yield large numbers of seeds per plant and collection of 500–1000 seeds per species for each collection was common. Since both inter- and intra-species variation in the morphology of seeds exists, maintaining large numbers of seeds within the collection is important.

Currently the collection is being used to identify archaeobotanical remains from Areni-1, a Chalcolithic and Medieval site located in the Vyats Dzor province of southern Armenia, where exceptional conditions have preserved large amounts of plant material. Since Areni-1 has yielded large amounts of edible fruit, collection of comparative material through this project initially targeted species and varieties within the Prunus, Vitis, and Armeniaca genera. Other economic and wild species that commonly occur in archaeological assemblages, such as legumes and grasses, were also collected.

To date, Tamara Bagoyan has used the collection at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography to study the plant remains at Areni-1 under the guidance and supervision of Boris Gasparian, Ivan Gabrielyan, and Alexia Smith. Alexia Smith regularly uses the collection at the University of Connecticut and is now carrying out a morpho-metric analysis of Prunus, Amygdalus, and Armeniaca stones (endocarps) in order to develop numeric criteria for distinguishing between species based on the morphology of the endocarps. This study will aid the identification of archaeological remains.

**This project has been incredibly successful in establishing a comparative collection of modern Armenia flora to assist in the identification of archaeobotanical remains from Armenian sites.**

Outside of the ongoing work being conducted at Areni-1, very little archaeobotanical work has been conducted in Armenia, and this collection will allow for that to change. In recent years, interest in archaeobotany within Armenia has increased and this collection will undoubtedly support a larger number of archaeobotanical studies at sites of all time periods.

At present, there are only two Armenian archaeobotanists (Roman Hovsepian and Tamara Bagoyan) working in Armenia, despite the enormous potential for future research. Since access to a botanical comparative collection is essential for any archaeobotanical study, the prior lack of comparative material would have served as a serious constraint to anyone wishing to establish an active research program. This constraint no longer exists.

The existence of identical collections maintained by institutions within the United States and Armenia makes them much more widely available to interested researchers and, thereby, will help stimulate archaeobotanical research in Armenia by both Armenian and non-Armenian scholars.

This project has been incredibly successful in establishing a comparative collection of modern Armenia flora to assist in the identification of archaeobotanical remains from Armenian sites. Funding provided by the ARISC Collaborative Heritage Management Grant allowed for the collection to begin and it now has a sizeable base. It is important to continue collecting additional plant species, however, to enhance the diversity of plant taxa represented and broaden the range of species that can be securely identified.

Obtaining funding for collections such as this can be challenging, despite their importance, since most agencies wish to fund active research. The existence of the collection established through ARISC has made it easier to obtain funds for additional targeted collection of certain taxa. In 2011, Alexia Smith was awarded a National Science Foundation Early Faculty Career Award, which is providing $5250 over a five year period (2011–2016) to further the collection. In 2013, the Norian Armenian Programs Committee at the University of Connecticut also provided $5000 to help broaden the collection further and expand the collection of wild and native grape strains. While these collections were created to aid the identification of archaeological remains, they also have potential to provide information on the genetic diversity of flora within Armenia. The flora of Armenia is particularly rich and documenting the use of plants in antiquity forms an important part of better understanding Armenia’s cultural heritage. While this project has not directly conserved ancient cultural heritage resources, it will do so indirectly, since the existence of this collection will allow for better informed archaeobotanical studies and will hopefully stimulate archaeobotanical research to grow in Armenia.

Very little is known about ancient plant use in Armenia, so the potential for future research is enormous. At present, little is understood about the origin of domesticated fruits such as apricot, Prunus sp., grape, and walnut across Southwest Asia. All of the current evidence points to the southern Caucasus as a likely origin, and remains from Areni-1 will undoubtedly shed light on questions of domestication once the morphology of comparative material has studied in detail.

The range of studies that will be made possible by the creation of this collection extends well beyond the examples provided here, however, and includes analysis of plant remains from any archaeological site within Armenia.

**Dr. Alexia Smith, an Assistant Professor at the University of Connecticut, is interested in food production, environmental change, and their relation to the economy and social organization of early civilizations. Dr. Ivan Gabrielyan is a Senior Researcher at the Institute of Botany in the Republic of Armenia. His research also focuses on paleobotany and environmental change. The CHM Grant is made possible by funding from Project Discovery!**
Emily Hammer  

Archaeological Landscapes of Highland and Steppe Zones in Northwestern Naxçıvan, Azerbaijan

With the generous support of the American Research Institute in the South Caucasus, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University, and the American School of Prehistoric Research, I conducted six weeks of archaeological fieldwork in Naxçıvan, an autonomous, spatially discontinuous region of Azerbaijan.

The fieldwork was carried out in collaboration with the Naxçıvan Archaeological Project, directed by Dr. Lauren Ristvet (University of Pennsylvania), Dr. Voli Baxşəliyev (Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences, Naxçıvan), and Dr. Səfor Aşurov (Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences, Baku).

The field team I directed consisted of an Azerbaijani student (Mr. Emin Məmmədov, Naxçıvan State University), an American undergraduate student (Ms. Stephanie Martin, Bryn Mawr College) and two American graduate students (Ms. Lara Fabian, University of Pennsylvania, and Ms. Jennifer Swerida, Johns Hopkins University).

The project involved survey work designed to locate, map, and date archaeological sites in an area surrounding the Iron Age (ca. 2700 BP) fortress of Oğlanqala.

More specifically, project methods included systematic pedestrian archaeological survey aided by satellite imagery and spatial analysis. High-resolution satellite photographs were used to identify possible areas of interest in the river plain, steppe and highland zones. The survey team visited these areas of interest to investigate the form, function, and chronology of any anthropogenic features. GPS receivers were used to map features and record surface pottery concentrations. In cases where significant ceramic scatters were present, the spatial limits of these scatters were determined by walking regularly spaced transects.

To ensure that the recovery of sites was not biased by the satellite imagery, the survey team systematically walked regularly spaced transects in several sample zones. Within cultivated areas, the survey team investigated areas along canal banks and fallow fields, as these areas had the most highly visible surfaces, where we were most likely to be able to properly document changes in surface ceramic distribution.

Six discrete dense ceramic scatters corresponding to ancient settlements, one partially collapsed underground tomb, seventeen stone burial mounds (kurgans), three large stone landscape-scale walls and one formerly inhabited cave were located and studied during the course of our season.

In addition to these newly-discovered sites, we also investigated a number of previously studied sites for the purposes of re-evaluating their chronology. As these archaeological features date to a range of time periods spanning at least 4000 years and correspond to a variety of different types of human occupation, I will focus the remainder of this report only on our findings related to the Iron Age occupation at Oğlanqala itself.

My collaborators have been excavating Oğlanqala since 2008, and one of the goals of our new survey work was to investigate the relationship between the fortress and its surrounding environment.

The excavations raised several questions that could only be addressed through survey work: 1) In the Iron Age, the fortress of Oğlanqala was not a unique site. Rather, it was part of a complex landscape of fortresses in the highlands of what is now eastern Turkey, Armenia, and Naxçıvan. What was the relationship between Oğlanqala and other nearby fortresses, both politically and environmentally?

2) What was the relationship between settlements in the lower river plains and activities that might have taken place around highland fortresses such as Oğlanqala? 3) Excavations at Oğlanqala itself have revealed stone fortification walls and large administrative buildings, but no domestic structures dating to the Iron Age. Where did the people who were associated with the fortress live?

The survey project was designed with these questions in mind, and our fieldwork made significant progress towards answering them. Our understanding of the area around Oğlanqala in the Iron Age has increased through our discovery of large stone wall segments that indicate Oğlanqala was not a single isolated fortress, but instead part of a massive settlement complex incorporating two fortresses and a settlement surrounded by a city wall.

The large stone wall segments are located in the uncultivated steppe and highland zones to the northeast of the site. Three distinct segments of wall were located that extend for 850 meters, 370 meters, and 530 meters. The longest (850-meter) wall segment extends from another fortress site, Qızqala 1, which is approximately 2 kilometers north of Oğlanqala. The 530-meter wall segment’s southern end appears to turn southwest towards Oğlanqala.

The position of these walls suggests that they joined and encircled Oğlanqala and Qızqala 1, creating a massive fortified area of at least 487 hectares that enclosed the northern part of the Şarur Plain, the Arpaçay River Gorge, and surrounding defensible highlands. The size of the enclosed area is an important finding — this is a huge size for any site in the Naxçıvan region, where excavated and surveyed settlements of all pre-modern periods rarely encompass more than 10 hectares of space, including their fortification walls.

Ceramic scatters documented along the banks of a large canal south of Qızqala 1 show that there was an extensive ancient settlement in an area that has been destroyed by modern agriculture.

Survey in the nearby uncultivated edges of the valley also yielded dense scatters of ceramics of the Middle Bronze Age, the Iron Age, and the Medieval Period. In addition to these scatters, the cut side of the canal showed archaeological stratigraphy, including massive stone wall foundations, smaller mudbrick wall foundations, ceramic ovens, and multiple living floors.

The spatial distribution of the surface ceramic scatters and the stratigraphy visible in the canal cut corresponds to the position of the large stone wall extending from Qızqala 1, mentioned above. The survey team documented a clear drop-off in ceramic density immediately beyond the probable path of the wall. This would seem to indicate that the portions
of the large stone wall adjacent of Qızqala 1 were a city wall.

The discovery of this settlement area within a fortification wall raises two questions for future investigation: 1) How much of the ca. 487 ha area within the large walls was settled, and what was the population in various periods? 2) Although it was also inhabited in the Iron Age, Qızqala 1 has appears to have been founded in the Middle Bronze Age, more than a thousand years before the first fortress at Qızqala. Do the large surrounding walls date to the Iron Age or were certain parts of the wall founded in the Middle Bronze Age?

Thus far, the excavations at Qızqala have interpreted the Iron Age activities at that site through the lens of the expansion of the Urartian Empire, which controlled nearby areas in this period. The massive settlement and walled area linking Qızqala to the older Qızqala 1 fortress indicates that we need to also consider the activities at Qızqala as extensions of local developments beginning in the Middle Bronze Age.

These questions and issues are more broadly important for understanding the early development of urban centers and state-level societies in the South Caucasus region. Many people working elsewhere in the region have argued on the basis of archaeological evidence that urbanism and complex political organization began in the Late Bronze Age, but the presence of a large Middle Bronze Age settlement below Qızqala 1, along with other recent findings in the Naxçıvan area, are indicating that political complexity may have begun earlier in this area, in the Middle Bronze Age.

In addition to survey work immediately surrounding Qızqala, our survey team mapped the surface architecture at four other nearby fortress sites known to be roughly contemporary with Qızqala: Sədərəkqala, Karasuqala, Qızqala 1, and Qızqala 2. The surface plans of all of these fortresses will be compared and contrasted in a future publication.

Beyond our archaeological findings, the survey team’s work reached an important general methodological conclusion. Archaeological work in other parts of the South Caucasus has suggested the Soviet-period agriculture transformed the landscape so dramatically that un-mounded archaeological sites and formerly mounded archaeological sites are not visible and that surface ceramic densities cannot be used as indication of what remains exist beneath the surface.

The differences in ceramic distribution in agricultural fields documented by our team and the sharp drop-off in ceramic density beyond the Qızqala 1 wall suggest that this generalization about Soviet agriculture is not true for the area around Qızqala. The Şorur Plain was extremely intensively cultivated during the Soviet period (most intensive area of cultivation in Naxçıvan), so it is possible that Soviet-period agricultural activity did not transform the archaeological record beyond recognition with intensive survey techniques such as those applied by our team.

The research conducted this summer was the pilot season for a research program that we will carry out over the next 3-4 years.

The two major goals of future survey work will be 1) better understand the appearance of political complex, urban societies in the Southern Caucasus in the Bronze and Iron Ages, and 2) to document different types of archaeological sites in river plain, steppe, and mountainous zones. The data collected have already provided some important conclusions as well as the material necessary to write successful longer-term grant applications.

Emily Hammer has just completed her PhD in Archaeology in the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University, with a dissertation on the archaeology of pastoral nomads of the Ottoman period in southeastern Turkey. Her general interests are Near Eastern landscape archaeology, especially the use of survey and satellite imagery to examine ancient settlement patterns, roads, and irrigation networks. In addition to her research in Turkey on pastoral nomads, she is actively involved in several archaeological excavations in the Emirate of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.
Caitlin Ryan
State Formation and Property Relations in Georgia: A Case Study of IDP Housing

Georgia’s President Mikheil Saakashvili inherited the ruins of the Soviet empire filled with the victims of its collapse. Approximately 50,000 families fleeing civil war in Abkhazia in 1992-93 found refuge in the abandoned and looted infrastructure of Soviet industry. These buildings, which they still occupy today, are a hodgepodge of former state-run enterprises such as pharmaceutical firms, former worker housing, and the various parts of the social infrastructure surrounding the state enterprise—schools, hospitals, military barracks.

IDP families remained in their “temporary” sites of displacement for 19 years with minimal assistance from the state. Then suddenly in 2009 the government embarked on a hastily planned program to address problems in IDP housing. It began in early 2009 by offering ownership contracts to IDPs in Tbilisi. By the end of the year construction companies had renovated hundreds of buildings outside the capital and by 2010 plans were drawn up to construct new apartment units in the Black Sea cities of Poti and Batumi, and the mountain resort town of Tskhaltubo.

A high-level Steering Committee consisting of the donors and government agencies involved in planning, funding and implementing the work was formed to oversee and coordinate key decisions.

With funding from ARISC and NCEEER, this project uses this unprecedented housing program as a lens through which to investigate the intersection of state-building and humanitarian action.

Through a combination of Georgian language study, interviews with IDPs, government employees and aid agency representatives, and document review, it investigates the role of housing and property in Georgia’s social and economic development, what it means to be a modern Georgian citizen and how the new state establishes and exercises its power vis-à-vis the international humanitarian order.

One of the main findings of the project was the identification of a “discourse of dignity” that pervaded the housing program’s rationale, despite a number of shortcomings in upholding dignity in practice. In particular, key reports and speeches by western aid agencies interpret the Georgian legal framework on IDP housing as upholding “the right to dignified living conditions” even when the latter did not contain such language.

Aid agencies nevertheless stuck to their aims of upholding “dignity” in the housing program when state actions to rehouse IDPs were seen as undesirable or in violation of the dignity concept. These included forced evictions of IDPs from state housing, and processes of allocating new housing to IDPs that prioritized state interests over the needs of the most vulnerable IDPs. Aid agencies (and donors) responded to such violations through a number of technical measures and guidelines meant to improve these processes, which were never implemented.

In a paper presented at the annual meeting of the Council of European Studies in March 2014 I explored this conundrum, asking why the western aid apparatus assigned a discourse of dignity to a program that made no pretense to dignity in its stated aims, and why it stubbornly pursued measures to uphold dignity despite overwhelming evidence that its attempts to do so were unsuccessful. It is therefore important to ask, What does the discourse of dignity DO for the humanitarian industry?

In the critical geography of development literature, authors such as Tania Li, Timothy Mitchell and James Ferguson have suggested that western aid agencies construct and define problems in technical terms because they are then knowable and fixable through the limited set of tools at the foreign development expert’s disposal. But this focus on “rendering technical” and the stripping of a problem from its political moorings does not fully explain the paradoxes of housing for IDPs in Georgia because most of the technical solutions proposed to uphold dignity never took effect.

Rather, I argue that we need to understand both the genealogy and role of the dignity concept in humanitarian responses, and the transformation of the humanitarian industry in the last 20-30 years, to answer this question. By tracing these changes, the project shows how the “international humanitarian order” uses the concept of dignity to construct its own system of value and ethics in an imperfect environment that requires compromise on some of the most basic and universal of human rights.

“Dignity” is a founding concept in both modern humanitarian intervention and the origins of the modern nation-state system. It is a central piece of the Geneva Conventions and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the Declaration of the Rights of Man, a key document of the French Revolution. Arendt observed that the codification of a “natural” human rights in the Rights of Man conspicuously coincided with the advent of the western European nation-state and the rise of capitalist processes of production, which overturned other systems of social order.

David Graeber’s understanding of value, as discussed in Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value (2001), helps explain this paradox: “Value, I’ll suggest, can best be seen in this light as the way in which actions become meaningful to the actor by being incorporated in some larger, social totality—even if in many cases the totality in question exists primarily in the actor’s imagination.” In the context of this case study, this definition suggests that we can see the dignity discourse as a way that the international humanitarian industry made its actions...
meaningful to itself by drawing on the larger social totality of the global human rights framework. In other words, by understanding value as being produced by an actor for its own consumption, the discourse of dignity becomes a site through which both the humanitarian industry and the larger western liberal world order, of which it is a key part, are reenacted.

Caitlin Ryan, is a PhD student at the University of Colorado-Boulder. She is an ARISC Fellow and Recipient of the Title VIII Short-Term Travel Grant, National Council for Eurasian and East European Research

Bevery Schmidt

Middle Paleolithic Lithic Technology and Behavior in the Hrazdan River Gorge, Armenia

This project investigates hominin behavioral variability in the southern Caucasus through analysis of lithic technological change/stability at the contemporaneous Middle Paleolithic (MP) sites of Lusakert Cave I and Yerevan Cave, both located in the Hrazdan Gorge, Armenia (~60kya BP, OIS3).

Behaviors such as resource exploitation, group coordination and organization, economic efficiency, regional mobility, and material transportation are dictated by hominin foraging practices, which in turn influence lithic technology.

While the few available publications for the two sites present conflicting interpretations regarding the nature of technology, site occupation and duration, mobility, and land-use during the Middle Paleolithic, it is expected that both sites will demonstrate similar lithic technologies due to equivalent access to high-quality obsidian.

This research will allow for direct comparison with published sites in Armenia, Georgia, Russia, the Levant, and Iran.

Statistical tests are currently ongoing, but some analysis has begun using standardized quantitative measurements and qualitative attribute observations, including obsidian type, for individual lithic artifacts over 2.5cm in size.

During this research, techno-typological analyses are conducted each day, with illustration, photography, and 3D scanning of particularly diagnostic artifacts. Specific metric and attribute studies are undertaken to understand flake manufacture techniques and establish a comparable data collection.

The representation, frequency, ratio, significance, and correlation of lithic variables can show dominance of flaking technique, range of determined tool types, the nature of site occupation, and the degree of retouching as an indicator of raw material accessibility or specialized tasks.

All artifacts are assigned general qualitative obsidian categories, which will be compared against future geochemical element determination.

Assignment of obsidian type, based on visually-observed characteristics of color, translucency, banding, mixing of color, texture, and oxidation sheen, are recorded, having been shown to be a reasonably accurate method that allows for basic understanding of changes in raw material procurement and transport.

Patterns of obsidian type preference may also emerge when later combined with metric measurements, amount of retouch, overall mass and volume, and specific knapping technology.

One ongoing research question that came up during my fieldwork, and which will be debated and discussed is how do the industries within the southern Caucasus compare to the techno-typological Middle Paleolithic framework of the larger geographic region (the Caucasus, the Zagros, the Levant, and Eastern Europe)?

As a result of the ARISC fellowship, I was able to extend my research goals and completely analyze a site’s newly excavated lithic assemblage (n=20,220), something that is very rare for an archaeological dissertation.

Beverly A. Schmidt is Doctoral Candidate at the University of Connecticut who has conducted Paleolithic archaeological research as a lithic analyst in southwest France, Morocco, and Egypt since 2005 and in Armenia since 2008. Her main interests are lithic technology, human origins, behavioral evolution and ecology, quantitative methods and computer applications in archaeological fieldwork.
FOUR-YEAR GRANT FROM US DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ARISC has been awarded a four-year grant under the American Overseas Research Centers (AORC) program. Awarded through the US Department of Education, this grant provides funding to establish or operate an AORC that promotes postgraduate research, exchanges, and area studies. ARISC was one of only 10 AORCs to receive this funding, among at least 25 possible AORCs!

In the coming four years, ARISC will be able to hire three country representatives, one in each South Caucasus country, who will continue to assist visiting scholars, and coordinate lectures and reading groups, while also taking steps to establish offices. The first office will be set up in Yerevan in year two of the grant, Tbilisi in year three, and Baku in year four. Each office will have basic amenities for visiting scholars and will serve as a hub for ARISC activities.

Funds from this grant will allow ARISC to offer a third funding opportunity, the Research Fellowship for graduate students and junior scholars.

This unique grant opportunity requires that all projects include one or more undergraduate and/or graduate students from the South Caucasus as research assistants/participants in order to foster long-term ties between the academic communities in the U.S. and the South Caucasus. Awards will be for a maximum of $5,500.

And in year two of the grant period, ARISC will be coordinating its first conference, Caucasus Connections. With scholarly contributions that span the humanities and social sciences, as well as pedagogy and innovative teaching, this interdisciplinary conference will focus on the institutions, languages, cultures and histories that connect (as well as divide) the various places and peoples of the South Caucasus. Presentations will cover the themes of Caucasus and Circulation, the Imagined Caucasus, Cultural Connections, and Crossroads and Peripheries.

MULTI-COUNTRY FELLOWSHIPS FROM CAORC

The Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) Multi-Country Fellowship Program supports advanced regional or trans-regional research in the humanities, social sciences, or allied natural sciences for U.S. doctoral candidates and scholars who have already earned their Ph.D.

Preference will be given to candidates examining comparative and/or cross-regional research. Applicants are eligible to apply as individuals or in teams.

Scholars must carry out research in two or more countries outside the United States, at least one of which hosts a participating American overseas research center. Approximately eight awards of up to $10,500 each are given each year.

In the coming year, ARISC will host two CAORC Multi-Country Fellows, Heather Badamo, travelling to Georgia, Egypt and Lebanon, and Irina Levin, travelling to Azerbaijan and Georgia. We wish these fellows all the best!
Collaborative Heritage Management in the Republic of Armenia Grant

The American Research Institute of the South Caucasus invites 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 and preservation of heritage materials such as artifacts, sites, and manuscripts. An award was made to the following project.

- Dr. Miriam Belmaker (University of Tulsa, USA) and Dr. Ruzan Mkrtchyan (Yerevan State University): Storage and Preservation of the Bioarchaeological Collections at the Yerevan State University.

ARISC Graduate Fellowship

Projects in all fields in the social sciences, humanities and related sciences are eligible. Proposals are judged on their quality and on the potential of the research to strengthen scholarship on the South Caucasus. The purpose of the fellowship is to help cover travel and/or living expenses in the South Caucasus. During his/her stay in the South Caucasus, the fellow is expected to give an ARISC-sponsored presentation on a subject related to his/her research. This year’s ARISC Graduate Fellowship awardees include:

- Hannah Chazin (University of Chicago): The Politics of Pasture: The Political Economy of Herding in the Late Bronze Age.
- Jesse Quinn (University of Arizona): Forests, State and Territory in the Republic of Georgia.

ARISC Graduate Student, Postdoctoral, and Junior Faculty Research Fellowship

The goals of the fellowship are 1) to support research in and the study of the South Caucasus; and 2) to select, recognize and financially support individuals early in their careers who demonstrate high potential to contribute to research in this region. Projects in all fields in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences are eligible, but all projects must include one or more undergraduate and/or graduate students from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and/or Georgia as research assistants/participants in order to foster long-term ties between the academic communities in the U.S. and the South Caucasus. Research awards will be made for a maximum of $5000 each to help cover travel, living, and research expenses in the South Caucasus; an additional $500 may be made available for fellows to offset necessary expenses related to incorporating an undergraduate or graduate student in the host country in their research program. Proposals will be judged on their quality and on the potential of the research to strengthen scholarship on the South Caucasus. Funding for this fellowship is made possible by a grant from the US Department of Education.

- Dr. Diana Ter-Ghazaryan (University of Miami): Spaces of Diaspora Investment: Urban Transformations and Transnational Linkages in the Landscape of Yerevan.

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ARISC’s Representatives in Profile

Nina Iskandaryan
Armenia Representative

An educator and researcher based in Yerevan, Armenia, Nina has worked since 2002 at the Caucasus Institute, a think-tank in Yerevan, where she supervises curricula, manages projects, events and publications. She also conducts research and consults domestic and international organizations on education, gender and media studies, and freelances as a simultaneous interpreter and translator. She received her MA degree in Structural and Applied Linguistics from Lomonosov Moscow State University in 1989 and graduated from the Yerevan School of Political Studies in 2012.

Leyla Rustamli Jabir
Azerbaijan Representative

Leyla received her Bachelor’s degree in International Relations from Azerbaijan University of Languages in 2006, and Master’s degree from Baku State University in 2009, both with honors. She started her career as an instructor at International Relations Department of Azerbaijan University of Languages (AUL) in 2009. She is currently a lecturer at AUL and assistant on foreign relations for the Head of the Department. Leyla also taught in Middle East Program at Baku State University in 2009-2010. Throughout May – September 2009 and January – August 2010 she has been the country representative of ARISC in Azerbaijan.

Medea Turashvili
Georgia Representative

Medea holds a BA in Political Science from Middle East Technical University (METU, Turkey) and MA in Conflict Studies and Human Rights from Utrecht University (the Netherlands). She has 5 years of research experience in the South Caucasus, focusing on conflicts, security, human rights and politics. Prior to joining ARISC as a Resident Director in May 2013, she worked as an analyst at the International Crisis Group. She also works on various research and peace building projects. She is a board member of Georgian Political Science Association.

Funding for these positions has been made possible by a grant from the US Department of Education.
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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.

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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.

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You may also pay by check or 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, a wiki 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.

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ARISC welcomes your gift contributions to support its mission. Please make a check payable to The American Research Institute of the South Caucasus or ARISC and mail to:
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