Dear ARISC Community,

2019 has been a productive and exciting year for ARISC! We launched a new small grant award for students in the South Caucasus to support their research. For years, our colleagues in the South Caucasus have asked us about funding opportunities for their specific needs and we are happy to finally make it happen thanks to generous donations from our members and community!

ARISC was also awarded a 2-year U.S. State Department ECA grant through CAORC, which is being used to support short-term Research Fellowships that include a mentorship component for young local scholars to train in new methodologies. Fellowship recipients conducted innovative and valuable research this summer. Dr. M. Scott Demyan (The Ohio State University) investigated soil degradation in order to support Armenia in combating land degradation. Dr. Selin Nugent worked to document, analyze, and preserve the large Iron Age III/IV (370-220 BCE) Piboz Təpə skeletal population with the goal of establishing the fundamental features of local paleodemographics and modeling community health and well-being. Dr. Kenneth Ritchie (Ctr. For Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology and Moesgaard Museum) examined the role of wild resources at the Neolithic tell Aruchlo I, finding an unusual focus on fishing during spawning runs, "truly the archaeology of the South Caucasus has a lot to teach us about the spread of agriculture". Read more about these and other groundbreaking research projects inside!

Meanwhile, donor-funded ARISC grants continue to advance our mission of preserving cultural heritage and encourage intellectual inquiry across borders. Erin Piñon, graduate student at Princeton University, used the digital facilities at the Matenadaran to explore the text and iconography of the earliest dated sharaknots' (a manuscript similar to a hymnal), a 12th-century text block that was edited and rebound in a 16th-century codex. Dr. Rayya El Zein (Wesleyan University) traced the development of political affect and critique in Georgia from the Bassiani club arrests and protests to the attempted occupation of Parliament in summer 2019.

ARISC members also led workshops in the South Caucasus on research design and methods in the social sciences, health care, classroom assessment techniques, ArcGIS, and more. In the U.S., ARISC organized a popular curriculum development workshop, "Teaching the South Caucasus," designed to help educators integrate the history and cultures of the South Caucasus into college classrooms. Check out the ARISC members news section (p. 2) to learn about the new amazing research, publications, and awards of our members; it was a productive year for ARISC members as well!

2020 promises to be even more exciting with the first phase of a new ECA grant for internships and a new round of research fellowships, workshops, and lectures! As always, our activities are made possible because of the hard work and dedication of our executive director, Talin Lindsay, and our overseas staff, Diana Lezhava, Susan Marukhyan, and Leyla Rustamli. With their help and yours, we will ensure a vital ARISC presence in the region and the expansion of our programming and fellowships. Thank you for taking the time to discover more about ARISC!

Maureen E. Marshall
News from ARISC Members
Sharing updates from our members (October 1, 2018–September 30, 2019)

Congratulations to ARISC Member Dr. Houri Berberian (University of California, Irvine) on the release of the Persian translation of her book in Iran, Armenians and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution Of 1905-1911: “The Love for Freedom Has No Fatherland.”

Dr. Erb-Satullo’s recent publication, "The Innovation and Adoption of Iron in the Ancient Near East" in the Journal of Archaeological Research synthesizes field research, textual analysis, and archaeometric data to evaluate different explanations for the spread of iron in the ancient Near East, and integrates the Caucasus into the broader regional discussion of this issue. Congratulations, Dr. Erb-Satullo!

ARISC member Dr. William Fierman (Indiana University) was awarded the Edward Allworth Award for Lifetime Service to the Profession from the Central Eurasian Studies Society (CESS). The award recognizes extraordinary lifetime achievement in the field of Central Eurasian Studies. Dr. Fierman served as Director of the Inner Asian and Uralic National Research Center (IAUNRC) at Indiana University in Bloomington. He is a longtime observer of political, social, and cultural developments in the Central Asian region and a former ARISC Vice President. He has donated an extensive archive of Kazakh and Uzbek periodicals to libraries for a microfilming project. Congratulations Dr. Fierman! Read the full interview with Dr. Fierman.

Kathryn Franklin and Astghik Babajanyan recently published their article “The Power of Making Places: Collaborative Heritage and Working with ARISC in Armenia” in Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies, Penn State University Press, Volume 6, Number 3, 2018! The article discusses working with ARISC in Armenia within the context of general programming by other American Overseas Research Centers. Congratulations!

Congratulations to ARISC Member Dr. Nathaniel Erb-Satullo (School of Archaeology, University of Oxford,) on his recent publication, "Investigating the spatial organisation of Bronze and Iron Age fortress complexes in the South Caucasus" in Antiquity 93 368 (2019): 412–431. The paper, co-authored with Dimitri Jachvliani, Tuna Kalayci, Marine Puturidze and Katie Simon, discusses the use of remote sensing, surface collection and magnetometry to investigate two hilltop fortress settlements at the margins of the Kura River Basin, with a particular emphasis on satellite settlements around the main hills. The use of multiple survey techniques reveals a complex picture of settlement organisation, with implications for comparative analysis of prehistoric population aggregation models. Dr. Erb-Satullo was able to conduct the fieldwork on which this publication is based with funds from the ARISC Junior Research Fellowship.
News from ARISC Members
Sharing updates from our members (October 1, 2018–September 30, 2019)

Congratulations to ARISC Member Dr. Hamlet Gasoyan (Temple University) on a recent publication, "School-Based Preventive Dental Program in Rural Communities of the Republic of Armenia" in the journal, Frontiers in Public Health. This community case study article is a result of collaboration among researchers from Temple University College of Public Health, University of Michigan School of Dentistry, Yerevan State Medical University, and Children of Armenia Fund. The paper describes a school-based preventive dental program implemented in 14 rural schools within nine villages of Armenia. Schoolchildren involved in the intervention had significantly less decay levels compared to same-ages pre-intervention groups. Read more.

ARISC Member Dr. Aleksandr V. Gevorkyan (St. John's University) was recently promoted to Associate Professor at St. John's University. On October 3, 2018, he presented his book, Transition Economies: Transformation, Development, and Society in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union (Oxford: Routledge) at the World Bank. Read more. He recently recorded an interview-podcast with the New Books Network, where they discussed his book. Check it out. His book was also reviewed by David Lane, one of the top scholars in the field.

Dr. Gevorkyan’s recent publication, "A Diaspora-Portal as a door to knock on for non-monetary development in small economies: a diaspora policy proposal based on an Armenian Diaspora Online Survey" in Noyan Tapan discusses results of the survey he created for the Armenian diaspora. Check out an in-depth analysis of Gevorkyan’s (St. John’s University) Diaspora Survey in EVN Report here. It captures respondents’ inner motivations for engaging with homeland in a capacity that would be conducive to economic and social advancement in Armenia. Read more. Congratulations Dr. Gevorkyan!

Congratulations to ARISC Member John Latham-Sprinkle on his recent publication, "One Alania or Two? The Question of a 'Dual State' in the Seventh to Twelfth Century North Caucasus," which has been recently published in Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi 24 (2018), 185-208.

ARISC Resident Director in Georgia, Diana Lezhava was selected as an evaluation expert for Erasmus+ Capacity Building in the Field of Higher Education 2019, which is administered by European Union Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)! This is the second year Diana is participating in this grant program as a higher education expert responsible for evaluating the grant proposals submitted under Erasmus+ CBHE calls. Congratulations!

Congratulations to ARISC Member Dr. Christina Maranci (Tufts University) on her very recent publication, The Art of Armenia: An Introduction (Oxford University Press, 2018)! The Art of Armenia offers a complete and authoritative introduction to three thousand years of Armenian art, archaeology, architecture, and design. Featuring over 100 illustrations (89 in color), the book presents a timely and much-needed survey of the arts of Armenia from antiquity to the early eighteenth century C.E., bringing into discussion a wide range of media including architecture, stone sculpture, works in metal, wood, and cloth, manuscript illumination, and ceramic arts.
News from ARISC Members
Sharing updates from our members (October 1, 2018–September 30, 2019)

Congratulations to ARISC Member Dr. Kristine Martirosyan-Olshansky on her new position as the Director of the Chitjian Archives and Research Program in Armenian Archaeology and Ethnography at UCLA!

ARISC Resident Director Susan Marukhyan recently completed two diplomas from Centre International de Formation Européenne (CIFE):
1. Executive Master in EU Studies (90 credits)
2. Policy Officer in European and International Organizations (Title registered in the National Register of Professional Certifications on the level 1, European Qualifications Framework Level 7 (Official Journal of the French Republic)
Congratulations on all your hard work, Susan!

ARISC member Anahid Matossian (University of Kentucky) recently presented, "'Roses remind me of Aleppo': Memories, Strategies, Aspirations of Ethnic Armenian Women from Syria in Yerevan." The talk was hosted by UNHCR in Yerevan, Armenia on Wednesday July 10, 2018. The lecture was based on Anahid's research conducted while she was on a Fulbright Fellowship.

Congratulations to ARISC Member Dr. Selin Nugent on starting a Postdoctoral position at the School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography at the University of Oxford! She will be working on the Ritual Modes and Seshat Global History Databank projects to quantitatively test theories on social cohesion and social complexity.

ARISC Member Dr. Anna Ohanyan (Stonehill College) recently published “Armenia’s Democratic Dreams” in Foreign Policy. Dr. Ohanyan considers similarities and differences between Armenia’s Velvet Revolution and those of post-Soviet states and Latin American countries. Congratulations Dr. Ohanyan!

Congratulations to Nina Panyan, ARISC’s Accountant in Armenia, for becoming a grandmother! This is a photo of little David!


ARISC member Jesse Swann-Quinn completed his PhD in Geography from Syracuse University! His dissertation is titled “Malleable Territories: The Politics and Effects of Mining Governance in Post-Soviet Georgia.”

Congratulations, Dr. Swann-Quinn!

Do you have news you would like to share with the ARISC community? Please let us know by sending an email to admin@arisc.org.
Donations and Appreciation

2018-19

Donations
ARISC received generous donations in support of our fellowships, activities, and general costs!

Donations for Armenia came in from JoAnn and Mark Alexander, Maral Dabagian-Anjargolian, Vahe Derian, Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Giragosian, Rose G. Hagopian, Armen Khachaturian, Ann Marie Kohlligian, Dr. Allen and Erika Odian, Dr. Arsine Oshagan, Linda Shahinian & Herb Schiff, and numerous anonymous donors.

For programming in Georgia, we are grateful to the support of Gregory Gabliani, MD.

For our new Small Grant program, we received donations from Lori Khatchadourian, Maureen E. Marshall, Kayhan Nejad, Stephen Badalyan Riegg, Adam T. Smith, and several anonymous donors.

Thank you!

In Appreciation
ARISC’s overseas staff members are the backbone of all our programming. Our Armenia Branch is expertly run by Resident Director Susan Marukhyan, Accountant Nina Panyan, with assistance from Intern Sona Aramyan. In Azerbaijan, our dedicated Resident Director Leyla Rustamli has solely organized our activities. Resident Director Diana Lezhava, Accountant Ketevan Gikashvili, and Intern Lasha Vashakidze have steadfastly run our Georgia Branch.

Many thanks to Pavel Avetisyan, Gayane Shaghoyan, Roman Hovsepian, Ruben Badalyan, and Harutyun Marutyun at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography; Yuliya Antonyan, YSU; Karine Harutynyan and Levon Babamyan at the State Institute of Foreign Languages After Brussov; Arevik Ohanyan at Eurasia University; Marine G Hovhannisyan, YSMU; Aghavni Harutyunyan, Sharistan Melkonian, Luiza Grigoryan, Karine Abelyan, AUA; Nune Ghazakhtetsyan, Armine Tukhikyan, Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development; Nouneh Sarkissyan, Media Initiatives Center; and Gevorg Teplanosyan, Center for Ecological and Noosphere Studies.

In Azerbaijan, our events were coordinated with the assistance of Jodi Blankenship at American Councils Azerbaijan and Kamila Dadashzade at Azerbaijan State University of Culture and Arts.

In Georgia, Timothy Blauvelt (American Councils) and Mariam Kobaladze (CRRC), have been instrumental in coordinating the WiP co-sponsored lectures. We also want to thank Nino Barnovi and Tiko Khomeriki (Ilia State University) for working with us to co-host lectures.

In the US, thanks to Sidney Bittman for volunteering to do research for ARISC, and to Elizabeth Fagan for maintaining and troubleshooting the South Caucasus Forum.

And many, many thanks to everyone at the Council of American Overseas Research Centers for all their assistance: Glenn Corbett, Nick Gottschall, Arcelia Jackson, Katie Jost, Nanette Pyne, Rick Spees, and Heidi Wiederkehr.

We would not be able to do any of the activities on these pages if not for the constant assistance of our active members! From preparing grant calls and applications, to moderating networking sessions, to reading through applications, you are what keeps ARISC running!

Thank you!
Notes from Abroad

ARISC Grants 2018-19

Protesters gather in front of Parliament in downtown Tbilisi during protests beginning June 20, 2019. The protests followed a speech of Russian minister Sergei Gavrilov in the Georgian Parliament. The incident sparked a fortnight of protests in the Georgian capital putting pressure on the government for its relationship with Russia and marked a new chapter in both the transformation of political discourse among Georgian youth and the contest over the legitimacy of Minister of Internal Affairs Giorgi Gakharia. Photo by Raya El Zein.

Graduate/Postdoctoral Fellowships

Funding for the Graduate Fellowships is made possible by membership fees and private donations. Awards are made up to $1,500 per Fellow.

Fighting for the Future:
Georgian Creative Industries after the Rose Revolution

Rayya El Zein
Visiting Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Wesleyan University

On May 12, 2018 armed Georgian police raided three prominent nightclubs in the capital Tbilisi, arresting around 60 people including two club owners. The violent arrests were ostensibly to crack down on illegal drugs in the wake of a string of tragic, drug-related deaths, which the authorities connected to the prominent club. In the days that followed, the city saw a fierce contest emerge over the symbols and meanings of cultural progress. The rainy morning following the raid, protests erupted in solidarity with the arrested and against the state’s use of force in a private cultural venue. In response to this, counter protests emerged defending the actions of the police and the decision by the municipality to crack down the club, perceived by many citizens as a den of vice (drugs, sex, homosexuality, foreign conspiracies), out of standing with, and a threat to, Georgian traditions, sovereignty, and cultural mores.

The emotionally fraught public debate over the raided club Bassiani – an internationally renowned electronic dance venue in a retired swimming pool – crystallized the symbols and
discourse of what have been cast as competing visions of a Georgian future. One of these is oriented towards “globalized” aesthetics and social codes including self-modeled counter-cultures, LGBTQ-tolerance, a generally pro-sex attitude, critiques of state force, feminism, and fierce libertarianism. The other is embodied in specific visions of “Georgian-ness” understood as traditional, hierarchical, patriarchal, and respectful of the Georgian church. It is this vision of a simplistic contest between a global, progressive future and a local, regressive past that Mariam Murusidze, a prominent event booker, articulated in her early assessment of what the protests were about: “a fight between... the country we used to live in and the future we want for our country.” Her comments resonate with a general discourse around the protests that pitted the darkness [Georgian: bneli] of history or tradition against the progressive protesters’ bright [Georgian: nateli] vision of the future.

“My affiliation with ARISC was smooth, helpful, and without complication.”
– Rayya El Zein

My research project intervenes in this contemporary cultural and political moment to examine the limits of progressive politics as imagined in cultural consumption. The particular aesthetics of social consumption patterns (alternative music, electronic and clubbing festivals, recreational drug use, sexual experimentation) are increasingly identified as the manifestation of liberal and progressive politics in debates about social change and the future of urban life in Georgia. My research seeks to trouble this way of discussing modernity and change and asks: what happens when politics are reduced to consumptive practices? What happens when private venues become the primary incubators of social critique? In what ways are uneven urban processes like gentrification masked by affectively fraught debates about social and cultural norms?

My ARISC fellowship allowed me to follow political articulations, networks, and discourse as it developed from the Bassiani club arrests and protests through the attempted occupation of Parliament in the summer of 2019. I traced the development of political affect and critique in Georgia from incubation in private venues to public manifestations to international debate.

Roses Remind Me of Aleppo: Memories, Strategies, Aspirations of Ethnic Armenian Women from Syria

Anahid Matossian
Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Anthropology, University of Kentucky

“I am very grateful for the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC) Graduate Fellowship Award for the financial contribution to help me complete the last phase of my dissertation fieldwork for summer 2019.”
– Anahid Matossian
I used the award towards expenses for my roundtrip airfare ticket from Detroit to Yerevan, and an apartment in the Pokr Kentron, smaller city center neighborhood of Yerevan for 6 weeks. The award enabled me to continue collecting data based on previous contacts and relationships established over the prior 9 months as a Fulbright Student Research Awardee in Armenia. I was able to continue collecting ethnographic interviews with participants, engage in further participant observation through embroidery classes, and give two presentations about my research, in English and Armenian with a translator assisting me, to two different institutions: the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Yerevan (they were also my host institution through Fulbright) and Eurasia International University to give a presentation with ARISC. I was also able to immerse myself in the Eastern Armenian dialect and improve my Western Armenian language skills with my research population. I continued working with ethnic Armenian women from Syria, occupying diverse statuses from refuge-seeking to now having received Armenian citizenship since I started this research in 2015. I also interviewed non-government organization (NGO) and government staff members. I conducted 10 interviews in total during this specific research period, and now have approximately 70 interviews for my dissertation, spanning from summer 2016 to the present, from Istanbul to Berlin to Yerevan. The majority of my research took place in Armenia.

The research that was accomplished during the award period (summer 2019) included finishing collecting dissertation data, which was initiated in August 2018. I continued interviewing contacts established through previous fieldwork trips and discourse analysis of state and non-state media sources. I also engaged in participant observation in public spaces, Syrian Armenian women’s expositions, NGO vocational workshops, formal and informal events, etc, which was necessary for completing dissertation fieldwork. The working title for my dissertation project is currently, “Roses remind me of Aleppo: Memories, Strategies, Aspirations of Ethnic Armenian Women from Syria.” This research examined everyday experiences as to what it can mean for forced migrants to be integrated, or not, into a state with which they share an ethno-religious identity. Specifically, it examined concepts of citizenship and territorial-based belonging among ethnic Armenian women from Syria who have sought refuge in Armenia. The Armenian state regards itself as a rightful home for ethnic Armenians, and vigorously seeks to attract Armenians from other locations to come “home.”
In terms of ARISC events, I gave a presentation about my initial research findings at Eurasia International University and attended a workshop in Tbilisi sponsored by ARISC. The presentation was given by me in English with simultaneous Armenian translation provided by an ARISC affiliate. Audience engagement was active and included many questions from people who had participated in my research and local scholars attending the talk. The ARISC workshop in Tbilisi on qualitative research methods provided me with new tools for critical thinking and analysis and provided me with an excellent networking opportunity with other regional scholars. I am very grateful to ARISC for both funding the remainder of my dissertation fieldwork and providing me with professional opportunities such as workshops.

Painting Narrative, Performing History: Early Modern Armenian Illumination in Liturgical and Paraliturgical Manuscripts

**Erin Marie Piñon**
Doctoral Student, Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University

“Due to the generous funding provided by ARISC, I was able to participate in the third annual meeting of the Fresno Institute of Classical Armenian Translation in Yerevan, Armenia.”

– Erin Piñon

As a returning fellow, I was excited to work on the earliest dated sharaknots’ (a manuscript similar to a hymnal) under the guidance of my Classical Armenian professors, Dr. Sergio La Porta and Dr. Michael Pifer. Building on my translation project from FICAT’s 2018 Fresno meeting and using the digital facilities available at the Matenadaran (Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts), I was able to take stock of the entire contents of this curious, handheld manuscript, which was edited and rebound into another volume in the 16th century. It soon became clear that researching this early sharaknots’ was invaluable for understanding how the genre evolved both textually and iconographically. I was grateful to take object-based approach to my study by handling the manuscript, during which I realized its dozens of marginal illustrations were in fact illuminations, sumptuously laid in gold. With the manuscript, I applied my codicological training and sought the expertise of Dr. La Porta in order to better understand the remains of a 12th-century textblock within a 16th-century codex. During the remainder of my stay in Yerevan, I was able to lay the groundwork for my dissertation research, handling manuscripts that will form key parts of my study, in addition to delivering a public lecture at the American University of Armenia, where I taught an upper-level undergraduate course on the visual and material culture of Armenia in the fall of 2016.
Investigating the Capability for Rapid, Low-Cost Spectroscopic-Based Detection of Soil Degradation and Soil Health in Armenia

M. Scott Demyan
Assistant Professor, School of Environment and Natural Resources, The Ohio State University

Armenia’s soils are under threat from a combination of factors more localized such as over-grazing, improper irrigation resulting in salt build-up, organic matter depletion, and heavy metal contamination but also the influence of global climate change with increasing temperatures and changing rainfall patterns. To combat land degradation, Armenia has voluntarily set a goal of increasing soil organic carbon to 2.8% by 2040 from 2010 levels as part of the Land Degradation Neutrality Program.

Well-reasoned land use management decisions and monitoring of whether instituted managements are improving or degrading the soil system cannot be made with accuracy if there is a lack of high-quality soil data. In the past this would have required multiple in-field samplings with intense, costly lab work, making such monitoring restrictive for large areas. An alternative for the traditional costly and laborious soil analyses and a compliment to remote airborne sensing is field-based portable infrared spectroscopy. Infrared spectroscopy relies on vibrations of different molecules which can then be correlated back to different soil properties via modeling. The soil can be sampled, minimally prepared, and then scanned with an infrared spectrometer, which only takes 1-2 minutes. The measurement itself is non-destructive so the sample can be reused for other analyses. Once a prediction model has been developed for a certain area, then just the spectrum from that soils needs to be measured.

“My communications with both Talin Lindsay, Executive Director and also the Armenia Resident Director Susan Marukhyan were answered promptly and completely. They both assisted with navigating the fellowship logistical requirements and reporting. I only have high regard for both of them.”

–M. Scott Demyan

This research aimed to test the applicability of portable infrared spectroscopy in detecting soil degradation in Armenia. Archive soil samples were used along with new in situ field
measurements for both semiquantitative descriptions of soil mineralogy and also predictive modeling of soil properties. Additionally, this work represented the initiation of a soil spectral library with the intended future use of predicting soil properties of unknown samples. A total of 265 soil samples were measured via visible/near infrared. Training was also done for early career scientists and students on spectroscopy and possible uses to compliment their own research.

Statistical prediction models of a subset of the soils yielded moderately good predictions ($R^2$ ca. 0.50) for total metal concentrations of chromium, iron, and cobalt, while titanium and arsenic were only approximated ($R^2$ ca. 0.35). Semi-quantitative determination of mineralogy indicated differences distinct differences between regions.

Future work includes the generation of more reference data using 108 samples from both countrywide sampling and individual regions for total carbon, total inorganic carbon, total organic carbon, pH, and electrical conductivity and also to expand the dataset for total metal concentrations in order to improve modeling predictions. These prediction models, when successful, can then be used to analyze unknown samples and predict multiple soil properties with a single measurement, thus saving time and money on costly lab analyses. Additionally, mineralogical determination will be improved by comparing newly analyzed spectra to standard mineral spectra. The building of a visible/near infrared spectral database along with statistical modeling will allow the rapid determination of biological, physical, chemical, and mineralogical properties to extend soil and geochemical investigations in Armenia for land use planning, remediation, and soil management.

GIS and Globalization in Classical-Period Armenia

Elizabeth Fagan
Affiliation at time of grant: Lecturer, University of Chicago
Current affiliation: Assistant Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University

The Azat River Gorge, looking west from the Havuts Tar monastery site. Artashat is in the plain on the horizon. Photo by Elizabeth Fagan.

This project sought to use Armenia as a case study for thinking about the connections between the Mediterranean and Eurasia in the classical period (ca. 300 BCE – 300 CE). The research was conducted between 6/28/19–8/1/19.

There were initially two objectives for this research project: to train junior researchers at Armenia’s Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography on geographic information systems (GIS) and spatial analysis; and to investigate the degree of globalization evident in the Classical-period (300 BCE – 300 CE) Armenian kingdom. The first objective, to begin the training of junior researchers, is important because it will enable the digitization and democratization of archaeological data. Digitization allows for multiple interpretative voices and can help scholastic conversation flow across geopolitical and academic borders.
by improving accessibility to data. During the course of the project, a secondary goal was appended to this first one, namely, to create an entirely open-source digital workflow, so that researchers in Armenia would have constant access to the tools, regardless of funding sources.

“I commend ARISC for organizing this fellowship, which was sufficient to fund training and also archaeological survey. I am an early-career scholar whose job situation has been in flux, and so the amount was very important to producing a successful project, and it was a wonderful boon. I think funding projects like this, which generate results sufficient for publication and presentation, will continue to raise ARISC’s profile, and I am grateful for the chance to help with that project.”

– Elizabeth Fagan

The examination of globalization sought to test the hypothesis that it is possible to see how the polities of the South Caucasus facilitated the movement of peoples, goods, and ideas between the Mediterranean and the Eurasian spheres in the Classical period. The Silk Roads traveled through the South Caucasus during the medieval period (ca. 7th century CE and later), and evidence shows that there was commerce between the Romans and Han China in the first two centuries CE, but little is known about the connections between the Mediterranean and Eurasia in this earlier period. The pilot project was designed to examine the degree to which Classical-period connections between the Mediterranean and Eurasia are visible on the ground, and to illuminate the routes that would have facilitated those connections.

While the project was entirely successful in beginning to teach GIS and in developing a digital workflow using only open-source technologies, it was less successful in testing the hypothesis of visible globalization. However, it clarified why it is particularly challenging to understand the flow of goods in the Classical period: the evidence is literally hard to see. Using the technique of intensive archaeological survey, the project showed how Bronze Age and Medieval remains are in fact far more visible than Classical-period architectural and material remains. As a result, the question of the project has changed from trying to understand globalization in the South Caucasus to instead thinking through how we can illuminate the Classical-period landscape, as a first step on a path toward understanding globalization.

More walls from the medieval settlement found on survey. Many of the rocks visible here are actually protecting the walls, not the walls themselves. This suggests to me that the site had been dug, but it was not on the list of cultural monuments kept by the Ministry of Culture, and after consultation with a couple of scholars at the institute, it was not clear who had dug it—they had been unaware of the site. Photo by Elizabeth Fagan.
Queer Sensations in Sergei Parajanov’s Film and Collage

Leah Feldman
Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature, University of Chicago

“I worked at the ARISC office in Tbilisi and found Diana Lezhava wonderful and very accommodating for all my research needs.” – Leah Feldman

During my ARISC grant, I conducted research on the filmmaker Sergei Parajanov for 6 weeks in Tbilisi and Yerevan. This research was building on previous work on Parajanov’s film, with an eye to expanding my understanding of his filmmaking techniques in line with his collage work. While he made some experiments with this collage work early in his career, particularly in relation to costume design plans, I was interested in thinking through how he developed this technique during his time in prison and how prison culture and his relationships to forms of queer community played a role in his work. I began my work in Tbilisi meeting with friends such as photographer Yuri Mechetov and set designer Georgi Aleksi-Meskhishvili. I learned that collage work was an important genre in this period. This spurred me to revise my thesis and think more about the ways in which forms of precarity during the Soviet collapse in the Caucasus and during Parajanov’s time in prison had a material impact on what he was able to make, and more so reflected a moment in which major material shifts were occurring – closing markets such as the silk industry and growing access to western media and materials. In Yerevan I visited the Parajanov museum and worked with the archivists there, where I acquired Parajanov’s writings in prison and images for my book, including his prison collages. I also met with Parajanov’s long-time colleague, the anthropologist Levon Abrahamian, who discussed the ways in which Parajanov’s work reminded him of ethnographies and inspired his decision to become an anthropologist. Thinking further about the ethnographic element has had a major impact on my conception of this project as a kind of historical ethnography of the Caucasus amidst the collapse through the materiality of the collages and films. In this way, the notion of queer sensations has emerged through this work as a mode of excavating social history through a certain turn to materiality in postmodern art in Tbilisi.

Biological Histories of the Late Iron Age in the Talysh Mountains

Selin E. Nugent
Postdoctoral Researcher, School of Anthropology and Museum Ethnography, University of Oxford

“I have been an ARISC member for a number of years now since I was a graduate student. It has always been a critical resource for staying informed about research in and on the South Caucasus and being connected to researchers around the world. I have nothing but positive words to describe this organisation.” – Selin E. Nugent
This project examines the biological influences of empire on the health and well-being of rural, highland communities in the Talysh Mountains of southeastern Azerbaijan during the Late Iron Age (600-200 BCE). During the Late Iron Age, the South Caucasus was positioned at the peripheral northern edges of the Achaemenid/Seleucid and later Parthian/Roman empire. While these empires had far political reach and radiating cultural influence, little is known about their physical impacts, whether beneficial or detrimental, on the lives and health of the people who occupied their furthest extents. Excavations of the Late Iron Age Piboz Təpə necropolis have produced one of the largest archaeological human skeletal remains collections in Azerbaijan, which will provide substantial and significant insight on empire from the perspective and daily lives of its people. Excavations at the Piboz Təpə necropolis in Lerik began in 2012 under the direction of Jeyhun Eminli (Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences). In total over 130 burials, mostly dating to the Iron Age III/IV (370-220 BCE), have been excavated at Piboz Təpə (Eminli and Iskenderov 2016). Burials include rich assemblages of ceramics, jewelry, weaponry, and fauna. Since 2016, Eminli has collaborated with Lara Fabian (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg), Susannah Fishman (University of Pennsylvania), and Hannah Lau (Koç University) to integrate necropolis data with domestic contexts to examine daily life during the Late Iron Age in this region. This research aims to establish fundamental features of local paleodemographics and model community health and well-being. As one of the largest and most rapidly growing collections of archaeological human skeletal remains in Azerbaijan with potential to contribute significant new perspectives on the biological history of this region, one of the primary goals of this new collaboration has been to thoroughly document, analyze, and preserve...
the Piboz Tape skeletal population. Bioarchaeological research during the 2019 field season at Piboz Tape expanded the skeletal collection to achieve a more representative sample size and collected osteological data to examine lifeways and social inequalities in response to sociopolitical changes during the Late Iron Age in the South Caucasus.

**Azerbaijani Musical Storytelling: Translation and Teaching**

Anna C. Oldfield
Associate Professor of World Literature, Dept. of English, Coastal Carolina University

This ARISC project was to work with the Azerbaijan University of the Arts faculty and students as a researcher/mentor to support the preservation, recording, analysis and translation of the Azerbaijani bardic music genre called “ashiq.” Ashiq music is Azerbaijan’s major venue for performing and transmitting centuries of oral narrative poetry and epic, and is a complex poetic-musical genre not well known outside of the Caucasus. Ashiq traditions are a focus of the Folk Music department of the Azerbaijan University of Culture and Art, and the mentoring section of my project was to work with faculty and students to discuss issues of research methodology, sources, scholarly objectivity, publication and translation. An issue we addressed is that they are experts in their fields but have difficulty presenting their research outside of Azerbaijan because of research...
questions and methodologies that are out of step with international standards of Folklore and Ethnomusicology scholarship. Our goal in these meetings was to familiarize Azerbaijani academics and graduate students with current issues, theoretical approaches, research methodologies, academic protocols in the Folklore/Ethnomusicology disciplines and to discuss how their work could fit into a broader international framework. This part of the project took place as a series of formal and informal lectures and discussions with the students and faculty.

“ARISC was very helpful both in the US and in Baku. In Baku, my ARISC representative met with me, helped me with organizing my talk, translated for me, and was available for all questions.”

– Anna Oldfield

In addition, I ran a model research project on the life and works of Ashiq Shamshir, a practitioner of the art who lived from 1893-1988. In this I partnered not only with the Azerbaijan University of Culture and Arts but also with the Union of Ashiqs, the Folklore Institute, Azerbaijan Archive of Sound, and the Ashiq Shamshir Cultural Center. This project, which combined research review, original research and translations, is intended for publication by an academic press. This project, while creating the first scholarly work on the work of Ashiq Shamshir in English, was undergone with Azerbaijani student Research Assistants in order to showcase research methodologies, citation and use of sources, work with original sources, translation methodologies, and fieldwork methodologies. I am now working on writing up the final manuscript, which is expected to be about 50 pages.

Neolithic fishing in the Southern Caucasus

Kenneth Ritchie
Post-doctoral researcher/zooarchaeologist, Center for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology, Schleswig, Germany; Moesgaard Museum, Aarhus Denmark

“Neolithic fishing in the Southern Caucasus” is an archaeological project focusing on fish remains from the Neolithic tell settlement of Aruchlo I. The site is of intense archaeological interest because it dates to the early stages of the spread of agriculture into the Caucasus. The process of adopting domestic plants and animals was a key cultural development in the 6th millennium BC, and it is essential to understand the role of wild resources before and during this transition. Until recently, relatively little was known about the role of aquatic
resources, including fish, because excavation methodology generally was not suited to recovering these small and fragile remains. A joint project of the National Museum of Georgia and the German Archaeological Institute—Eurasian Department at Aruchlo used wet-sieving of excavated soils in order to recover fish bones and other small artifacts. However, the bones recovered during recent excavations were not able to be definitively analyzed because of a lack of modern comparative skeletons from the relevant fish species. In collaboration with colleagues from the National Museum who participated in the excavations, I came to Georgia to lay the foundation of a reference collection of fish species that can be used for this and future projects. This consisted of traveling around to many fishmongers and fishermen in and around Tbilisi to procure specimens. It was fascinating to see the many different markets and the wide variety of wares for sale. We developed good relations with several vendors who went out of their way to try to obtain the different fish we needed. With the fish in hand, we proceeded to process them to remove the soft tissues so that only the bones were left. Using these, we were able to identify the archaeological materials as mostly khramulya (*Capoeta capoeta*) and mursa (*Luciobarbus mursa*) with a single specimen of bulatmai barbel (*Luciobarbus capito*). In addition, there were 16 bones from trout (*Salmo trutta*). These data show that fishing most likely took place in the rivers immediately adjacent to the site, and there may have been a special focus on fishing during the spawning runs of the larger fish (bulatmai barbel and trout). It is unusual for Neolithic sites to have a large focus on the use of wild animals, so truly the archaeology of the South Caucasus has a lot to teach us about the spread of agriculture.

“ARISC is great! You did a fantastic job facilitating my project before, during and after. I have nothing but the highest praise for the organization (and the people who make it happen).”

– Kenneth Ritchie
### ARISC’s Representatives

The people who make everything happen abroad

*Funding for these positions has been made possible in part through private donations.*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Susan Marukhyan</td>
<td>Resident Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leyla Rustamli</td>
<td>Resident Director</td>
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<td>Diana Lezhava</td>
<td>Resident Director</td>
<td>Georgia</td>
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**Susan Marukhyan**

*Resident Director, Armenia*

Five years ago I had the honour to join ARISC, which is advancing the research within and about the South Caucasus. Since then, we have organized a lot of interesting lectures, talks and other events, that were always unique, and diverse in their topics and formats. Working for ARISC is a real pleasure, as one has the opportunity to share ideas, grow professionally and train creative thinking. I enjoy being a part of the ARISC team!

Susan Marukhyan is a public relations and public education specialist based in Yerevan, Armenia. She graduated from Yerevan State Language University after V. Brusov in 1994. She has also studied in the department of International Relations and European Studies in Central European University (1996-1997). Since 1994 she has worked in different foreign and international organizations in the spheres of management and administration, public and media relations and communication, research, translation and publishing. In 2019, she completed an Executive MA degree from the Centre International de Formation Européenne (CIFE) in EU Studies.

[armenia@arisc.org](mailto:armenia@arisc.org)

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**Leyla Rustamli**

*Resident Director, Azerbaijan*

I am very pleased to say that this year ARISC was much more active in Azerbaijan. ARISC fellow Dr. Selin Nugent gave an interesting talk at the American Councils for International Education (ACIE), and Dr. Anna Oldfield delivered an outstanding presentation at Azerbaijan University of Culture and Arts (AUCA). Thus, we established our first-ever cooperative relations with AUCA and ACIE, and I can say with confidence that ARISC is establishing itself in Azerbaijan. It is an honor to be in one team with marvelous ARISC staff.

Leyla Rustamli is a PhD candidate at the Philosophy, Sociology and Law Institute of Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. She received her BA in International Relations from Azerbaijan University of Languages in 2006 and her MA from Baku State University in 2009. She was awarded a fellowship to study at the Rothberg International School of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel) in 2007-08. She is now a full member of the Regional Studies and International Relations Faculty. She has been the ARISC residential director since 2013.

[azerbaijan@arisc.org](mailto:azerbaijan@arisc.org)

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**Diana Lezhava**

*Resident Director, Georgia*

Since Georgia is a small country with limited resources, it is of utmost importance to enhance academic activities that would have an impact on the country's development. ARISC is among the few organizations that supports research in and around Georgia. It helps explore the country’s past and present as well as promoting Georgia in the US. Through various grants, events, conferences and symposia, ARISC supports not only development of scholarly thought, but also popularizes the South Caucasian countries outside the regional borders. I have been affiliated with ARISC since 2014 and have had the privilege of working with its wonderful team. It is a great pleasure to be part of this organization.

Diana Lezhava joined ARISC in 2014 as a country representative and directed ARISC Georgia Branch since then. She also works at the Center for Social Sciences (CSS) as an Administrative Director and a Research Fellow at CSS Education and Development Research Programme. Since 2018 Diana is a Higher Education Expert of European Commission Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

[georgia@arisc.org](mailto:georgia@arisc.org)
Sona Aramyan
Armenia Intern

Sona Aramyan, graduate student at Yerevan State University, Department of Foreign Affairs. This year, from May to September, I was given the opportunity to join the ARISC team in Yerevan. Before that, I hadn't even known about ARISC and its activities. Being in this delightful team, I was able to acquire and improve a lot of new skills, attend workshops on various topics, which, of course, helped me broaden the way I look at certain things. I have done all the tasks with great pleasure, knowing that I will have my little contribution to the development of the ARISC Armenia Branch. Moreover, being in a warm and friendly working atmosphere of open-minded supervisors, helped me realize what kind of future job I dream about.

I owe you a debt of thanks. My hope is that ARISC will become more well-known in Armenia and enlarge the scope of its activities in the coming years.

Lasha Vashakidze
Georgia Intern

I started my internship at ARISC two months ago and I have to say that I am very pleased. Internships are all about helping students/young people to gain experience. Being an intern it can involve a lot of work, but it can also involve a lot of fun too. So I have both. I still am surrounded by lot people and I like it because I have chance to socialize. I don’t think that my internship workplace is a typical workplace, because I am enjoying my tasks, it does not feel like I am having stress. This boosts my productivity more than I would imagine. I really enjoy taking/communicating with my co-workers. For example I can talk to them not only about work but about non work-related topics, I am creating memorable relationships, it means I don’t only have co-workers but actual friends. This internship gives me opportunity to learn a lot of new things and improve my skills/develop as human being. I think this is the entire purpose of it, am gaining new skills and am applying them to real tasks.

Frankly speaking every morning I get-up excited to go to work, because I enjoy there. My boss Diana helps me in everything I ask her about.

I thought it would be difficult for me to find an internship that would fit my demands I would say, but ARISC gave everything I’ve wanted. I think I’ve hit the “JACKPOT”. So thanks to ARISC I am really developing and growing.

Sidney Bittman
US Volunteer

I am currently a graduate student of linguistics, and I began volunteering with ARISC in the summer of 2019. My academic interests are geographically focused on the Caucasus (and Georgia in particular), and serving as a volunteer has allowed me to assist an organization that is dedicated to advancing research related to the region. Thus far I’ve enjoyed the experience immensely and have greatly benefited from the exposure to all of the information that ARISC provides. I can only hope that I’ve been able to give back as much as I’ve received!
**Networking Opportunities**

**South Caucasus Online Forum**

We have put together an online web space where we can communicate with each other about exciting opportunities, including research, funding opportunities, and chances to participate in conferences. This resource is free and open to all.

**Networking Calls**

ARISC organizes teleconferenced networking call sessions. These networking sessions are an informal way for scholars in all stages of their careers to connect and have a chance to discuss issues relevant to their research.

**Past Networking Events**

"Gender Successes and Gender Struggles: Including Gender Dimension into Teaching"
Dr. Joanna Regulska, UC Davis
Thursday, April 11, 2019

"Social Media Use in Academia"
Dr. Ian Lindsay, Purdue University
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

"Women and Gender in Armenian Studies"
Dr. Houri Berberian, UC Irvine
Thursday, June 13, 2019

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**Nina Panyan**
Armenia Branch Accountant

In the course of this year I engaged with different events organized by ARISC Armenia, which helped me regain feelings of progress and achievement. Since I am open to new challenges, I enjoyed the opportunity to learn something new from diverse research projects conducted by people with different backgrounds. These new discoveries broadened my scope of interests and made me work with more diligence and energy.

**Ketevan Gikashvili**
Georgia Branch Accountant

It gives me a feeling of pleasure and happiness to work for ARISC—in a team of very intelligent and exceptional people of different nationalities, who supports scholars to make very valuable researches about South Caucasus countries and connects different people who is interested in our region.

Ketevan Gikashvili has cooperated with ARISC Georgia since 2014. In 1991 she graduated from Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Engineering-Economic Faculty, with a degree in Economical Informatics and Automated Systems of Management. In 1999 she completed the course of Professional Accountants and Audits. She has a first degree certificate of ACCA. She has previously worked at the Center for Social Sciences, Georgian Young Lawyers Association, International Transparency Georgia, and in private business. Since 2014 Ketevan Gikashvili works at CSS on the position of an Accountant.
Workshops in the U.S.

News and events from the past year

The South Caucasus Region: Crossroads Of Societies & Polities. An Assessment of Research Perspectives in Post-Soviet Times
April 13, 2019
Society for American Anthropology
Albuquerque, New Mexico

ARISC co-sponsored a panel at the Society for American Anthropology (SAA) Meetings in April 13, 2019 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Panel chairs were Alvaro Higueras, David Berikashvili and Isabelle Coupal. Presenters also included Vakhtang Licheli, Benjamin Irvine, and ARISC members Ian Lindsay and Alan F. Greene, Nathaniel Erb-Satullo, Elizabeth Fagan, Lauren Ristvet, Maureen Marshall, Aram Yardumian, and Isabelle Coupal.

Presentations:
Alvaro Higueras: Research and Heritage Management in the Southern Caucasus: Future Perspectives in Post-Soviet Scenarios

Ian Lindsay and Alan F. Greene: New Solutions to Old Challenges: Methods and Results from Project ArAGATS’ Kasakh Valley Archaeological Survey (KVAS) Project, Northwestern Armenia (2015-17)

Vakhtang Licheli: 10th Century BC Novelties in the Central Part of Southern Caucasus

Nathaniel Erb-Satullo: Elite Stronghold or Communal Defense? Investigating a Late Bronze-Early Iron Age Cyclopean Fortress in Kvemo Kartli, Southern Georgia

Elizabeth Fagan: Everything Old Is New Again: Considerations for Re-examining the Previously Excavated Material of Hellenistic- and Roman-Period Armenia

Lauren Ristvet: Negotiating Empires: Village Dynamics in Naxcivan, Azerbaijan

David Berikashvili: Samshvilde and the Medieval Kingdoms of Kartli

Maureen Marshall: Building Bronze Age Populations of the South Caucasus: Preliminary Bioarchaeological Results from the Kasakh Valley Archaeological Survey

Aram Yardumian: Archaeology and Genetics in the South Caucasus
Teaching the South Caucasus:  
A Workshop for College and University Educators  
June 18 – 21, 2019  
Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

In a four-day workshop hosted at the University of Illinois’ Summer Research Lab (SRL), workshop attendees engaged with topics on the history, societies, and peoples of the South Caucasus; participated in pedagogical activities; conducted research at the University of Illinois’ world renowned library; and workshopped individual projects. Participants worked with scholars specializing in the region who gave lectures, led discussions and film screenings, shared their experiences in the South Caucasus, and facilitated workshops. Themes were selected for their usefulness to educators interested in integrating the South Caucasus into their courses and classrooms, with a focus on the relationship between the past—factors such as geography, imperial rule, trade routes—and the present. The workshop was open to college and university educators and advanced graduate students.

This workshop was hosted by the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Notable participants included Benjamin Bamberger (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Mauricio Borrero (St. John’s University), Donna Buchanan (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Cynthia Buckley (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Christopher Condill (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Kathryn Franklin (Birkbeck, University of London), Stephen Jones (Mount Holyoke College), Natasha Kipp-Maki, Judith Pintar (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), and James Steffen (Emory University).

Mr. Ara Margarian, Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of Armenia to the United States, and Mr. Giorgi Tsikolia, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Georgia to the United States, participated in a panel on current information on the South Caucasus.

Sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC) and the Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC).

Supported by the U.S. Department of Education’s Title VI grant, the U.S. Department of State’s Title VIII Program, ARISC, REEEC, and the Ralph and Ruth Fisher Endowment.
Lectures and Workshops in the South Caucasus
News and events from the past year

Workshop | Research Design in Social Science
Eteri Tsintsadze-Maas, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Kentucky
May 17, 2019
Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia

This full-day workshop on Research Design in Social Sciences conducted by Eteri Tsintsadze-Maas, Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Kentucky, at Ilia State University aimed to help the workshop participants develop skills in research design, how to develop research questions, build up convincing theories, develop hypotheses, and prepare the research project for the fieldwork stage.

This event was one in a series of ARISC workshops funded within the small grant program that gives stipends for organizing workshops and public talks.

Funding for this workshop was provided by a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).

Research design workshop participants. Eteri Tsintsadze-Maas, seated at the front of the room, addresses participants. Photo courtesy of Diana Lezhava.

Workshop | Research Methods in Social Science
Richard Maas, University of Evansville
May 18, 2019
Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia

This all-day workshop on Research Methods in Social Sciences conducted by Dr. Richard Maas, University of Evansville, at Ilia State University aimed to teach the workshop participants major methodological options available in the social sciences and help them envision how those methods might be applied in their own research projects. Consisting of several parts, the workshop reviewed qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches to conducting research in social sciences.

Funding for this workshop was provided by a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).
Workshop | Research Methods in Health Care
Hamlet Gasoyan, Doctoral Fellow, Temple University
May 29, 2019
Yerevan State Medical University, Armenia

This workshop was intended for faculty and graduate students working on medical and public health research projects. Basic research design methodologies applicable to health sciences such as cross-sectional, cohort, case-control studies, and randomized controlled trials was discussed. The first part of the event was devoted to an informal lecture on research project design and research methods. The second half was devoted to the discussion of participants’ research ideas and/or project discussion, questions, and active group work on detailing the steps from inception of the research question to manuscript publication based on a mock research project. A major focus of the workshop was helping the participants to transform their own research ideas into research project proposals. The workshop was very dynamic, with the constant participation of the audience. The speaker had a good presentation style and was tailored to the needs of the audience.

Funding for this workshop was provided by a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).

Lecture | Digitizing and Revisiting the Works of Oskar Schmerling (1863-1938): Caricature in the South Caucasus
Naomi Caffee, Assistant Professor of Russian and Humanities, Reed College
Robert Denis, Independent Scholar, Tbilisi
June 6, 2019
Media Initiatives Center, Yerevan, Armenia

Oskar Schmerling (1863-1938) was an artist from Tbilisi, Georgia, who played a decisive role in the development of nationalist discourses in the South Caucasus in the final years of the Russian Empire. As an outsider to the region’s major ethnic groups, he was in a unique position to move with ease between them, and this paved the way for a prolific career publishing caricatures and political cartoons in the Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, and Russian press. With an iconic style that is recognized to this day and identified with the pre-revolutionary intelligentsia of the South Caucasus, Schmerling’s work appeared primarily in satirical periodicals, providing a powerful visual component to hotly debated issues surrounding language policy, religious identities, Russian cultural and political hegemony, economic development of the region, and more. Until now, however, Schmerling’s work has received only fragmented attention, confined to the boundaries of national traditions in isolation. In this
presentation we discussed a collective project we have undertaken with scholars in Georgia, Russia, and the United States, to create a digital collection of Schmerling’s work from across several different periodicals and languages. Through a comparative analysis of caricatures from Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani periodicals, we aimed to emphasize the diversity and interconnectivity of print cultures in the pre-revolutionary South Caucasus, and to highlight the role of satirical illustration as a tool for anti-colonial resistance and the self-fashioning of national identities in a multicultural context.

Funding provided by Reed College and the NCEEER Title VIII Fellowship.

Content provided by the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia.

This event was hosted by the Media Initiatives Center and sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).

Workshop | Visualizing, Analyzing & Sharing Your Geospatial Data with ArcGIS Online

Diana Ter-Ghazaryan, Lecturer, University of Miami
June 21, 2019
American University of Armenia, Yerevan, Armenia

This workshop introduced attendees to the basics of visualizing, analyzing, and sharing geospatial data with ESRI’s ArcGIS Online platform. ArcGIS Online is a powerful cloud-based solution that allows users to access authoritative geospatial content, or to visualize and analyze their own geospatial data and create shareable maps and apps, all without having to access a GIS server or learn computer programming.

Attendees varied from students to specialists in the fields of environmental studies, engineering, economics, geography, as well as participants from private industry.

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Ter-Ghazaryan, Department of Geography at the University of Miami. Dr. Ter-Ghazaryan directs the University of Miami’s Geospatial Technology Program and has been teaching and researching with GIS for over 10 years. Dr. Ter-Ghazaryan’s teaching and research interests lie at the intersection of geospatial technology and cultural geography, and she works on finding ways to map and visualize the abstract and ethereal, such as connection to place, identity, and heritage.

This workshop was organized in collaboration with the University of Miami, the American University of Armenia, and American Research Institute of South Caucasus (ARISC).

Funding for this workshop was provided by a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).
Workshop | Going Beyond Grades: Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT) in Assessing Learning Progress

Anna Jenderedjian, Lecturer, Ohio State University
July 1, 2019
Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences, Yerevan, Armenia

An important component of teaching is being able to determine whether students are learning and meeting the objectives and goals for the course. Grades are a common way that instructors can assess how much students are learning in their classes. However, assessing student learning is about more than assigning grades; it is a process and is not just a product. Assessing student skills over time helps instructors adjust, support, and challenge learners throughout the term. The workshop training held by Dr. Anna Jenderedjian focused on different ways of using CATs in different classroom sizes and settings.

Hosted by the Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences, the workshop opened with a welcome by the head of the Brusov Career Center Director Levon Babamyan, who spoke highly about the university’s cooperation with ARISC. This was followed by an introduction to ARISC by Armenia Resident Director Susan Marukhyan, who also introduced the speaker, Dr. Anna Jenderedjian. After a short round of introductions by the participants, the workshop commenced in a very interactive way, engaging the participants into the discussion. The participants were interested to get the materials in Armenian, and the lecturer had done her best to provide as much Armenian information as it was possible.

The presentation materials were later sent to the participants by the ARISC Armenia office, based on their requests.

Funding for this workshop was provided by a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).
Workshop | Best Practices of Working with Qualitative Data
Jane Kitaevich, University of Michigan
July, 26, 2019
Tbilisi, Georgia

Qualitative methodology is a commonly used scientific approach in various social science disciplines to develop theories and test hypotheses through systematic data collection and analysis. How can qualitative methods help researchers investigate their questions in a rigorous and systematic manner? What are some of the best practices to improve the quality and reliability of the data? How can scholars process qualitative data and communicate their results most effectively to the academic and lay audience?

This workshop focused on several key components of qualitative research, giving workshop participants an overview of the latest theoretical discussions in the literature, as well as offering an opportunity to apply some of the best practices in qualitative data management, processing, and analysis to participants’ own research. Special attention was given to important considerations a researcher ought to take into account when devising research designs that rely heavily or partially on qualitative data.

Funding for this workshop was provided by a grant from the Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC).

Lecture | Social Justice Activism in the United States
Sarah McNamara, Assistant Professor of History at Texas A&M University
August 27, 2019
The Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development, Yerevan, Armenia

The twentieth century was an era defined by political upheaval and social justice that changed the meaning of citizenship and equality in the United States. In this talk, Dr. Sarah McNamara, Assistant Professor of History at Texas A&M University, explored how social justice activism transformed communities and national political policies. Dr. McNamara centered on historical movements for social, economic, and political equality that created sustainable frameworks for present-day issues. Following the presentation, Dr. McNamara participated in a discussion and Q&A with audience members.

Sarah McNamara is Assistant Professor of History at Texas A&M University. Her research centers on immigration, women and gender, social justice, and labor histories in the modern United States.

This event was hosted by the Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development (UFSD) and sponsored by the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC).
Works-in-Progress

W-i-P is an ongoing academic discussion series based in Tbilisi, Georgia, that takes place at the CRRC office at 5 Chkhikvadze Str. It is co-organized by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), the American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS, and the American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (ARISC). All of the talks are free and open to the public. The purpose of the W-i-P series is to provide support and productive criticism to those researching and developing academic projects pertaining the Caucasus region.

**WiP | Authoritarian Regimes in Times of Political Crises: Post-Soviet Strategies for Power Preservation**
Tatia Chikhladze, University of Bremen
October 17, 2018

**WiP | Negotiating Value in the Georgian Hydroelectric Sector**
Daniele Artoni, University of Verona
November 7, 2018

**WiP | Usage, Identity and Competence in Russian in the South Caucasus**
Ryan Wyeth, Durham University
November 21, 2018

**WiP | In the Crosshairs: Environmental Journalists in Peril**
Eric Freedman, Michigan State University
December 5, 2018

**WiP | Guram Rcheulishvili, Georgian Literature, and the Process of Translation**
Trevor Durham, American writer
December 12, 2018

**WiP | Race, Slavery, & the Origins of “White Supremacy” in the 19th Century Caucasus**
Sergey Saluschev, UC Santa Barbara
December 19, 2018

**WiP | The Transcaucasian Federation (1922-1936), Policies and Politics in the early Soviet Caucasus**
Etienne Peyrat, Sciences Po, France
January 9, 2019

**WiP | Russkii Mir and the Geopolitics of Ukrainian Autocephaly**
Tornike Metreveli, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland
January 23, 2019

**WiP | Oil and armed civil conflict: explaining post-Soviet non-occurrences**
Anar Ahmadov, Leiden University
January 30, 2019

**WiP | Informal Politics: The Pitfalls of Field Research**
Vincenc Kopeček, University of Ostrava
February 13, 2019

**WiP | Kicking the Crusaders out of the Caucasus: Deconstructing the Meme that Khevsurs are Descended from a Lost Band of Medieval Christian Knights**
Ryan Sherman, Cornell University
February 20, 2019

**WiP | Why Cross the Conflict Divide? The Success and Failure of Abkhazian de facto Statehood**
WiP | Soul food: The festival of Lipanali in Svaneti
Andrea Peinhopf, University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES)
March 6, 2019

WiP | Studying Russian-Georgian Relations on the Ground: Stereotypes and Challenges
Kevin Tuite, Université de Montréal
March 13, 2019

WiP | The Lost Kingdom: Caucasian Albania and the Udis
Archil Sikharulidze, GIPA
March 20, 2019

WiP | With Russia or Not? The Geopolitical Orientations of Russia's Neighboring State Populations
John O'Loughlin, Gerard Toal and Kristin Bakke
May 1, 2019

WiP | Remembering the Repressions of 1937-38. Mikheil Mgalobishvili's Attempts to Cope with his Traumatic Experiences
Oliver Reisner, Ilia State University
May 15, 2019

WiP | Geneva International Discussions: from Technical Talks to Political Dialogue
Ann Tsurtsumia-Zurabashvili, Eurasia Democratic Security Network, Center for Social Sciences
May 29, 2019

WiP | When things don’t work out as expected: The EU’s consultation mechanisms on trade issues in Georgia
Diana Potjomkina, United Nations University–CRIS, Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Ghent University
June 5, 2019

WiP | Can a Yesterday’s Homeland Exist? Russians Reflecting on Postsocialist/Postcolonial Georgia
Mirja Lecke, Ruhr-University, Bochum
June 19, 2019

WiP | Challenges to Tourism Development in Upper Svaneti
Michael Long, Baylor University
July 3, 2019

WiP | The Economic Consequences of Child Marriage in Georgia
Dustin Gilbreath, CRRC-Georgia
July 10, 2019

WiP | What Happened to that Building? Writing an Architecture Guide for a City in Flux
Angela Wheeler, Harvard University and Vladimir Shioshvili, freelance photographer
July 17, 2019

WiP | Voices of Sorrow and Joy: Sonic Dimensions of Azeri-Turkish Shi’i Islam
Stefan Williamson Fa, University College London
July 24, 2019
Institutional Members’ Upcoming Events

University of California, Irvine

Book Signing | **Roving Revolutionaries: Armenians and the Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman Worlds**
Houri Berberian, University of California, Irvine
December 4, 2019 | 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
Location: HG 1030, UC Irvine

The UCI Armenian Studies Program presents a book signing of "Roving Revolutionaries: Armenians and the Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman Worlds" by Professor Houri Berberian, Professor of History, Meghrouni Family Presidential Chair in Armenian Studies.

Lecture | **Music and the Armenian Diaspora: Searching for Home in Exile**
Sylvia Alajaji, Franklin and Marshall College
January 22, 2020 | 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
HG 1030, UC Irvine

Professor Alajaji received her Ph.D. in Musicology from the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music. She specializes in the music of the Middle East and is particularly interested in the intersections of music, popular culture, and politics in the West Bank and in the Armenian diaspora in Beirut. Her research is based on extensive fieldwork conducted throughout the Middle East and United States.

The Vahe & Armine Meghrouni Lecture Series.

Lecture | **Sultanic Saviors and Tolerant Turks: Writing Ottoman Jewish History, Denying the Armenian Genocide**
Marc Baer, London School of Economics and Political Science.
April 15, 2020 | 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
HG 1030, UC Irvine

Marc Baer, PhD is Professor of International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science. He researches in the shared histories of Christians, Jews, and Muslims in Europe and the Middle East.

The Vahe & Armine Meghrouni Lecture Series.

Lecture | **The Thirty Year Genocide: Turkey’s Destruction of Its Christian Minorities, 1894-1924**
Benny Morris, Historian and Journalist
May 13, 2020 | 6:30 PM-8:30 PM
HG 1030, UC Irvine

Benny Morris was formerly a professor of history in the Middle East Studies Department of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. He is the author of 1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War. Morris’s work on the Arab–Israeli conflict and the Israeli–Palestinian conflict has won praise and criticism from both sides of the political divide. He will present his new book (co-authored with Dror Ze’evi) The Thirty Year Genocide: Turkey’s Destruction of Its Christian Minorities, 1894-1924.

The Vahe & Armine Meghrouni Lecture Series.

University of Michigan

Lecture | **Roving Revolutionaries: Armenians and Connected Revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, and Ottoman Worlds**


Three of the formative revolutions that shook the early twentieth-century world occurred almost simultaneously in regions bordering each other. Though the Russian, Iranian, and Young Turk Revolutions all exploded between 1904 and 1911, they have never been studied through their linkages until now. “Roving Revolutionaries” probes the interconnected aspects of these three revolutions through the involvement of the Armenian revolutionaries—minorities in all of these empires. Armenian revolutionary movements and Armenian participation within and across frontiers tell us a great deal about the global transformations that were taking shape. Exploring the geographical and ideological boundary crossings, this archivally grounded analysis of the circulation of revolutionaries, ideas, and print tells the story of peoples and ideologies in upheaval and their practices of collaborating. In doing so doing, the talk will illuminate our understanding of revolutions and movements.

**Lecture | Overwhelming Absurdity: Vahé Oshagan’s Discourse of Diasporic Culture**
Karen Jallatyan, 2019-20 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellow, U-Michigan
January 15, 2020 | 5:00 – 6:30PM
Room 555, Weiser Hall
500 Church Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109

This lecture investigates how an obsession with absurd informs Vahé Oshagan’s (1922-2000) vision of diasporic Armenian culture across his poetry, prose and criticism. Dr. Jallatyan discusses the problematic of the absurd (meaninglessness), as it was inspired by a post-World War II European preoccupation with existentialism. How has the absurd informed Oshagan’s works over time? How has it influenced his paradoxical and provocative reappropriation of myth as a mode of witnessing the tragically absurd human existence? By tracing the transformations of these configurations in Oshagan’s meta-historiographic and meta-allegorical works from the 1970s and 1980s, Dr. Jallatyan pays special attention to how the problematic of the absurd shaped Oshagan’s conception of language and his poetics. The lecture will conclude with a discussion on decisive and singular features of Oshagan's dynamic mode of negotiating difference for a diasporic culture.

**Workshop | Afterlives of Western Armenia**
Organizers: Karen Jallatyan, Anoush Suni, 2019-20 Manoogian Postdoctoral Fellows, U-M, and Hakem Al-Rustom, Alex Manoogian Professor of Modern Armenian History, U-M
February 13-14, 2020 | 5:30 – 8:30PM
Friday - Hussey Room, Michigan League, 911 N University Ave, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.
Saturday - Room 555, Weiser Hall
500 Church Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109

As a geography and a concept, Western Armenia is a contested category. The same territory is at once imagined and claimed by disparate yet overlapping groups in often mutually exclusive ways as Western Armenia, Eastern Turkey, and Northern Kurdistan. This geography has been home to many peoples over centuries, including Armenians until the 1915 Catastrophe decimated the Ottoman Armenian community and scattered its survivors across the world, where they founded new homes in the diaspora.

As a result of the rupture of 1915, the Armenian Diaspora came into intimate contact with other communities across the globe. At the same time, on the ancestral lands of the exiled Western Armenians, the material and immaterial remnants of their community live on, animated by the memories and narratives recounted by
the muslim Kurds, Turks, and Arabs who continue to live there. Taken together, these constitute two asymmetrically mirroring spaces in which afterlives of Western Armenia continue to develop in dynamic relationships with contemporary political and social processes. What are the afterlives of these histories, communities, and trajectories bound up in the notion of Western Armenia? What are the ongoing effects of the 1915 Genocide of Ottoman Armenians, both in the geography where the mass killing and expropriation took place a century ago and in the diasporic communities where Armenians continue to live today? How are histories of violence and exile inscribed both on the landscape through ruins and in the memories of local communities? And how are they reinterpreted and expressed through literature, art, and language? Learn more.

**2020 Dr. Berj H. Haidostian Annual Distinguished Lecture | David Ohannessian and the Armenian Ceramics of Jerusalem**
Sato Moughalian, award-winning flutist and author of *Feast of Ashes: The Life and Art of David Ohannessian*
March 18, 2020 | 7:00 – 9:00PM
Room 1010, Weiser Hall, 500 Church Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

In 1919, David Ohannessian founded the art of Armenian ceramics in Jerusalem, where his work and that of his followers is now celebrated as a local treasure. Born in an isolated Anatolian mountain village, Ohannessian mastered a centuries-old art form in Kütahya, witnessed the rise of violent nationalism in the waning years of the Ottoman Empire, endured arrest and deportation in the Armenian Genocide, founded a new tradition in Jerusalem under the British Mandate, and spent his final years, uprooted once again, in Cairo and Beirut.

Ms. Moughalian will detail the lineage of her grandfather David Ohannessian’s ceramic tradition and document the critical roles his deportation and his own agency played in its transfer—aspects of the story obscured in the art historical narrative. She will speak about the process of coming to terms with her family’s past, the ways in which that served as an impetus to excavate and reconstruct her grandfather’s history through archival research, and the importance of preserving the stories of peoples displaced through migration.

**Lecture | Sojourners, Smugglers, and Dubious Citizens: The Politics of Armenian Migration to North America, 1885-1915**
David Gutman, Associate Professor of History, Manhattanville College
April 1, 2020 | 5:00 – 6:30PM
Room 555, Weiser Hall, 500 Church Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109.

Between 1885 and 1915, roughly eighty thousand Armenians migrated between the Ottoman Empire and North America. For much of this period, Ottoman state authorities viewed Armenian migrants, particularly those who returned to the empire after sojourns abroad, as a political threat to the empire’s security. Istanbul worked vigorously to prevent Armenians both from migrating to and returning from North America. In response, dense smuggling networks emerged to assist migrants in bypassing this migration ban. The dynamics that shaped the evolution of these networks resemble those that drive the phenomenon of migrant smuggling in the present day. Furthermore, migrants who returned home found themselves stuck in an uneasy legal limbo as both Ottoman and United States governments disavowed them as citizens, leaving them vulnerable to deportation from their own ancestral lands. As this talk contends, the Armenian migratory experience in the late
nineteenth and early twentieth centuries both parallels and sheds light on themes such as smuggling, deportation, and the criminalization of migration, that are central to the issue of global migration in the 21st century.

Eleventh Annual International Graduate Student Workshop | Medicine, Madness, and Maladies of the Mind in Armenian Studies Past and Present
April 10-11, 2020 | 10:00AM – 5:00PM
Organizers: Melanie Tanielian, Director, Armenian Studies Program, U-M and Mano Sakayan, PhD student, Dept. of History, U-M
Room 555, Weiser Hall
500 Church Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109

In recent years, the history of medicine, mental illness, and the literary, anthropological, and sociological studies of madness have gained a remarkable momentum internationally. Still, there have been virtually no substantial studies of a premodern and modern understanding of medicine, madness, and maladies of the mind in Armenia and its Diaspora. This interdisciplinary workshop aims to interrogate the stories of both medical and psychiatric sciences as well as that of the concept of madness in Armenian political, historical, literary, and cultural discussions in the past and present.

The workshop will focus on the histories of medicine and psychiatry and the portrayals of madness as a form of behavior, marker of difference, and tool of body politics across periods and geographies. The workshop organizers are interested in the broader history of medicine, but they would like to draw particular attention to the historical and contemporary landscapes in which medical professionals sought to exercise their authorities over mental illnesses and the mind itself. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, tools and theories have provided medical professionals with renewed opportunities to intervene in the social, political and cultural spheres with the shared objective of devising and implementing therapies of madness.

The goal is to consider new perspectives, methodologies and cross-disciplinary frameworks that will put Armenian Studies in conversation with, among others, the growing fields of history of medicine, science and technology studies. This meeting will situate the notion of madness at the intersection of politics, medicine, literature, sociology, and anthropology and seeks to explore the changes in its definition and the underpinnings of perceptions of mental illnesses at critical junctures of history in Armenia and amongst its diasporic communities across the globe.

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Lecture | Conceptualizing Migration, Memory and Place Through Art
Millercomm Lecture Series
April 23, 2020 | 7:30PM
Kevork Mourad, Independent Artist
Spurlock Museum
600 South Gregory, Urbana, IL 61801

Syrian-born Armenian artist Kevork Mourad will discuss how he conceptualizes migration, memory and place-making through his paintings and visual performances. Mourad depicts the Syrian refugee crisis and co-existence in cities like Qameshli, Aleppo and Damascus. He will elucidate how his and his ancestors’ memories of the Syrian Civil War and the Armenian genocide inform his representations of upheaval and survival.

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