FAH 210
Seminar: Armenian Art
Christina Maranci
Arthur H. Dadian and Ara T. Oztemel Associate Professor of Armenian Art
Office Hour: after class 12-1pm, or by appointment, 11 Talbot Ave., room 204.

Topic:
This seminar will ask: how do you write a critical introduction to the subject of Armenian art? What are the major monuments, objects, and images, what are the issues at stake, what is the scholarly conversation, what methods and approaches should be used, and what, finally, is the best length, format, and press in which to publish it? Students in this class will help me answer these questions, with reading assignments, research exercises, writing projects, and presentations. By the end of the semester, we will have produced a working title, a viable table of contents, an idea of its projected length and breadth, sketch drafts of each chapter, and a list of viable publishers.

Goals:
To become smarter, to push yourself, to become more skeptical, to write better, to read and research more closely, to argue more powerfully, all within the arena of Armenian art. To learn the challenges and rewards of planning, writing, and finishing a long-term research project. To become sensitive to the worth and fragility of fields beyond the art-historical canon, and to learn how the canon reflects and shapes conversations about art. To change the canon and the conversation.

Provisional Seminar Schedule, Subject to Change:
We meet Tuesdays from 9-11:30 with a break mid-way. We meet in Talbot Seminar Room. Someone should bring cookies or sweets for each meeting; I’ll bring them the first time.

Responsibilities, Expectations, Grades:
Full engagement in the class. I don’t mind if you disagree, or are cranky or shy—you must talk and become involved. The seminar is only as good as you will make it by your participation. Class Participation thus 15%/Research and Presentation Exercises 35%/ Final Term Paper: 50% PAPER DUE MAY 1, 5PM, IN MY MAILBOX AND EMAIL. Paper Length: 12 pages for undergraduates; 18 for graduates.

Seminar Schedule, Subject to Revision

January 22: Introduction to the Seminar: Goals, Aspirations, and Responsibilities
Research Exercise #1 (Due 1/29): Find one source (print or internet) on Armenian art. Ask yourself: What are the main images/objects/monuments that are used to define Armenian art? How is the field characterized (e.g. is it discussed in relation to other artistic traditions?) What approach does the author take to the field? If relevant, also ask yourself: what was confusing about the source, and what seemed problematic or wrong? Write two pages, double-spaced, ready to be presented to the class 1/29.
January 29  
**Workshop for Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study of Armenian Art**  
This week, we will discuss research exercise #1 and ask ourselves: what is the best way to present the history of Armenian art to a wide readership of scholars and students? I will present to you the history of the field thus far, focusing on the Anglophone literature.  
**Research Exercise #2 (Due 2/5):** bring to class one recent news item on pre-Christian Armenian archaeology.

February 5  
**Workshop for Chapter 2: Ancient Armenia (Prehistoric to Roman)**  
This week, we confront the problem of ancient Armenia. Be warned: nothing about this tradition is firmly fixed or easily apprehended. Even the term “Armenian Art” is problematic for this era.  
**Reading Guidelines:** Ask yourself, why is this period difficult to understand and to teach? What is the best way to teach this material to undergraduates? Should it be taught at all, or should it remain the domain of advanced specialists?

February 12  
**Workshop for Chapter 3: The Art of Early Medieval Armenia**  
Armenia converted to Christianity in the first decades of the fourth century. This week’s meeting introduces you to the tradition of the conversion and the art that was produced, and experienced, by Armenia’s first Christians.  
**Reading Guidelines:** Ask yourself, what are the shared questions these two authors ask? What is it that makes their subject matter “Armenian Art”, and how do they define it as such?

February 19  
**Workshop for Chapter 4: The Seventh-Century Churches**  
**Reading Guidelines:** The seventh-century churches of Armenia are virtually unknown by students and scholars of art history, particularly in the United States. Chapter 4 of my project needs to bring them forward in a compelling and comprehensive way, addressing architecture, sculpture, inscriptions, liturgy, and landscape. The approach that I take is in response to the previous scholarship.
Read my introduction after reading Richard Krautheimer’s work, and ask yourself how I try to depart from his approach. Isolate three of the most difficult things for you to understand about this material. Is it the political landscape, for example, or the technical concepts of building? And what is the most compelling—what would you like to know more about? Be prepared for discussion.

February 26
Workshop for Chapter 5: Royal Patronage and the Arts, 10th to 12th c.
NOTE: Second half of this session: I will meet with each of you for approximately 5-10 minutes to go over paper topic issues for 3/5.

March 5
Workshop for Chapter 6: Art of the Cilician Kingdom
Second Hour: Presentations of Paper Topics, c. 5 minutes each.

March 26
Workshop for Chapter 7: Image Worship and Iconoclasm
Research Exercise for 4/2: visit the site: http://armenianstudies.csufresno.edu/arts_of_armenia/index.htm
This site is designed for use as a learning and research tool for students and scholars. What can be learned from it, and what is missing? How can it be improved? Imagine a better website for Armenian art and describe in one page, double-spaced.
April 2
**Workshop for Chapter 9: Armenian Monks and Monasteries**

**PRESENTATION 1**

**PRESENTATION 2**

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April 9
**Workshop for Chapter 10: Late Medieval Illumination in Armenia and Beyond**

**PRESENTATION 1**

**PRESENTATION 2**

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April 16
**Workshop for Chapter 10: Art of the Seventeenth Century**

**PRESENTATION 1**

**PRESENTATION 2**

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April 23
**Workshop for Chapter 11: Art and Cultural Heritage, Trauma, and Memory**

**PRESENTATION 1**

**PRESENTATION 2**

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1 Note: April 2-23 there will be seminar Discussion PLUS two presentations.