

Ani Garabed Ohanian

Ani Garabed Ohanian holds the Armenian Community Fellowship, which includes support from the Nishan and Margrit Atinjian Family Foundation, Michelle Kolligian, Steven and Deborah Migridichian, and Harry and Hripsime Parsekian. Trilingual in English, French, and Armenian, Ohanian spent summer 2019 at Columbia University's intensive summer Russian language program. Now comfortable working with Russian language sources, she has turned her attention to learning Turkish. Archival materials in these languages are crucial for her doctoral project, which examines the role the Armenian Genocide played in Bolshevik-Kemalist relations. The current state of research tends to focus on the relationship between Kemalists and Bolsheviks, but neglects to address the Armenian Genocide as an essential factor. Moreover, existing studies assess these relations strictly through a Turkish or Russian lens. Adopting a transnational perspective that puts the genocide at the center of these relations, Ohanian will consider how Bolsheviks and Kemalists interacted to undermine Armenian nationalism in the Caucasus.

Ohanian examines the continuing consequences of the Armenian Genocide and how it implicitly led to Armenia's Sovietization in 1920. Her project will shed light on how the Bolsheviks expanded their influence in the Caucasus and how anti-imperialist sentiments strengthened relations with the Kemalists. Russian and Armenian archival records should reveal information that is lacking from current scholarship and which may highlight different viewpoints regarding the intervention of western powers. Her dissertation concentrates on the final phase of the genocide, specifically during the period of 1918 to 1920, when the Republic of Armenia was an autonomous nation-state. During this period, the Bolsheviks and Kemalists collaborated to combat imperialist influence in the region of conflict. Their alliance led to a series of attacks and massacres that threatened Armenian nationalism. Ohanian's research will address scholarly debate over the real purpose of this rapprochement between the Russians and Turks, and the true nature of their aims in the Caucasus.

In the summer, Ohanian attended a conference at the 9/11 Memorial museum, which focused on memorials that are dedicated to specific atrocities. The panel discussions inspired her to write an article about the 1965 Armenian Genocide memorial, Tsitsernakabert, located in Yerevan, Armenia. Ohanian has partnered with Asya Darbinyan, a Strassler Center alumna, to organize a panel at the Association for Slavic, Eastern European, Eurasian, and Studies Convention in November 2019.

