

Oxford Armenian Studies Launches ‘Research Notes’



OXFORD, UK -- Oxford Armenian Studies launched short video “Research Notes” featuring Armenian studies scholars in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at University of Oxford.

Prof. Theo Maarten van Lint (Calouste Gulbenkian Professor of Armenian Studies), Dr. Hratch Tchilingirian (Associate Faculty) and Dr. David Zakarian (British Academy Fellow) highlight various aspects of their current research in these audio-visual notes.

“This new initiative aims to reach a wider audience beyond academia and to draw attention to the depth and scope of Armenian studies by providing a snippet of a subject or research findings,” explained Hratch Tchilingirian, who conceived and produced the clips.

The five “Research Notes” posted on social media so far have reached some ten thousand people online.

In “Research Notes 1”, Prof. van Lint speaks about his intellectual and academic journey into Armenian studies. In three additional clips (Notes 2, 3 and 4), he presents highlights of his work on medieval Armenian authors. Dr. Zakarian speaks about his research

in medieval colophons (Notes 5) and women in 5th century Armenia (Notes 6). In Notes 7, Dr. Tchilingirian speaks about his research on identity and notes a “connection” to chess in 12th century Armenia and, in Notes 8, discusses deaconesses in the Armenian Church.

All “Research Notes” are on Oxford Armenian Studies (OAS) Youtube channel and accessible through the following links:

Research Notes 1—Theo Maarten van Lint: the making of an Armenologist

Research Notes 2—Theo Maarten van Lint: Narek in Dutch

Research Notes 3—Theo Maarten van Lint: Grigor Magistros, an 11th century prince poet scholar

Research Notes 4—Theo Maarten van Lint: Ezekiel’s Vision

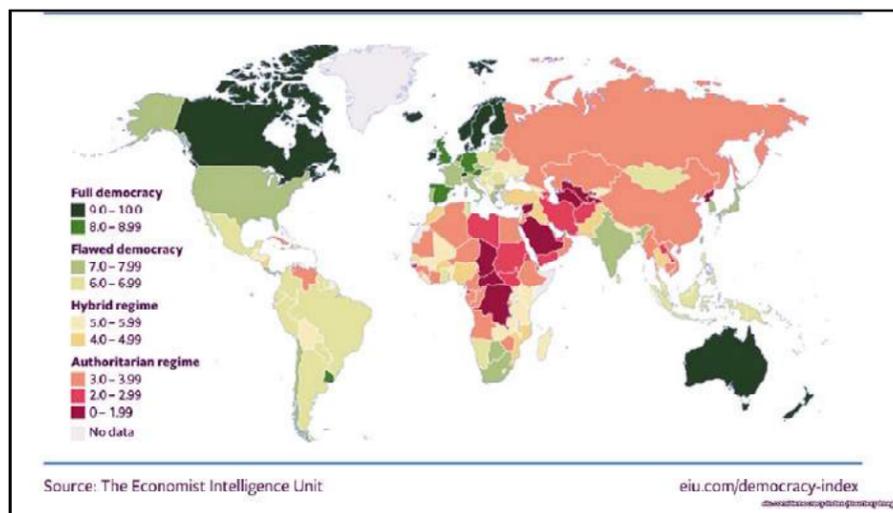
Research Notes 5—David Zakarian: Medieval colophons

Research Notes 6—David Zakarian: Women in 5th century Armenia

Research Notes 7—Hratch Tchilingirian: identity and a ‘connection’ to 12th c. chess in Armenia?

Research Notes 8—Hratch Tchilingirian: Female deacons in the Armenian Church.

Armenia Most Improved Country in Democracy Index 2018



LONDON — Armenia saw the most improvement among all “hybrid regime” countries in Eastern Europe in 2018, raising its score to 4.79, from 4.11 in 2017. This led to a jump in its ranking from 111 to 103, according to the eleventh edition of the Democracy Index, compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), which reveals that political participation is on the rise in almost every region of the world. Whilst clearly disillusioned with formal political institutions, the population has turned anger into action, and turned out to vote, and to protest, it says.

The report says the “Velvet Revolution” against an attempt by Serzh Sarkisian, the former president, to stay in power by switching to the post of prime minister resulted in the appointment of Nikol Pashinian, an opposition leader, as prime minister.

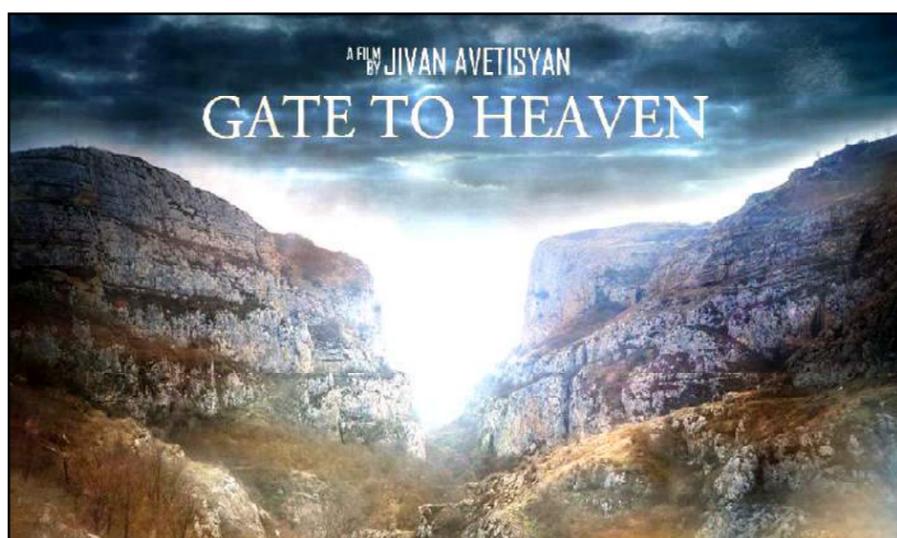
It says Pashinian’s opposition coalition subsequently swept the Yerevan municipal election and won a staggering 70% of the vote in a parliamentary election in December 2018. These developments, and Pashinian’s subsequent anti-corruption campaign, improved the country’s scores for government accountability and transparency.

They also resulted in a vast im-

provement in citizens’ perception of corruption and confidence in the government and political parties. The Velvet Revolution resulted in an increase in voter turnout and in the percentage of citizens actively participating in demonstrations to remove Sarkisian from power.

Armenia’s neighbors Georgia (89th) and Turkey (110th) are also in the same group of “hybrid regimes”. Azerbaijan (149th) and Russia (144th) are listed among “authoritarian regimes”. Among former Soviet republics, Armenia is behind only Moldova (79th), Ukraine (84th) and Georgia (89th). The Index is topped by Norway, Iceland, Sweden, New Zealand and Denmark. Syria and Northern Korea are on the bottom of the list.

The EIU Democracy Index provides a snapshot of the state of world democracy for 165 independent states and two territories. The Democracy Index is based on five categories: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. Based on their scores on 60 indicators within these categories, each country is then itself classified as one of four types of regime: full democracy; flawed democracy; hybrid regime; and authoritarian regime.



Gate to Heaven a Film by Jivan Avetisyan

Director Jivan Avetisyan from Armenia has been inspired to tell Armenian stories especially those from Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) from a young age through his Arthouse films that have received international recognition at various film festivals. Jivan believes that while film is a source of entertainment, they are also a powerful medium of educating the mass.

Gate to Heaven, is director Jivan Avetisyan’s third feature film. The film’s backdrop takes place in Artsakh with a storyline of a German photo-

journalist, played by Richard Sammel, who returns to Artsakh in 2016 to cover the war, which reignited after a 22-year ceasefire with its neighbouring country, Azerbaijan. In the result of his journalistic investigation, Robert meets a young opera singer, who happens to be the daughter of missing photojournalist whom he had abandoned in captivity during the fall of the village of Talish in 1992. Robert and Sophia’s frequent rendezvous leads to a passionate romance...

Richard Sammel, has starred in

over 100 films, including Quentin Tarantino’s “Inglourious Basterds”, Roberto Begnini’s “Life is Beautiful”, Martin Campbell’s “Casino Royale”, American vampire series “The Strain” by Guillermo dell Toro and many other films. In 2012, he won “Best Actor” at the Syracuse International Film Festival in New York for his performance in Ruggero Dipaola’s “Apartment in Athens”.

Jivan Avetisyan’s previous films, Tevanik and The Last Inhabitant have received numerous accolades and awards. Tevanik has won over ten awards in International Film Festivals including the Xian, Silk Road International Film Festival- China “Best Viewer’s Choice” Award and Italy’s International Overload Film Festival- Juries Prize for “Most Original Work.”

The Last Inhabitant, Jivan Avetisyan’s second feature film, was considered for the 74th Golden Globe Awards (2017). Recognized by A-Class International Film Festivals including

Shanghai and Venice International Film Festivals (2017); Awarded Best Feature Film at the Scandinavian International Film Festival in Helsinki, Finland (October 2017); The film has been purchased and licensed by HBO to air in Eastern European countries. The Last Inhabitant, also features Homayoun Ershad, who played the lead role in Taste of Cherry by Abbas Kiarostami and was awarded the Palme d’Or at the 1997 Cannes Film Festival.

Jivan Avetisyan’s team continues its efforts to complete the film about Artsakh. The film is a co-production between Armenia, Lithuania, Germany and France. Art enthusiasts and non-profit organizations who have an interest in the Arts took part in the creation of the film about Artsakh/Armenia. The production team has also launched a Crowdfunding campaign on GoFundMe to help with post-production funding. www.gatetoheaven.am

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