The Armenian Studies Program and
The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) present

“Migrants from Van and the Transforming
Politics of Representation
in the Ottoman Empire, 1850s-1870s”

By

Dr. Dzovinar Derderian

Migrants or itinerants from provinces like Van, or more precisely “pandukhts” in Armenian, are often characterized in the existing scholarship and popular discourse as destitute and melancholic people. Rather than discussing this disempowering image of Armenian pandukhts, this talk will demonstrate how voices of the pandukhts became a site of power and their very physical presence in the Ottoman capital in large numbers represented a lever of negotiation. Not only the pandukhts of Van, but also Armenian inhabitants still in Van referred to pandukhts as representatives of their voice and mentioned the pandukhts in their petitions to put further pressure on the Constantinople Armenian Patriarchate. The acceleration of movement and communication through newspapers and collective petitions, along with the large presence of Vanets’is in Constantinople provided the pandukhts the opportunity to step forward as the public voice of Van and thus engaged in novel practices of political representation in the Ottoman Empire.

Dzovinar Derderian is currently teaching at the American University of Armenia. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Her dissertation is titled “Nation-Making and the Language of Colonialism: Voices from Ottoman Van in Armenian Print Media and Handwritten Petitions, 1820s to 1870s.” She has co-edited a volume entitled The Ottoman East in the Nineteenth Century: Societies, Identities and Politics (I.B. Tauris, 2016). She currently serves on the editorial board of Études arméniennes contemporaines and is the editor of Entries of the Society for Armenian Studies website.

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Virtual Presentation-Zoom Webinar

Zoom Registration required-to register in advance please go to this link:
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