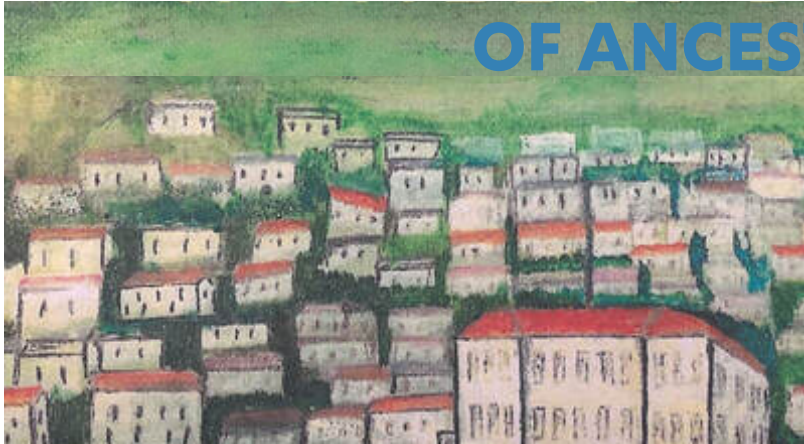


A HOUSE IN THE HOMELAND: ARMENIAN PILGRIMAGES TO PLACES OF ANCESTRAL MEMORY



FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2022

10 AM PDT (1 PM EDT)

ZOOM WEBINAR

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For many Armenians whose homeland is the Western Armenia of the Ottoman Empire, now in eastern Turkey, “memory” ended with the genocide in and around 1915. For them, no more “homeland” memories could originate or take place there. But the children and grandchildren of genocide survivors who travel “home” from their various diasporas, are giving new meaning to historical memory by inserting themselves in its arc. Between 2007 and 2015, Carel Bertram traveled with many self-described pilgrims on dozens of home-coming trips led by Armen Aroyan, and *A House in the Homeland* chronicles what she saw. In this talk, Dr. Bertram describes how, with luggage filled with stories heard from their own family members, including those transmitted through the songs they sang, the dances they danced, the foods they made, and even through their screams in the night, pilgrims understood that they were visiting a sacred landscape, albeit one violated by the profane. In this fraught yet transcendent place, pilgrims invent a series of rituals so that village by village, town by town, or even house by house, they ritually connect with their own ancestors, and, as they stand on their own ancestral land, allow them to be a part of their personal story in the present. Through these rituals, the pilgrims themselves are deeply changed, but so too is their own memory of homeland and even the meaning of homeland itself.



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