



RAMAPO COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Office of Communications and Public Relations

Press Release

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MIT Professor and Author to Address Armenian Life in Post-Genocide Turkey

MAHWAH, N.J. – Dr. Lerna Ekmekcioglu, McMillan-Stewart Associate Professor of History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, broadcast journalist and writer, will speak about her recent book *Recovering Armenia: The Limits of Belonging in Post-Genocide Turkey* on Tuesday, November 29 at 7:15 p.m. in the Trustees Pavilion at Ramapo College of New Jersey. The Gross Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies will sponsor this event.

The book follows the trajectories of the survivors of the 1915 Armenian Genocide who remained inside Turkish borders after the signing of the 1918 Mudros Armistice (and during the Allied occupation years of Istanbul) and after the 1923 establishment of the new country as the Turkish Republic. How did the Kemalist state treat the remaining Armenians? What were Armenians' responses to the new (but also old) Turkish regime? Dr. Ekmekcioglu will discuss multiple strategies Armenians improvised in order to cohabit with unapologetic perpetrators and survive in the new Turkey.

She gives voice to the community's most prominent public figures, notably Hayganush Mark, a renowned activist, feminist, and editor of the influential journal *Hay Gin*. These public figures articulated an Armenianess sustained through gendered differences, and how women came to play a central role in preserving traditions, memory, and the mother tongue within the home.

Lerna Ekmekcioglu is an historian of the modern Middle East and an affiliate of the Women and Gender Studies Program as well as the Center for International Studies. She specializes in Turkish and Armenian lands in the 19th and 20th centuries. Her work focuses on minority-majority relationships and the ways in which gendered analytical lenses help us better understand coexistence and conflict, including genocide. She holds a B.A. from Bogazici University (Istanbul) in Sociology, and a Ph.D. in History and Middle East and Islamic Studies from New York University, 2010. With Melissa Bilal, she also co-edited *Bir Adalet Feryadı: Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Beş Ermeni Feminist Yazar (1862–*

1933) [*A Cry for Justice: Five Armenian Feminist Writers from the Ottoman Empire to the Turkish Republic (1862–1933)*] (Istanbul: Aras Publishing House, 2006)

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Ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* as fifth in the Best Regional Public Universities North category, Ramapo College of New Jersey is sometimes mistaken for a private college. This is, in part, due to its unique interdisciplinary academic structure, its size of approximately 6,000 students and its pastoral setting in the foothills of the Ramapo Mountains on the New Jersey/New York border.

Established in 1969, Ramapo College offers bachelor's degrees in the arts, business, humanities, social sciences and the sciences, as well as in professional studies, which include nursing and social work. In addition, Ramapo College offers courses leading to teacher certification at the elementary and secondary levels. The College also offers eight graduate programs as well as articulated programs with Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New York Chiropractic College, New York University College of Dentistry, SUNY State College of Optometry and New York College of Podiatric Medicine.