



SRII WINTER AND SPRING LECTURES 2022

# THE CITY

Monday, April 25, 6.30 p.m.

The Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul  
Istiklal Caddesi 247 (Beyoğlu - Tünel)

Mehmed II's architectural patronage and a  
manuscript of the *Patria* of Constantinople  
Aslıhan Akışık, İstanbul Medeniyet University

The *Patria of Constantinople*, compiled in the tenth century, is the most extensive literary source concerning Byzantine Constantinople, its monuments, and legends. Some of the earliest Ottoman historiographical sources narrate that Mehmed II closely inquired concerning the monuments of Constantinople and its history in the aftermath of 1453. The Ottoman sources also relate that the Ottoman Sultan had collected manuscripts that preserved knowledge of the city which so amazed him. Thus, it is of great interest that a manuscript of the *Patria of Constantinople* was copied for Mehmed II by a Michael Aichmalotos (the Captive) in 1474.

This manuscript, TMSK G.İ. 6, is still housed in Topkapı Museum Library. This manuscript provides insight into the ways in which the Hellenic and imperial Roman past of the city was negotiated as the Ottoman Sultan set out to make Constantinople his capital and to appeal to its indigenous population. Close analysis of TSMK G.İ. 6 and its exemplar Parisinus gr. 1788 allows one to reconstruct the ways in which fifteenth-century building activity in Ottoman Constantinople was guided and influenced by this Byzantine literary text. Importantly, I propose that the location and fortification system of the Topkapı Palace was informed by the fanciful description of the mythical palace of Byzas as it was found in the *Patria*.

We kindly request that you do not attend if you are not fully vaccinated against COVID or if you are experiencing any COVID-related symptoms. Limited seating 30 persons. Registration is necessary. **Please register at [event@sri.org.tr](mailto:event@sri.org.tr)**. The lecture will not be available online.