


# Contested Histories of Settlement in Turkey and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on Housing, Nation-Building, and National Identities

This open workshop is the first scientific meeting of the research program MCH-EsMed - How the middle class housed itself in the Eastern Mediterranean (2024-2029), which is funded by the European Research Council – Starting Grant 2024 (Grant Agreement 101164009) and hosted by the Department of History of Cities, Diaspora and Immigration in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, Institute for Mediterranean Studies, FORTH. It aims to develop the relevance and theoretical impact of the research program's key concepts—such as nation-building, identities, modernization, property, and household—using Turkey, one of the four countries MCH-EsMed addresses, as a case study.

 26, Mandrokleous St.,  
Neos Kosmos

VENUE :



RESEARCH  
CENTRE for the  
HUMANITIES

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER'S BIO

Ecem Sariçayır is a member of the program's research team. Sariçayır is a historian of the built environment who specializes in the intertwined histories of architecture and property in West Asia from the mid-19th century to the present. She received her PhD in History of Architecture and Urban Development from Cornell University in 2024. Her research was supported by many awards and grants, including those from the Graham Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Canadian Center of Architecture, and the Social Science Research Council. Her work has appeared in *The Journal of Architecture*, *Footprint*, and various edited volumes.

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**Tuesday, January 21st, 2025**

12.00-12.10 **Konstantina Kalfa** | Principal Investigator of MCH-EsMed, Institute for Mediterranean Studies – FORTH

**Introduction to MCH-EsMed's main objectives, Sariçayır's speech, and the workshop's scope**

12.10-12.40 **Ecem Sariçayır** | Postdoctoral Researcher, Institute for Mediterranean Studies – FORTH, Member of the Research Team

**Architectural Histories of Property in Transition: From the Late Imperial South Caucasus Borderlands to Modern Turkey**

**ABSTRACT:** In 1878, Kars and Batumi, present-day border regions of Turkey and Georgia, were incorporated into Transcaucasia, completing the Russian annexation of the South Caucasus. Four decades later, with the dissolution of the Ottoman and Russian Empires, Transcaucasia was reorganized into the Soviet Republics of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, and, outside of the Soviet bloc, the Turkish Republic. Investigating the intertwinements of imperialism and architecture, Sariçayır's dissertation showed that paramount to these tumultuous sociopolitical shifts in the South Caucasus borderlands, inhabited by various communities, was the reorganization of property in this period of Russian settler imperialism and the emergence of capitalist development. It thoroughly shaped the development of modern urban and rural plans, as well as the production of new architectural forms and architectural historiography in the region at the turn of the twentieth century—a period marked by nationalism and nation-building. This talk aims to initiate a discussion on the dissertation's methods and theoretical frameworks for studying the modern forms of urban and rural built environments in post-war Turkey, including, among others, transnational fieldwork, multi-sited archival work, and comparative histories as well as the lens of property and class relations and the regional framework.

12.40-12.50 **DISCUSSANT : Christos Georgios Kritikos** | Postdoctoral Researcher, Institute for Mediterranean Studies – FORTH, Member of the Research Team

12.50-14.30 **OPEN DISCUSSION**

**COORDINATION : Despoina Valatsou** | RCH Director – Senior Researcher and Member of the Research Team

**WITH THE CONTRIBUTION OF :**

**Nikos Christofis** | Assistant Professor of 'International Cultural Relations' at the Department of Language and Intercultural Studies, University of Thessaly

**Alekos Lamprou** | Postdoctoral Researcher at the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia

**Thomas Maloutas** | Emeritus Professor of Social Geography and Thematic Cartography at the Harokopio University