



38th Levantine Heritage Foundation Zoom lecture with guest speaker Selma Somer  
15 April 2025, 6.00 pm (UK time)

**Pera/Galata: Neighbourhoods, Residents and Churches of a Late Medieval Genoese Enclave (1267-1453)**

During nearly two hundred years, from 1267 to 1453, the Genoese ruled over the Pera/Galata quarter, right across Constantinople. The Galata Tower stands as a reminder of this period. Although there is little public knowledge about this heritage, an abundance of publications has been produced since the middle of the 19th century. Genoese notary records, maps, and an Ottoman survey of 1455 reveal precious information about the characteristics of the Genoese settlement Pera. The presentation aims to relate how this enclave came to exist, function, and survive over the years, and how this is reflected in its monuments. Through the study of texts, the different communities that composed Pera, various neighbourhoods and churches, and the transformation of the Byzantine space is revealed.

Booking essential: <https://selma-somer-presentation.eventbrite.co.uk>

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The Map of Constantinople (1422) by Florentine cartographer Cristoforo Buondelmonte



Selma Somer obtained a Master in Archaeology and History of Art from Koç University. Her 2024 MA thesis is entitled “Pera/Galata”: Neighbourhoods and Churches of a Late Medieval Genoese City”. She initially began her working life in IT, followed by a long career in banking and financial advisory. She holds a B.Sc. in Computation from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, and an MBA from Bilgi University, Istanbul. Passionate about the cultural heritage of Istanbul and its preservation, her research interest continues to be in this field, focusing on urban life, neighbourhoods, reuse of space, and interaction between communities