



SRI SPRING AND AUTUMN LECTURES 2021
NARRATIVE AND POLITICS

December 15, 2021
18:00 (Turkey), 16:00 (CET)

Stories of ruins, ruins of stories

A discussion between
Christos Chryssopoulos (Athens)
and Ingela Nilsson (Istanbul)

Ruins and their stories have an intricate relationship in the Mediterranean area. Travelers from Europe long sought in them the physical evidence of ancient and biblical myths, and found in them the inspiration for new stories and works of art. In the modern period, some observers used ruinous settings around the Mediterranean to buttress racist or orientalist narratives of progress and degeneration, and nascent states in the area instrumentalised them to underpin nationalist or fascist myths of rebirth and rejuvenation. Problematised by many post-modern thinkers, such tendencies have seen a revival in recent years. We currently live in a world where technology not only empowers collective and independent agents to physically rebuild and restore cultural heritage on a large scale, but also to rewrite and annihilate it, and where extreme exponents of tribalism and individualism compete in storytelling through social and digital media. Under such circumstances, how can we relate to the ancient past and its various manifestations in stories and ruins, both in the Mediterranean and beyond?

Christos Chryssopoulos is a prize-winning Greek author. His novel *The Parthenon Bomber* (2008) explores various topics relating to history, identity and modernity. He lives in Athens.

Ingela Nilsson is professor of Greek and Byzantine language and literature at the university of Uppsala. Since 2019, she has been director of the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul.

— Zoom admission code after registration to event@sri.org.tr —