

Water, Heritage and the Making of Landscapes

The event brings together two conferences on water, archaeology, and cultural landscapes in Türkiye. Through case studies from several projects, the speakers will reflect on heritage, transformation, and future challenges.

25 June 2026 / 4.00 pm

Sala Vigliano, Castello del Valentino

The conferences will be held in English

Reflections on the water.

Developing proposals for water heritage in Istanbul and Izmir

Human dependency on water is of all times. Aqueducts, irrigation systems, flood control installations, ceremonial fountains, bath houses, reservoir dams, docks and harbor cranes: water heritage is all around us in our urban and rural landscapes today, reflecting the multitude of ways in which people's lives have revolved around water. The great wealth of water heritage comes with challenges of preservation but also opportunities for increased public engagement with water in past, present and future. In this talk I will discuss two case studies of recent work on water heritage sites in Türkiye, conducted in the framework of NIT Urban Heritage Lab. The studies concern the historical water supply of Constantinople/Istanbul and the cosmopolitan heritage of the port city of Smyrna/Izmir.

Fokke Gerritsen PhD.

Fokke Gerritsen (MA 1995 University of Chicago; PhD 2001, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam) is an archaeologist and heritage specialist. He is the director of the Netherlands Institute in Türkiye and teaches at Leiden University and Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. His areas of research focus on Anatolian prehistory as well as the challenges and potentials of heritage in contemporary urban and rural contexts. He has co-organized the NIT Urban Heritage Lab since 2021.

[2]

Reporting from the *ground*. Proposals for the future of multilayered cultural landscapes in Ankara and Phrygian Highlands

Archaeological heritage is not only a material trace of the past, but also an active part of contemporary urban and rural landscapes. Whether fragmented, partly invisible, or landscape-defining, it raises important questions about preservation, interpretation, accessibility, and public engagement. In this talk, I will discuss two case studies developed within the framework of the NIT Urban Heritage Lab: Roman Ankara, where archaeological remains are embedded in the layered fabric of a modern capital city, and Yazılıkaya in the Phrygian Highlands, where the Midas Monument and its wider cultural landscape reveal the challenges of rural heritage, climate vulnerability, depopulation, and adaptive reuse. Together, these cases reflect on how archaeology can contribute to more liveable, inclusive, and sustainable heritage futures.

Özgün Özçakır PhD.

Özgün Özçakır received his Bachelor of Architecture from Middle East Technical University (METU), and his Master's and PhD degrees from METU's Graduate Program in Conservation of Cultural Heritage. As part of his doctoral and postdoctoral research, he was affiliated with the University of Catania in Italy and Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands. His work focuses on how historic environments transform, adapt and are reused within the frameworks

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