

Annual Report 2024

The Netherlands Institute in Turkey (NIT) supports the study of Turkey through the ages. Linked to the Faculty of Humanities of Leiden University, it initiates and conducts research and education programs and facilitates projects by students and researchers of all Dutch universities, mostly in the humanities and social sciences. Its offices and extensive library are located in the heart of Istanbul, where an unparalleled concentration of (international) academic and cultural institutions give exceptional possibilities for innovative, interdisciplinary collaboration. NIT's small staff (2,2 fte) maintains an extensive network in Turkish and international academia.

This report gives a brief overview of NIT's activities in 2024. It showcases the wide scope of its programs, relating to research, education and social impact.

Education

NIT Urban Heritage Lab 2024



The course included the Mediterranean Port Cities: Shared Heritage, Shared Challenges for Urban Sustainability Symposium held online on October 11, 2024, which explored the rich history, current challenges, and future potential of port cities around the Mediterranean.

Between October and December, the fourth edition of the NIT Urban Heritage Lab Autumn Course took place. This international, interdisciplinary program educates graduate students and junior professionals in innovative approaches that use the potential of cultural heritage to find solutions for current challenges that cities face worldwide.

The 20 selected participants from a wide variety of disciplines such as architecture, urban planning, archaeology, art, history, sociology, literature, and anthropology came together to develop new projects for the revalorization of the historic port city of Izmir. The participants followed an online lecture program and case study presentations on the revalorization of the historic urban landscape of port cities.



First in-person meeting with the participants of the course in Izmir.

During the excursion to Izmir from October 17-19, participants had the opportunity to come together and start working on their final projects. These projects were presented on December 13, 2024, and will be published in the fourth volume of the NIT Urban Heritage Lab publication series of the Netherlands Institute in Turkey.



During the field trip of Historic Ports, Future Cities program

As part of the program, a series of lectures took place on the revalorization of the historic urban landscape of port cities. These lectures, which were open to both participants and the general public, explored various approaches to preserving and transforming the cultural and architectural heritage of port cities.

The following course lectures took place:

(November 1) Historic Ports Future Cities: 568 Yıllık Miras Haliç Tersanesi (The Haliç Shipyard, a 568-Year Legacy) - by Sinem Dedetaş

(November 15) Coastal Clear: A project created to increase the awareness about climatic threats facing the coast of Alexandria - by Panseh Ibrahim and Mirette Abdelnour (Bibliotheca Alexandrina Antiquities)

(November 15) How to make the most of the Danube heritage? Accessibility strategies - by Alexandra Mocioiu, Alexandru Roşu and Cezara Matei (Front la Dunăre NGO)

(November 29) Water Values Past, Present and Future: How to bring the history and heritage of water management to the design of sustainable futures? – By Carola Hein (Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Universities PortCityFutures)

Research Projects & Fieldwork

Tell Kurdu Excavation Project



The Tell Kurdu Excavation Team, 2024

For two months in the summer, NIT staff members Fokke Gerritsen, Aysel Arslan and Gülşah Günata conducted archaeological fieldwork as team members of the Tell Kurdu Excavations Project in Hatay. The project, which began in 2022, is led by Rana Özbal of Koç University and focuses on the study of a large settlement dating back to the 6th and 5th millennia BCE in the Amuq Plain in the southern province of Hatay. There was no fieldwork season in 2023 due to the devastating earthquakes of February 2023. In the summer of 2024, fieldwork resumed with excavations in two new areas, on the top of the mound and at the eastern base. The preservation of architectural remains holds much promise for large-scale excavations in future campaigns.

With generous support from Koç Holding, the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the excavation compound now has lodging for up to 28 people, as well as a kitchen/dining hall and an work building with workspaces and conservation and photography facilities. The Tell Kurdu Excavations project is planned as a long-term project, aiming to combine research, student education as well as public engagement.

Feriköy Protestant Cemetery Initiative

NIT has been involved since 2018 in this initiative of six international research institutes to document and preserve the historical Feriköy Protestant Cemetery and to share information about this landmark with the wider public. Activities in 2024 included the restoration of several historical gravestones, and cataloguing the digitized archives kept by the seven consulates (the Netherlands, Germany, United Kingdom, United States, Sweden, Hungary and Switzerland) that are responsible for the management of the cemetery.

The cemetery includes the gravestones of a number of noteworthy Dutch diplomats, merchants and their family members. The gravestone of 17th century Frederick Warner is the oldest Dutch gravestone in the cemetery. He was the brother of the famous scholar-diplomat Levinus Warner whose large Oriental manuscript collection became part of Leiden University Library's Middle East Collection soon after his death.



Gravestone of Frederick Warner at the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery

Project: The Legacy Emilie Haspels at the Midas Monument and Yazılıkaya



The village house where Emilie Haspels stayed in the 1930s

In the framework of the 100th anniversary of the Friendship Treaty between the Netherlands and Turkey, a joint project highlighted the work of Dutch archaeologist Emilie Haspels (1894-1980) in the Phrygian Highlands, south of Eskisehir. In collaboration with the Netherlands Institute in Turkey, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and the Middle East Technical University, and with the support of the Dutch embassy in Ankara, her fieldwork residence in Yazılıkaya was documented. On May 16 and 17, a Turkish-Dutch team investigated the architecture, construction techniques and the position of the building within traditional Anatolian village architecture.

Water Heritage Projects

Cities, Water and Heritage Symposium



Participants of the Water Heritage Symposium, Palais de Hollande, Istanbul.

The Netherlands Institute in Turkey is committed to bringing academic and public stakeholders together on topics that are of significance to the institute's research and education programs. This includes water management through the ages, including current threats to water resources worldwide and the potential of water heritage to increase public awareness and appreciation. As part of the 2024 activities commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Friendship Treaty between the Netherlands and Türkiye, the symposium Cities, Water, and Heritage was organized on June 6, by the NIT, the Dutch Consulate General at Palais de Hollande and ISKI, the Istanbul Metropolitan Water Authority.

During this symposium, Turkish and Dutch experts and stakeholders in water and water heritage discussed how they approach water heritage, water management, and public engagement programs in Amsterdam and Istanbul. ISKI is responsible for a larger number of historical structures relating to water distribution from the Roman era onwards.

Water Memories Project & Pilot Walk



Water Memories Project team at Seyyid Hasan Paşa Sebil and Fountain

On June 5, the pilot version of the Water Memories Walk took place with partners from the VU, Radboud University, and the Hrant Dink Foundation, where the route was finalized. The Water Memories Walk was launched in February 2025 on the KarDes mobile app.

Conferences and Public Lectures

Necropoleis Research Network Annual Meeting VII



Excursion to the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery

From October 7 to 9, 2024, the 7th annual meeting of the Necropoleis Research Network took place. The meeting started with two conference days in the ANAMED auditorium, with lectures on various aspects of funerary archaeology, mortuary practices, and the treatment of the dead in different historical and geographical contexts. On the third day, excursions were organized to the Feriköy Protestant Cemetery and the Haydarpaşa excavations.

NIT Day in Nijmegen



NIT Day in Nijmegen

On December 6, 2024, the NIT day took place at Radboud University in Nijmegen. During this event, attendees had the opportunity to learn about the research activities and collaborations of the NIT. The program included presentations by NIT staff and fellows on ongoing research and partnerships, including the Water memories project. In addition, former fellows gave presentations on various research themes and shared their experiences in Istanbul.





NIT Urban Heritage Lab site visit to the Temple of Augustus and Rome in Ankara, October 2023

The Netherlands Institute in Turkey invites you to the

NIT Day in Nijmegen

6 December 2024 | 13.00 – 16.30

Radboud University, Pavilion,
Erasmuslaan 9, room 01.15

with:

Fokke Gerritsen	Rafael Medeiros Coelho
Mariëtte Verhoeven	Ketty Iannantuono
Sanne de Jong	Evelien Roels
Rik Janssen	

SCAN ME



Other Events

January 17, Book launch: *A Hundred Years of Republican Turkey. A History in a Hundred Fragments* at Palais de Hollande.

February 8, Lecture: *Every Contact Leaves a Trace: Identifying Communities of Clay Object Makers through Ancient Fingerprints* by Aysel Arslan

March 6, Lecture: *Piety on screen: Increasing presentation of religion in Turkish television series* by Petra de Bruijn

March 26, Lecture: *Barcın Höyük'te Mandıracılık* by Rana Özbal and Fokke Gerritsen

April 3, Lecture: *Freedom in slavery. Status and agency in inscribed epigrams from the Greek East, 3rd cent BC – 3rd cent AD* by Laurens E. Tacoma

May 20-21, Conference: *International Conference Post-Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction: Challenges and Opportunities*

September 13, Lecture: *The Dawn of Orientalism: Dutch Scholars and Arabic Classics in Ottoman Istanbul* by Dr. Peter Webb

October 25, workshop: *From Miklagard to Istanbul: Moving the Senses*



Image: *Bir Başkady* (Ethos, 2020) season 1, episode 1, Netflix

Lecture organized by the Netherlands Institute in Turkey

Piety on screen
Increasing presentation of religion
in Turkish television series

by
Petra de Bruijn (Leiden University)

6 March 2024
18.30-20.00

ANAMED Auditorium
İstiklal Caddesi No 181 Istanbul

For more information please visit nit-istanbul.org

 Netherlands Institute in Turkey



**FROM MIKLAGARD TO ISTANBUL:
MOVING THE SENSES**

25 October 2024, 3 pm

Finding Refuge in Istanbul: From the Vikings Onward
Prof. Ayhan Kaya

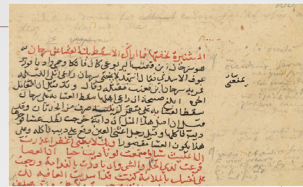
Seclusion versus Accessibility: The Harems of Constantinople
in Stories by Elsa Lindberg-Dovlette
Prof. Helena Bodin

Moderator: Lora Sariaslan

ANAMED Auditorium
İstiklal Caddesi 181
Beyoğlu/Istanbul



Lecture organized by the Netherlands Institute in Turkey & Sponsored by Leiden University Library to mark the opening of its new Middle East Library in 2024



Leiden Ms Or 700, the Arabic manuscript of Sufi al-ḥayr with Warner's pearl illuminations in Latin. Courtesy of Leiden University Library.

The Dawn of Orientalism
Dutch scholars and Arabic classics in Ottoman Istanbul

Peter Webb (Leiden University)

13 September 2024
18.30-20.00

ANAMED Auditorium
İstiklal Caddesi No 181 Istanbul

For more information please visit nit-istanbul.org



Research by NIT fellows

The Netherlands Institute in Turkey supports junior researchers from Dutch universities that come to Istanbul for their thesis, dissertation or publications. Fellowships consist of a month of free accommodation in the direct vicinity of the institute as well as 24/7 access to the institute's library. Fellows participate in the NIT community, engage in stimulating exchanges with fellow researchers and benefit from the vibrant academic atmosphere in the surroundings of the institute. Fellows have the opportunity to share and receive feedback on their ongoing work in an informal presentation. In 2024, ten talented researchers from diverse disciplines received a NIT fellowship.

John Turco (RUG)

*John Turco, PhD candidate in Archaeology at the University of Groningen, was one of the NIT spring fellows. During his fellowship he worked on his PhD research *Rituals in Space: Reconstructing Funerary Ritual through Gifts and Bones*. This research revolves around the analysis of preserved funerary contexts from the Roman period (1st century BC to 4th century AD) to reconstruct ritual sequences and practices. It analyses grave goods assemblages and their spatial relationships, bodily treatment, as well as evidence for commemorative practices taking place around the grave in an attempt to see what rituals were practiced in the necropolises of two case studies of Pisidia and Lebanon.*

Frederik Schack (UL)

*Frederik Schack, Research Master student in Archaeology at Leiden University, stayed at NIT in the spring to work on his thesis. In his thesis, entitled *Everyday Empire: A household Archaeological approach to regional centres in LBA North Central Anatolia*, he focused on the material manifestations of empire in regional centres of North Central Anatolia during the Late Bronze Age, such as the Hittite Empire. He investigated the lives of the inhabitants of North Central Anatolia, how they adapted to imperial measures, and how this was reflected archaeologically.*

Gabriel Sel (UL)

*Gabriel Sel, Master Student in Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University, came to the NIT in the spring to work on his thesis entitled: *Tekkes in Transition: Tracing Istanbul's Social, Cultural, and Political Metamorphosis through Visual Narratives*. In this thesis, he examined the restoration process of several tekkes (Sufi lodges) in relation to the social, political, and cultural transformations of Istanbul in the last few decades.*

José Rafael Medeiros Coelho (RUG)

*José Rafael Medeiros Coelho, PhD student in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Groningen, came to the NIT library in May to work on his project *Mapping Transnational Hubs, Networks, and Cultural Heritage: Ottoman Arab Migrations to Latin America (Antioch-São Paulo)*. In this research, he focuses on the transnational dynamics of Ottoman and post-Ottoman Arab-Christian migration, with a specific focus on Antioch and São Paulo.*

Sanne de Jong (RU)

*Sanne de Jong, PhD candidate at Radboud University, spent a month as a residential fellow at the NIT in the fall of 2024. During her stay, she worked on a case study within her PhD project: *Disastrous natural and political climates – the effects of volcanic-induced climate anomalies in relation to political unrest and resilience in the eastern Roman Empire (6th century CE)*. In this case study, she focused on the socio-political effects of volcanic-induced climate change on Roman society between 43 BCE and 650 CE.*

Rik J. Janssen (UL)

Rik Janssen, recent graduate of Leiden University, did his fellowship in the fall, during which he worked at the NIT Library, laying the foundation for his PhD research titled Sultan Mahmud II 'Pulls a Long Bow,' which examines the revival of archery in the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century. During his stay, he focused on collecting sources and documenting *nişan taşları* (historical archery monuments), which were erected to honor notable shots by Ottoman archers.

Thomas Faessen (RUG)

Thomas Faessen, of the University of Groningen, stayed at the NIT from November 4 to December 1. The aim of his fellowship was to complete a PhD proposal for NWO PhDs in the Humanities 2025 and to finalize an article for publication in the *Tijdschrift voor Mediterrane Archeologie* (TMA).

Janset Nil Genç (UL)

Janset Nil Genç, research master student at Leiden University, was one of the non-residential fellows of the fall semester. Her thesis, *Life after Migration: Experiences of Circassian muhajir families in the Ottoman Empire*, examined the experiences of Circassian muhajirs in the Ottoman Empire in the second half of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. She explored the migration experiences of two Circassian muhajir families, reconstructing and situating their stories within the broader Ottoman context, with the aim of providing an alternative to top-down accounts of their migration.

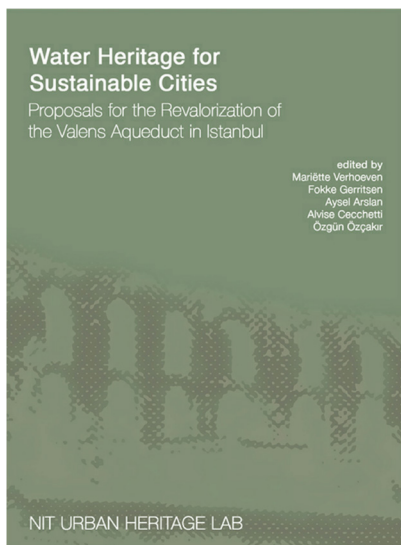
Ahmet Can Karapınar (Maastricht)

Ahmet Can Karapınar, Research Master student at Maastricht University, worked in December 2024 at the NIT library on his project *Divided Narratives of the Divided Island: The Construction of Legitimacy Through the Historical Narratives in the Cyprus Question*. In his research, he examined how the Greek and Turkish communities in Cyprus use historical narratives and collective memory to shape their foreign policy positions.

Fatma Tanış (Delft)

Fatma Tanış, Postdoctoral researcher at TUDelft, worked on her project *École Sedad Hakkı Eldem* in the fall. In this project, she investigates the role of human and non-human actors in the formation of architectural education and the development of the discipline. She specifically focused on the Fine Arts Academy in Istanbul, founded in 1882, an important architecture school that has experienced several political transitions and has remained a hub for intercultural exchanges in architectural education between Turkey and Europe.

NIT Publications

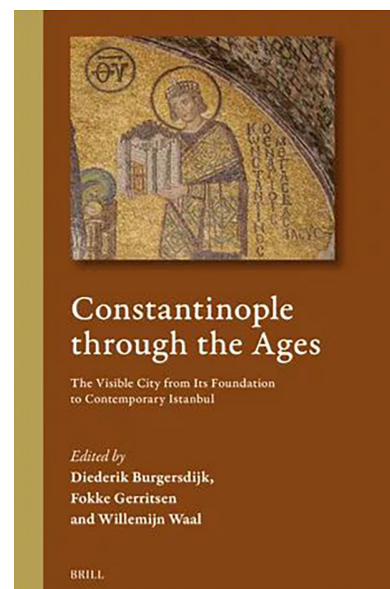


Water Heritage for Sustainable Cities: Proposals for the Revalorization of the Valens Aqueduct in Istanbul

In 2024, several publications were released. One of them is the book *Water Heritage for Sustainable Cities: Proposals for the Revalorization of the Valens Aqueduct in Istanbul*. This book presents proposals for innovative strategies to promote urban sustainability in times of climate crisis through tangible and intangible water heritage. The proposals were developed during the NIT Urban Heritage Lab: *Water Heritage for Sustainable Cities*, held in 2022.

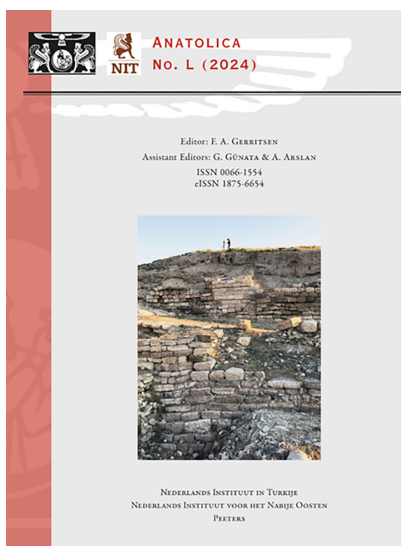
Constantinople through the Ages. The Visible City from Its Foundation to Contemporary Istanbul

In addition, the book *Constantinople Through the Ages: The Visible City from its Foundation to Contemporary Istanbul*, edited by Diederik Burgersdijk, Fokke Gerritsen, and Willemijn Waal, was published. This book explores the long and layered history of Constantinople from different sources and perspectives. The book launch took place on December 11 in Amsterdam.



Anatolica 50

In late 2024, *Anatolica 50* was published. The journal, which focuses on archaeological and historical research in Anatolia and surrounding regions, is edited by Fokke Gerritsen, Gülşah Günata and Aysel Arslan. Volume 51 will be published in the fall of 2025. *Anatolica* is published by Peeters in Leuven and appears in print and online. Issues (open access until 2021) can be found here: <https://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php>



Fokke Gerritsen (co-)authored a number of scientific publications that appeared in 2024:

Bos, E.O. van den, F.A. Gerritsen, 2024: *Adjoining Spaces, Building Communities. Agglutinative Architecture at Neolithic Barcın Höyük in North-West Anatolia*, in J. Sisa-López de Pablo, A. Bach-Gómez, and M. Molist (eds), *Households and Collective Buildings in Western Asian Neolithic Societies*, Turnhout (LEMA 4), 103-115. Doi: 10.1484/M.LEMA-EB.5.136709

Burgersdijk, D., F.A. Gerritsen, W. Waal (eds), 2024: *Constantinople through the Ages. The Visible City from Its Foundation to Contemporary Istanbul*, Leiden & Boston (Cultural Interactions in the Mediterranean 8).

Burgersdijk, D., F.A. Gerritsen, W. Waal, 2024: Introduction, in D. Burgersdijk, F.A. Gerritsen, W. Waal (eds), *Constantinople through the Ages. The Visible City from Its Foundation to Contemporary Istanbul*, Leiden & Boston (Cultural Interactions in the Mediterranean 8), 1-22.

Kaptan D., G. Atağ, K. Vural, ... R. Özbal, Gerritsen F. et al., 2024: The population history of domestic sheep revealed by Paleogenomes, *Molecular Biology and Evolution* 41(10). doi:10.1093/molbev/msae158

Özbal, H., A. Breu, L. Thissen, F.A. Gerritsen, E. van den Bos, A. Galik, T. Doğan, M. Çergel, A. Şimşek, A. Türkeul, R. Özbal, 2024: From Bowls to Pots: The Dairying Revolution in Northwest Turkey, a View from Barcın Höyük, 6600 to 6000 BCE, *PLoS ONE* 19(5): e0302788. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0302788>.

Özbal, R., F.A. Gerritsen, 2024: Tell Kurdu Höyük 2022 Sezonu, 43. Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı vol. 6, 383-394.

Aysel Arslan's research was published in:

Arslan, A., 2024: Barcın Höyük'te Paleodermatoglifik (Antik Parmak İzi) Çalışmaları 38. Arkeometri Sonuçları Toplantısı vol. 1, 151-158.

Çevik, Ö., Sivil, C., Vuruşkan, O., Aktaş, A., Sayit, K., Arslan, A., Králík, M., & Bamyacı, A. O., 2024: Prehistorik Dönemde Uzmanlaşmaya Dair Bir Model: Ulucak Höyük Seramik Üretim Atölyesi (MÖ 6005-5840), *Turkish Journal of Archaeological Sciences* 4, 1-45.

Gülşah Günata translated the following books published in 2024:

Hall, Jonathan M., 2024: *Arkaik Yunan Dünyası Tarihi. MÖ 1200-479*, translated by Gülşah Günata, Istanbul, *Homer Kitabevi ve Yayıncılık* (Original name: *A History of the Archaic Greek World: ca. 1200-479 BC*, Blackwell Publishing, 2014).

Özdizbay, A., Dağlı, İ. (eds.), 2024: *Pamphylia: Bereketli Ovada Halkların Ahengi/Harmony of the Peoples on the Fertile Plain (TR-EN)*, translated by G. B. Yazıcıoğlu, G. Günata, B. Akşahin, L. Erçevik Amado, S. I. Geray, S. Ö. Gerçeker, Istanbul, *Yapı Kredi Yayınları*.

Webpage, blog and social media

In 2024, the NIT Blog was launched. This Blog shares the experiences of fellows, provides updates on ongoing research, and announces events. You can find the blog on <https://nit-istanbul.net/>

Library

The NIT library has a collection of some 20.000 books on the archaeology and history of Anatolia and the wider region. Throughout the year, a total of 182 (141 books and 41 periodicals) publications has been added to the NIT Library. The library offers workspaces to fellows and guest researchers and is open to students and researchers during weekdays.

Staff

The staff of NIT consists of Dr. Fokke Gerritsen (director, 0,8 fte), Dr. Aysel Arslan (institute assistant 1,0 fte), Dr. Gülşah Günata (publications editor, 0,4 fte). Librarian İrem Ünal manages the NIT library on behalf of Koç University. Leiden University Middle Eastern Studies graduate Alvise Cecchetti worked as a research assistant, and University of Amsterdam graduate Esen Kaya assisted with communications and pr.

Funding

Several of the 2024 activities relied on external funding. This included a Vrije Universiteit Connected World Social Impact Award to Fokke Gerritsen for public engagement activities related to water heritage, and a grant from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs for cultural heritage related activities, including the Urban Heritage Lab.