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Public Keynote of the
Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA)

Identity, Modernity, and Encounter: Archeology in the Gardens of the Topkapı Palace in Late-Ottoman Istanbul

Saturday, 1 October 2022, 7:00–8:30 pm

Centro de Investigación Interuniversitario das Paisaxes
Atlánticas Culturais (CISPAC), Edificio Fontán, Cidade da Cultura,
Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain



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Abstract

This keynote investigates the archeological and cultural activities taking place in the royal gardens of the Topkapı Palace in Istanbul during the late-Ottoman era. The first part of the presentation will discuss the archaeological activities performed by the Ottomans and the foundation of the Ottoman Archeological Museum during the second half of the 19th century. The second part focuses on the Second Constitutional Era (1909–18) and portrays the developments and discussions during the conversion of the palace gardens into a public park, as a showcase of Ottoman modernization. The last section scrutinizes the archeological activities of the French forces that took place in the palace gardens during the Allied occupation of Istanbul (1918–23) after WWI. The presentation hopes to present different facets of archeology, and its changing social, ideological, and scholarly meanings for various parties at different periods.

Short CV

Nilay Özlü is an architectural historian with a focus on the urban culture of Istanbul, late-Ottoman cultural history, and museum studies. She earned her B.Arch. from ODTÜ, Ankara, and PhD from Boğaziçi University, Department of History. Her co-edited volume with Mohammad Gharipour, *The City in the Muslim World*, was published by Routledge in 2015. Özlü has numerous publications on the display of Ottoman imperial heritage and architectural history of Istanbul and received several awards from the Society of Architectural Historians, the University of Oxford, the Getty Foundation, and Istanbul Research Institute. She worked as the Barakat postdoctoral fellow at the University of Oxford and the Chevening visiting fellow at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies between 2019 and 2021. Currently, Özlü is an associate professor and the vice chair of the Architecture Department at Istanbul Bilgi University, teaching architectural design, theory, and history.

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