

Platform of Anatolian Religions and Beliefs Platform / Those who are backing our cultural heritage Vanguards of Our Cultural Heritage / Chapter 17

"Cultural Heritage of Bergama" with Yaşagül Ekinci

TOPICS: Cultural Riches of Bergama, The Road to UNESCO World Heritage List, Historical Importance of Bergama, Protection of Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism, Suggestions for Visitors: Places to Visit in Bergama**

Nükhet Everi: Today Wwe are in Bergama today infor our cultural heritage interviews for the Anatolian Religions and Beliefs Platform. It is one of the most important treasures of Anatolia, and one of the places I enjoy touring as a guide. We will discuss why we are talking about PergamonBergama in this marvellous place located between Troy and Ephesus. Lecturer Yaşagül Ekinci from Trakya University, who enriched us with marvellous information in the previous episodes, will be our guest today. For those who do not know you, could you briefly tell us about yourself and why you focus on Bergama?

Yaşagül Ekinci: I am a lecturer at Trakya University. I have been involved in various studies on the protection and management of cultural heritage. I took part in the preparation of TurkeyTürkiye's first UNESCO World Heritage List nomination file for the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne. Later, I moved to Bergama and worked on Bergama's nomination file. After Bergama was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2014, I returned to Edirne, where I worked on the nomination file for Uzunköprü and the 2nd Beyazit ComplexComplex of Sultan Beyazid II. I also took part participated in the UNESCO nomination processes of Niksar from Tokat and the Historical Harbour City in Izmir. I also took part as was also a coordinator in the preparation of the Gaziantep file in the field of gastronomy in TurkeyTürkiye's first creative cities.

Nükhet Everi: Bergama is a very rich place both historically and culturally. Could you tell us about the importance of this region?

Yaşagül Ekinci: Bergama is a settlement that has been home to many civilisations from ancient times to the present day. It was of great importance as the capital of the Kingdom of Pergamon during the Hellenistic period. Pergamon Library was one of the biggest libraries of the period and parchment paper was invented here. In addition, Asklepion was one of the most important health centres of antiquity. Bergama, which maintained its importance during the Roman period, continued its existence as an important settlement centre during the Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman periods.

Nükhet Everi: Which criteria were taken into consideration in the process of Bergama's inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List?

Yaşagül Ekinci: Bergama was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List based on cultural criteria. In particular, the architecture and urban planning in the ancient city reflect the cultural, economic, and political importance of the Pergamon Kingdom period. In addition, Asclepion draws attention with its importance in the history of health and innovative treatment methods. The various buildings in Bergama bear the traces of different periods such as Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman, and this increases the universal value of the place.

Nükhet Everi: What kind of activities are being carried out for the protection of cultural heritage and sustainable tourism in Bergama?

Yaşagül Ekinci: Various projects are being carried out for the protection of cultural heritage in Bergama. Local administrations, universities, and non-governmental organisations cooperate in these

projects. In particular, rRestoration of historical buildings, archaeological excavations, and educational programmes are particularly of great importance. In terms of sustainable tourism, Bergama offers various opportunities for tourists to both experience cultural heritage and contribute to the local economy. Guided tours, local handicrafts, and gastronomy experiences are some of these activities.

Nükhet Everi: Which points places would you especially recommend for those who will visit Bergama?

Yaşagül Ekinci: Among the must-see places for visitors to Bergama are Pergamon Ancient City, Asclepion, Red Courtyard, and Bergama Museum. In addition, strolling around the historical bazaar and tasting local delicacies will also provide visitors with an unforgettable experience. It would be very appropriate to spare a full day to discover the unique historical and cultural richness of Bergama.