

# SOME THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE FUTURE AIMS AND DIRECTIONS OF THE ISTANBUL BRANCH OF THE GERMAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE<sup>1</sup>

ALMAN ARKEOLOJİ ENSTİTÜLERİ İSTANBUL ŞUBESİNİN İLERİYE YÖNELİK AMAÇLARI İLE İLGİLİ BAZI ÖNGÖRÜLER

Felix PIRSON

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**Anahtar sözcükler:** Alman Arkeoloji Enstitüleri, araştırma politikaları, bilim kurumları

## ABSTRACT

*The Istanbul branch of the German Archaeological Institute is the largest foreign scientific institute in Turkey. Even though it has had a long and successful past, the institute must redefine its goals to meet the needs of the changing Turkish and international academic environment. This article presents research plans and aims ultimately to contribute to continuing archaeological discussions in Turkey. Research should be conducted by endorsing the values of collaboration and partnership and by embracing the joint responsibility towards cultural heritage. Such an approach will ensure that cultural policies are maintained through united efforts and accredited academic research standards*

## ÖZET

*Türkiye'deki yabancı arkeoloji enstitüleri arasında en kapsamlı yapılanmaya sahip olan kurum Alman Arkeoloji Enstitülerinin İstanbul Şubesidir. Her ne kadar Enstitü kurulmuş olduğu yıldan bu yana çok sayıda araştırma projesini başarı ile gerçekleştirmiş ise de, uluslararası ve Türkiye'nin akademik ortamındaki gelişmeler, önümüzdeki yıllarda Enstitü'nün amaç ve yaklaşımlarının yeniden tanımlamasını gerekli kılmaktadır. Bu yazı ile, Türkiye'de hızla gelişmekte olan bilimsel arkeoloji ortamına, Enstitü'nün nasıl katkıda bulunabileceği konusunda bazı öngörülerini ve bu doğrultuda tanımlanacak yeni amaçlarını tartışmaya açmaktadır. Enstitü'nün ileriki yıllarda yapacağı her türlü projenin dayanağı kültürel mirasa ortak sorumluluk ve duyarlılığı olan, yüksek akademik standartlara sahip işbirliği ve ortaklık ilkesi olmalıdır. Akademik ortamın bilimsel standartlarını yerine getiren, işbirliği ve paylaşımı esas alan sürdürülebilir kültür politikaları ancak bu şekilde gerçekleştirilebilir.*

## INTRODUCTION

The Istanbul branch of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) - a public research institution operating under the auspices of the Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany with branches in many countries - is the largest foreign research institute for archaeological disciplines in Turkey (Fig. 1). When it was established in 1929 following the approval of a request by the German government to the Republic of Turkey, its research program differed considerably from the older branches in Rome and Athens. While they were - and still are - characterized by an obvious focus on Greek and Roman archaeology, the Istanbul branch (in the following: the Institute) aimed to cover all periods of Turkey's culture and history, "...from the oldest to the most recent times", as Martin Schede, the founding director of the Istanbul branch of the DAI, declared in a policy statement<sup>2</sup>.

Despite the loss of one post in the 1990s, assigned to the Ottoman periods, the Institute still attempts to pursue its initial aims. Today, the post-doctoral scholars employed in Istanbul include a prehistorian, a Near-Eastern archaeologist, two Classical and one Byzantine archaeologist, and an architect (*Bauforscher*) working on the architecture of Anatolia from prehistoric to Ottoman times. Two research assistants working on their doctoral thesis are Classical archaeologists, one postdoctoral research fellow is a prehistorian. The assignment of different archaeological disciplines to the various positions (directors, researchers, research-assistants and postdoctoral research fellows) is not fixed but highly flexible. Hence we are able to follow actual trends and developments in the archaeological sciences and combine them with the needs of our long-term research projects such as Hattusha (Fig. 2) or Pergamon (Fig. 3).

Apart from these general outlines, one major aim of our current and future research policy is to maintain and extend research cover over as many periods and materials as possible. This endeavour does not lay claim to any universality, but instead reflects our interest in cross-cultural and comparative approaches. We think that Turkey is particularly appropriate for such approaches, given its long historical tradition, its position as the site of crucial historical evolutions such as the "neolithic

revolution" and its function as a bridge between east and west. In order to foster a fruitful academic exchange with visible synergies, we will reinforce our efforts to build academic networks within the Institute and beyond, including colleagues from Germany, Turkey and elsewhere. The first network with the title "Manifestations of Power and Hierarchies in Urban and Rural Landscapes" ran from 2006 to 2008. For 2009-2010, a further network is planned with the title "Changes of Epochs (*Epochenwandel*) and Processes of Historical Transformation in Anatolia". Several projects of the Institute will be involved in a process of academic exchange and discussion with each other and with colleagues from German, Turkish and international universities and research institutions, organized in the framework of seminars and workshops. The academic networks form part of the DAI-wide research-clusters (*Forschungscluster*), covering broader and more general themes such as "Political Spaces", and forging contacts with archaeologists, historians and colleagues from other relevant disciplines outside the DAI.

The material basis of our research - whether inside or outside the networks and clusters - consists in field projects, i.e. excavations, surveys and studies of architecture. Additionally, work on material in museums represents another important source of new archaeological data. This also includes the presentation of unpublished excavations and finds in Web-based archives as highly useful tools for the scientific community. A planned joint-venture between the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul and the Institute raises high expectations with regard to this form of cooperation.

The field projects can be roughly divided into long-term excavations such as Göbekli Tepe, Hattusha, Miletus and Pergamon, and short-term projects (maximum five years) such as Anazarbos or Oinoanda<sup>3</sup>. The long-term excavations with their stable infrastructures should be regarded as research centres in their own right under the direction of the DAI<sup>4</sup>. The focuses of their research have to be (re-)formulated every five years and are evaluated by the *Zentraldirektion*, the scientific governing body of the DAI. According to their respective research programs, they should invite sub-projects from

Turkish, German or international universities to participate. Additionally, they are centres of education for advanced students and platforms for academic discussions in the form of small and informal meetings and seminars during the excavation campaigns. Projects such as Göbekli Tepe, Hattusha, Miletus and Pergamon fulfil an important function as laboratories of new archaeological questions and methods which not only can be applied over an adequate time span, but can also be reviewed and further developed within a long-term perspective. As showcases of the DAI and of German archaeology, they should become points of reference in a fruitful and cooperative academic contest between the various national and international archaeological projects in Turkey. The effort to attain the highest possible standards also applies to the conservation and presentation of archaeological sites, where these projects have particular responsibilities due to their long-term nature.

The short-term projects are much more flexible in terms of organization and scientific focuses. Ideally, they are cooperation projects with Turkish partners or sub-projects within Turkish or international long-term excavations or surveys. Due to the continuous presence of the DAI in Turkey, participation in rescue excavations, which are not limited to the traditional excavation seasons, might be an opportunity for future cooperation. Successful examples from Pergamon/Bergama, where the local Museum and the DAI are carrying out such excavations together, lead in the right direction.

The infrastructure of our work is formed by the Institute in Istanbul and the various excavation houses. The core elements in Istanbul are the library (Fig. 4) and the photo-archive (Fig. 5), both the largest structures of their kind for the archaeological sciences in Turkey. They do not only serve the needs of the Institute's projects, but are also crucial tools for all archaeological research in Turkey. Consequently the library, which currently holds 60,000 volumes and two hundred ongoing periodicals, is not only open to scholars, but also to students and the general public. The great importance of our library, which was named one of the 10 best libraries in Turkey in 2007 by the newspaper *Hürriyet*<sup>5</sup>, is reflected by the large number of 4,750 readers in 2008. Among the various libraries of the DAI (for example Berlin, Rome,

Athens, Cairo, Madrid) the Istanbul branch is in second place after Rome and equal with Athens in terms of the frequentation of the library. Additionally, the Institute houses accommodation facilities and rooms for public lectures and workshops. It is also the base for various public relations activities, including a website ([www.dainst.org/abteilung\\_266\\_de.html](http://www.dainst.org/abteilung_266_de.html)), a yearly brochure (Fig. 6), public lectures and guided tours to the museums and monuments of Istanbul.

Apart from scientific public relations for a wider audience, the Institute also organizes and hosts specialized conferences, for instance in 2007 on "Bautechnik im antiken und vorantiken Kleinasien" and in 2008 on "Byzantinische Kleinfunde im archäologischen Kontext" (together with the Koç University). The public lectures by Turkish, German and international scholars are directed at laymen as well as colleagues from different archaeological disciplines. Unfortunately, there has been a decline in attendance figures at the lectures over the last couple of years, particularly among students and colleagues from Istanbul. This might be partly due to problems in understanding German, the preferred language of most of the lectures (see below). However, we will continue to offer such lectures since we are convinced that they form an integral part in the international exchange of new results and methods.

On the basis of the Institute's research program, its projects and its infrastructure, the following future aims and directions can be formulated:

## 1) COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP

When the Institute was founded in 1929, it was the first foreign research institute with a clear focus on archaeology in Turkey. Against the background of the modernization of the young Turkish Republic, setting up an academic system played a crucial part and was a core element of the ideas of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. German scholars played an important role in this astonishing process, which was particularly fruitful for the field of archaeology. In this context, Kurt Bittel, director of the Institute between 1938-1944 and 1954-1960, also became the founder of the Institute of Prehistory at the University of Istanbul as well as the academic teacher of many eminent Turkish archaeologists<sup>6</sup>. However, Turkish archaeo-

logy – in particular prehistory – also oriented itself in various other directions and created close links with Anglo-American academia. And despite more or less continuous academic teaching by the Institute's directors and other members of the staff in Turkey until today, the Institute is not the central point of reference for Turkish archaeologists anymore. In my point of view, the loss of such a monopolist position is a very positive development, reflecting the full integration of Turkish archaeology in the international scientific community. Nowadays, the Institute still holds a very prominent position among other foreign institutes, but we have to adapt our profile to the changing world of archaeology and particularly to the changing environment in Turkey. The latter is characterized by the establishment of several public and private universities and research centres with archaeological departments located all over the country.

In the future, the academic networks mentioned above will become a central tool of scientific cooperation. By discussing specific archaeological problems on an informal and continuous basis, joint projects between Turkish and German scholars can be developed. Thanks to its specific potential - i.e. the coverage of most periods of Anatolian history and their study in a cross-cultural and comparative perspective (see above) - the Institute can offer a platform for exchange beyond the limits of national academic systems and their typical structural shortcomings (concurrency between different national academic 'schools', development of exclusive networks etc.), which are to be observed in Germany as well.

Another basis for the development of networks is the knowledge of the German language and/or experience with the German academic world by means of Humboldt, DAI or DAAD scholarships etc. In archaeology and the classics, the knowledge of (at least some) German is still a precondition for serious academic work. Due to the long and close Turkish-German relations, the degree of knowledge of German in Turkey is remarkably high. Having this in mind, we adhere to German as the basic language in our lectures and publications, even if this might reduce our potential audience<sup>7</sup>.

A good knowledge of German on the part of Turkish academics is a great potential which led to the establishment of a network for Turkish

Germany-alumni by the Institute in cooperation with the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in 2005 (Fig. 7). One of the aims of this network is to build up and strengthen contacts between Turkish and German universities, which might result in joint research projects or student exchanges. In this respect, the Institute intends to play an important role as mediator, particularly in encouraging German students to gain academic experience at Turkish universities. Exchange in this direction has slightly increased in the last few years, but there is still potential to be exploited. This process might be further enhanced by German colleagues who start to discover Turkish universities, particularly the private ones, as an interesting job-market.

Concerning Turkish-German cooperation in archaeological field-projects, it should be possible to carry them out under Turkish, German or joint directorship. The latter form, however, is difficult to realize due to the specific regulations of Turkish law on archaeological excavations and surveys requiring one project director. Beyond the level of project-directorship, the exchange of students from both sides in archaeological field projects should be intensified. This however requires good mutual knowledge of the respective language for communication as well as for the documentation systems.

Cooperation also works by organizing joint conferences or exhibitions. Here the already very good relations of the Institute with, for example, the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, the Research Centre for Anatolian Civilisations of the Koç-University and the Istanbul Araştırma Enstitüsü should be further strengthened (Fig. 8)<sup>8</sup>.

## 2) RESPONSIBILITY

The opportunity to work at very prominent archaeological sites in Turkey is a great courtesy of the Turkish Republic and also a sign of firm trust in German archaeology and the Institute. Such trust implies responsibilities for the Institute, not only in terms of high-standard research and publication, but also in the preservation and presentation of the sites. Therefore, large scale conservation projects and the development of management plans have to be an integral part at least of the long term projects. Responsibility means furthermore that it has to be made clear that the

preservation of the cultural heritage is a joint obligation of both the German (or other foreign license holder) and the Turkish side. In particular the development of management plans for archaeological sites offers various possibilities of cooperation between the Institute and Turkish universities, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the local administrations. In this context, cooperation between the Municipality of Bergama, the Mimar-Sinan-University, the Koç University and the Institute in developing a management plan for Pergamon/Bergama should be mentioned.

### 3) STANDARDS

The time when foreign institutes developed archaeological standards in Turkey is clearly over, and it has to be stated that Turkish universities played a leading role in this respect from the very beginning of the Turkish Republic. On the other hand, academia is always a field of fruitful competition, and the Institute firmly declares its will to participate in this competition. Therefore it is our obligation to promote the latest methods, techniques and – above all – approaches of German archaeology in Turkey. In this respect, our field projects, academic networks, conferences etc. still aim to set standards – though clearly not as development workers, but rather as part of an international scientific discourse going on in Turkey. Particularly in specific fields of our disciplines, such as the study of historical buildings (*Bauforschung*), where German scholarship is traditionally very strong, we can still give important stimuli to the Turkish and international colleagues working here. The Institute accordingly attempts to represent such disciplines and fields of research as have a positive and successful tradition in Germany. This is in line with our belief that Anatolia is one of the most important and promising areas of archaeological research and hence an important laboratory for methods and approaches from all over the world. This is reflected by the highly praiseworthy “Kazi Sonuçları Toplantısı” organized every year by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, which is attended by a great number of German colleagues who not only contribute but also receive important stimuli for their own work.

### 4) SUPPORT

The Institute’s infrastructure puts us in the favorable position of being able to contribute in many ways to archaeological research in Turkey. Not only is this

sound international academic practice, it is also, in our view, an important aspect of the bilateral cultural policy between Germany and Turkey. As part of the German Foreign Office, the Institute takes this task particularly seriously.

The support includes the library, which is open to everybody and can be used day and night by the colleagues staying in our guest-rooms. In view of the large number of newly founded departments of archaeology at Turkish universities with hardly any books, it is clear how important such support is. And even at the traditional universities in Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir, a general tendency to concentrate books in centralized libraries with limited access stresses the importance of the Institute’s library for archaeological research in Turkey. Therefore, the Institute will use all efforts to keep the high standard of its library despite rising costs for publications and maintenance.

The photo-collections of the Institute are the biggest of their kind in Turkey and represent valuable cultural archives. Despite the lack of a photographer, we are attempting to build them up further and to make them accessible via internet.

By means of “guest invitations” (*Gasteinladungen*), the Institute offers a non-bureaucratic way for Turkish colleagues to work in other libraries of the DAI such as in Berlin or Athens. We would like to increase this form of support and also to introduce other forms of scholarships for Turkish colleagues.

Our peer-reviewed scientific journals and monographs – such as “Istanbul Mitteilungen”, “Istanbul Forschungen” or “BYZAS” (Fig. 9) - contribute significantly to the publication of archaeological material from Turkey and to its discussion by an international academic audience.

### CONCLUSION

The Institute believes that its future aims and directions lie in making a significant contribution to the international archaeological discourse going on in Turkey. This contribution will follow the principles of cooperation and partnership, responsibility towards the cultural heritage, high standards in research and finally support as part of good international academic practice and bilateral cultural policy.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> I am very grateful to Prof. Dr. Mehmet Özdoğan for encouraging me to publish these very preliminary thoughts which initially were only intended as a stimulation for discussion with Turkish and international colleagues.
- <sup>2</sup> On the history of the Istanbul Branch of the DAI see Hauptmann 1991.
- <sup>3</sup> An overview of recent research projects of the DAI is given on the homepage of the Institute ([http://www.dainst.org/abteilung\\_266\\_de.html](http://www.dainst.org/abteilung_266_de.html)) and in the yearly report of the DAI in the *Archäologischer Anzeiger*; for 2007 see *Archäologischer Anzeiger* 2008/1 Beiheft p. 159-192.
- <sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the risks and opportunities of traditional long-term projects, particularly Pergamon, see Raeck 2001.
- <sup>5</sup> *Hürriyet* 9.3.2007, p. 4.
- <sup>6</sup> On Kurt Bittel, see Esin 1999.
- <sup>7</sup> The choice of English for this article – although TÜBA-AR accepts contributions in German – is due to the fact that it was first drafted for a British audience.
- <sup>8</sup> See most recently the exhibition „Ahşap İstanbul“ on Istanbul’s wooden houses (Istanbul Araştırma Enstitüsü – DAI 30.10.2008 – 15.3.2009) or the conference “*Tumuli istanbul 2009 - Tumuli as Sema*” on burial mounds (Centre for Anatolian Civilisations of the Koç-University – DAI 1.-3.6.2009).

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Fig.1. The German Consulate housing the Institute since 1989



Fig.2. Recent excavations at Boğazköy-Hattusha



Fig.3. Recent restoration work at Pergamon



Fig.4. The main reading room of the library



Fig.5. A selection of historic pictures from the photo-archive



Fig.6. Cover of the "Wooden Istanbul" exhibition catalogue



Fig.7. The alumni meeting held in 2005

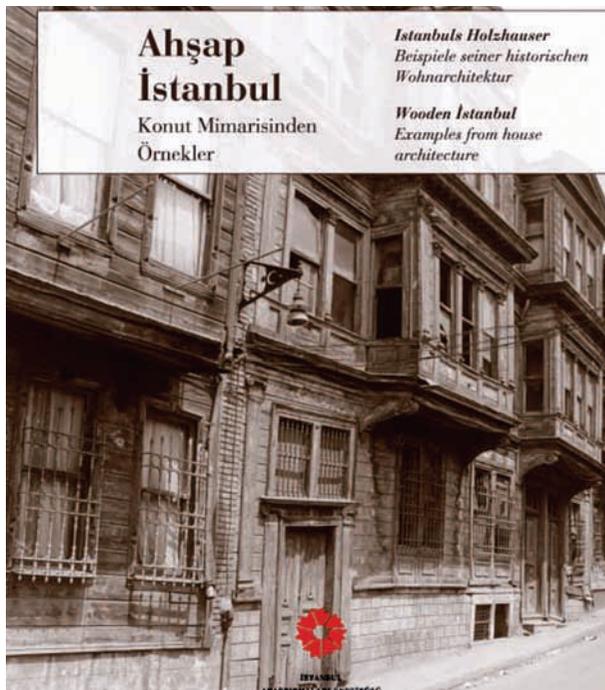


Fig.8. Cover of the yearly booklet of the institute

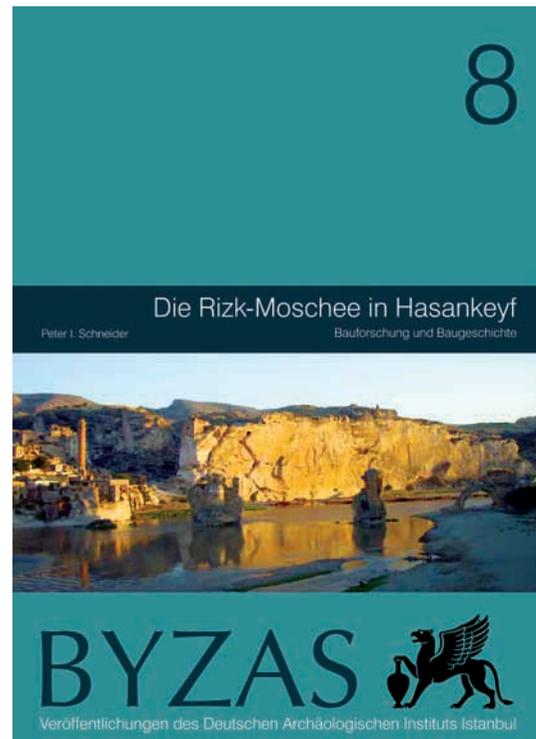


Fig.9. Cover of the Byzas, a new periodical on the proceedings of scientific meetings held by the Institute.