

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

SUPPLEMENT 31

PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST IN THE TURKISH REPUBLIC: CLASSICAL AND BYZANTINE PERIODS

Edited by

Scott REDFORD and Nina ERGIN



XDOCS.NET

PEETERS

LEUVEN – PARIS – WALPOLE, MA.

2010

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	vii
List of Contributors	ix
Introduction	1
Scott REDFORD and Nina ERGIN	

THE PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Archaeology and the Perception of Greek, Roman and Byzantine Eras in Early Republican Turkey	13
Murat ERGIN	

Constructing the Past in Ankara: From Augustus to Atatürk	35
Suna GÜVEN	

INDIVIDUALS

From the Lofty Halls of Academia to the Dusty Hills of Anatolia: Howard Crosby Butler and the First Sardis Expedition through Peace and War, 1909–1926	57
Fikret K. YEGÜL	

Guillaume de Jerphanion (1877–1948) as Jesuit and Scholar in Turkey . . .	101
Vincenzo RUGGERI	

Louis Robert (1904–1985): A Historian-Epigrapher Discovering Anatolia .	127
Pierre CHUVIN	

The Archaeology of the Turkish Republic and the School of Ekrem Akurgal A. COŞKUN ÖZGÜNEL	137
--	-----

Arif Müfid Mansel: A Pioneer of Turkish Archaeology	147
Haluk ABBASOĞLU	

INSTITUTIONS

The Museum in Bergama as an Example of Turkish Politics of Culture and of German-Turkish Collaboration	161
Wolfgang RADT	

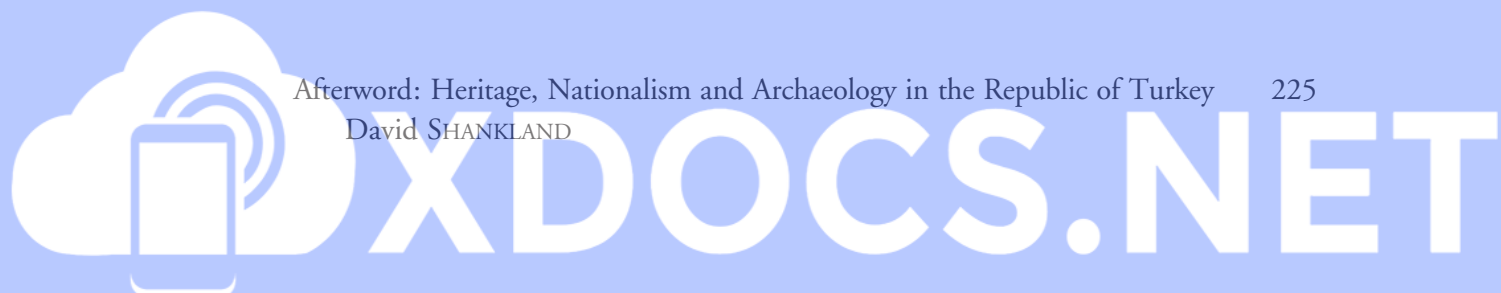
The Russian Archaeological Institute of Constantinople (1894–1914): From its Establishment until Today	187
Konstantinos PAPOULIDIS	

THE STATE OF THE FIELD

The Future of Classical Archaeology in Turkey	195
Kutalmış GÖRKAY	

Byzantine Art History in Modern Turkey	205
Engin AKYÜREK	

Afterword: Heritage, Nationalism and Archaeology in the Republic of Turkey	225
David SHANKLAND	



BYZANTINE ART HISTORY IN MODERN TURKEY

Engin AKYÜREK
İstanbul Üniversitesi
Edebiyat Fakültesi
Sanat Tarihi Bölümü
34452 Beyazıt/Istanbul
TURKEY
eakyurek@istanbul.edu.tr

This paper aims to present a brief history of Byzantine art history in the Ottoman Empire and Turkey from the late nineteenth century to today and to discuss the current situation of the field.¹ For the modern Republic of Turkey, which is actually founded on the core of the Byzantine mainland — that is, Constantinople, Anatolia and eastern Thrace — the cultural heritage of Byzantine civilization is of great significance. On this land, Byzantine civilization survived more than eleven centuries, exceeding the life span of any other historical civilization in Anatolia. The material remains of Byzantine culture in Turkey are hardly fewer than those of the Ottomans who dominated the same land for over 600 years following the Byzantine period. Moreover, material remains of Byzantine civilization in modern Turkey exceed Byzantine remains in the rest of the world. Thus, it is an undeniable fact that the Byzantine cultural remains surviving in Turkey today form one of the major parts of the country's cultural heritage.

THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

The current approach to human culture as an irreplaceable heritage which has to be preserved clearly dates to modern times. In Europe, interest in ancient cultures began with the Renaissance, when it was still limited to the admiration of Greek and Roman culture. This interest turned into the exploration and excavation activities of European archaeologists, mostly amateurs, at the end of the eighteenth century — activities that were actually a hunt for the treasures of Eastern civilizations rather than scientific curiosity. These then turned into a scientific activity only at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Ottomans, naturally, did not have the consciousness to protect cultural heritage in a modern sense, but their utilitarian approach led to the

¹ A detailed history of Byzantine studies in Turkey, mostly focused on the studies in Istanbul and Istanbul University, up to the 1970s has been published in Eyice 1973.

partial protection of the Byzantine cultural heritage. The Ottomans never considered the remains of the Byzantine era as the remains of a hostile civilization and did not pursue a policy to destroy them, as the presence of many Byzantine remains in the former Ottoman lands verify. What they did was to benefit from those remains, mostly architectural ones, by converting them for their own use. Thus, everything they needed and used has survived until today in relatively good condition; architectural remains which they did not need were neglected, became ruins throughout the ages, and mostly disappeared. This attitude is much more than simple utilitarianism — such as the conversion of churches into mosques. For example, Ottomans also took measures to preserve the magnificent mosaics and paintings of the Hagia Sophia and the Chora Church, although they did not “need” them practically and even though they were contrary to their beliefs. In short, Ottoman civilization, which was actually a continuation of the Byzantine Empire (geopolitically, if not culturally), never had a deliberately hostile attitude towards the Byzantine remains on its territory. Rejection of different cultures as the Other and even as hostile is the result of the nationalist ideology which began to spread in the Ottoman lands by the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Impressive monuments like the Hagia Sophia obviously commanded the attention of people visiting Istanbul throughout the ages, but the scientific interest in Byzantine remains in the Ottoman Empire began at the end of the nineteenth century, almost parallel to the first scientific studies in the field in Europe. One of the first books on Byzantine art was published in 1883 by C. Bayet,² and the first periodical on Byzantine culture, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, published its first issue in 1892. In the beginning, this interest in Byzantine art was mostly limited to monuments extant in Italy, in Ravenna, Venice and Sicily.

The first studies on remains in the Ottoman Empire were conducted by Western archaeologists and art historians: Joseph Strzygowski's well-known book, published in 1903,³ paved the way for followers to study in Anatolia. Bell, Ramsay, Jerphanion, Rott, Keil and others made excursions in Anatolia to find and to study Byzantine ruins.⁴ Ongoing excavations at the important antique cities of Western Anatolia — such as Pergamon, Miletos, Priene, and Sardis — began to include Byzantine remains, too. First established at Hagia Eirene in 1846, the Istanbul Archaeological Museum,⁵ as the only museum of the empire, began to collect works of art from the excavations and to publish catalogues, mostly in French. I should also mention some of the catalogues which include Byzantine pieces: Joubin's catalogue of sculptures (1896),⁶ the

² Bayet 1883.

³ Strzygowski 1903.

⁴ Eyice 1973, p. 377.

⁵ For a short history of Istanbul Archaeological Museum, see Önder 1985, pp. 96–99.

⁶ Joubin 1895–96. Published in Ottoman and in French.

⁷ Joubin 1898.

⁸ Ebersolt 1910.

catalogue of bronzes (1898),⁷ the catalogue of Byzantine pottery (1910),⁸ Mendel's catalogue of sculptures (1912–14),⁹ and a catalogue of the Bursa museum which held many Byzantine pieces at that time.¹⁰ In Istanbul, under the Allied occupation following the end of World War I, French occupation forces encouraged excavations at Byzantine sites, a well-known one being the excavations at the church of St. George of Mangana between 1922 and 1923.¹¹

Among Ottoman citizens, mostly amateurs from the Christian minorities were interested in Byzantine monuments during the last decades of the Ottoman Empire.¹² Their publications were mostly in French, even when native Turkish-speakers wrote them.¹³ The reason for preferring French in publications during the late Ottoman period is the fact that the readers of such studies were mostly Europeans and the Levantines of Istanbul. During the Ottoman period, important books on Byzantine monuments included a study by Mehmed Ziya Bey, published in Ottoman Turkish: a monograph on the Chora Church in 1908,¹⁴ and *Istanbul and Bosphorus* in 1920.¹⁵

THE EARLY REPUBLICAN PERIOD (1923–50)

Following the declaration of the Republic in 1923, the state began to encourage and support studies on history and archaeology. For this purpose, the Turkish Historical Society was founded in 1935. Students of archaeology and related fields were elected through an examination by the state and sent to Western universities or institutions for their education.¹⁶ The state also supported, encouraged and mostly directed several archaeological excavations. This cultural campaign of the young Republic, however, at the beginning was limited to pre-classical period excavations and historical studies, and was meant to establish the cultural base of the new Turkish Republic, which, contrary to its predecessor, was a nation-state of Turks. Thus, historical and archaeological efforts during the first decades of the Turkish Republic basically aimed

⁹ Mendell 1912–14.

¹⁰ Mendell 1908.

¹¹ French occupation forces had invited R. Demangel to carry out the excavations in the Mangana region. Demangel, accompanied by E. Mamboury who was working as a high school teacher in Istanbul at that time, began excavations in 1921; these continued until 1923 without any results worth mentioning. However, in 1933, they received permission from the authorities of the new Turkish Republic to continue excavations at the site, and in 1939 they published the results (Demangel and Mamboury 1939).

¹² For example, Konstantinos, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Istanbul (d. 1859), and Theodore Macridis, a museum employee.

¹³ Celal Esad Arseven's book *Constantinople, De Byzans a Stamboul* was first published in Paris in 1909, followed four years later by a Turkish translation.

¹⁴ Mehmed Ziya 1908.

¹⁵ Mehmed Ziya 1920.

¹⁶ Ekrem Akurgal (Archaeology), Sedat Alp (Hittitology), Afif Erzen and Halil Demircioğlu (Ancient History), and Suat Baydur (Classical Philology) are well-known scholars who benefited from this program.

to prove that there were great civilizations in Anatolia before the Roman and Hellenistic periods, as well as to search for the roots of the Turks in connection to those earliest Anatolian civilizations. This was in some ways a reaction to the Western archaeology which at that time exalted Greek and Roman periods as the origin of European civilization. Thus, archaeological studies in the young Republic concentrated on the native civilizations of Anatolia. In the framework of this cultural policy, there was no place for Byzantine archaeology. Among the archaeologists and historians whom the state sent to Europe for education, there were no Byzantinists; yet, the country gained important archaeologists and historians of international reputation.

Be that as it may, Byzantine culture was not completely neglected during the first decades of the Republic; it was only that the investment in the archaeological studies of the Byzantine period was not one of the state's cultural priorities. With regard to Byzantine civilization, studies in this period mostly focused on history. In 1931, Fuat Köprülü published a book examining the effects of Byzantine institutions on the Ottoman ones.¹⁷ For the first time, publications by Turkish historians on Byzantine history were in the Turkish language; moreover, important literature on Byzantine history began to be translated into Turkish—for instance, C. Diehl's and A. Vasiliev's books.¹⁸ An interesting detail that helps understand the attitude of the Republic is a book written by Reşat Ekrem Koçu between 1931 and 1934, summarizing Byzantine history for children,¹⁹ showing that the Republic did not feel any harm in teaching Byzantine culture to children. Even today, there is no children's book that presents Byzantine history in an age-appropriate manner. Also, two of the most important Byzantine monuments, the Hagia Sophia in 1934, and the Chora Church in 1948, were declared museums after the restoration of their mosaics had started.

However, although mostly not supported and directed by the state, excavations of Byzantine sites also continued during this period, especially the ones in Istanbul and those conducted by foreign scholars, among them Wiegand, Casson, Rice, Kollwitz, Schatzmann, and Schneider.²⁰ Parallel to activities in Istanbul, several studies on Byzantine art were being carried out in Anatolia as well. One of the most important studies was Jerphanion's survey of Cappadocia, which introduced the region to scholarly attention.²¹ David Talbot Rice was another scholar studying Anatolia (Trebizond) at that time.²²

¹⁷ Köprülü 1931.

¹⁸ Diehl 1937 (translated by T. Bıyıklıoğlu) and 1939 (translated by C. Yularkıran); Vasiliev 1942 (translated by A. M. Mansel).

¹⁹ Koçu 1934.

²⁰ See, respectively Mamboury and Wiegand 1934; Casson et al. 1928; Rice 1933; Kollwitz 1941; and Schatzmann 1935. Upon the destruction of the jail in 1939, the frescoed wall of the Church of St. Euphemia was exposed. Alfons Maria Schneider, director of the German Archaeological Institute, excavated the site in 1942 and published the results (Schneider 1943).

²¹ Jerphanion 1925–42. [Editor's note: See Ruggieri's contribution in this volume.]

²² Rice and Millet 1936.

We may list also many excavations of Byzantine sites and monuments, conducted by Turkish archaeologists as of 1930. The excavations of the Balabanağa Mescidi, an unknown Byzantine church converted into a mosque, were conducted by Arif Müfid Mansel in 1930 — the first excavation by a Turkish scholar.²³ In 1937, the Archaeology Museum excavated the Byzantine basilica in the garden of the Topkapı Palace, in collaboration with Istanbul University and supported by the Turkish Historical Society.²⁴ Between 1940 and 1948, excavations of the Rhegion at the Hebdomon were carried out by Arif Müfid Mansel and Aziz Ogan, the director of the museum, following the accidental revealing of the Byzantine complex at the site.²⁵ In addition to these excavations, the recovery of the mosaics in the Hagia Sophia by Thomas Whittemore and Underwood's work at the Chora Church, which began in 1947, were other important activities in the field of Byzantine studies before the 1950s. With the exception of Mansel's, all those excavations and studies were conducted by foreign scholars, while the contributions of Turks, due to the official involvement of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums, remained symbolic.

Another very important development was the foundation of several foreign national archaeological institutions in Istanbul and Ankara. The Russian Archaeological Institute was the first archaeological institute to open in Istanbul in 1894, but it did not survive until the Republican period and closed in 1914. The German Archaeological Institute opened in Istanbul in 1929 and the French Institute of Anatolian Studies in 1930. The British Archaeological Institute opened in Ankara in 1947. Later, these were followed by the American Research Institute (1964) and the Netherlands Archaeological Institute (1958), which after a short hiatus has recently opened its doors again.²⁶ These institutions have directly supported archaeological studies in Turkey, including the Byzantine period, and established libraries in the field.

AFTER 1950

The 1950s and 1960s were important for Byzantine archaeology, especially in Istanbul. This period was marked by a massive wave of migration from Anatolia to urban centers. The population of the city, which had been 1,000,000 in 1950, increased by 130 per cent and reached 2,300,000 by the end of the 1960s.²⁷ This resulted in a great population pressure especially on the Historical Peninsula of the city, causing a rapid and unplanned urban transformation and destroying the historical fabric of the city. During the populist Democrat Party government's campaign of

²³ Mansel 1933.

²⁴ Mansel 1940.

²⁵ Ogan 1939; Ogan and Mansel 1942; Mansel 1951.

²⁶ Now its library is housed at Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations.

²⁷ Kuban 1996, p. 400.

public improvements, which came to its peak especially between 1956 and 1960, many large public buildings and boulevards were constructed in the area within the Theodosian walls. Thus, many Byzantine, as well as Ottoman buildings were unearthed and destroyed through these construction activities; some were fortunately studied and documented by international scholars and the museums' experts. The Church of St. Polyeuktos at Saraçhane,²⁸ the triumphal arch of Theodosius at Beyazıt,²⁹ the Church of St. Euphemia at Sultanahmet,³⁰ as well as the floor mosaics found during the construction of the new Municipality Palace at Saraçhane,³¹ were all subject to major studies, following the construction activities in the city.

Work executed by the museums, especially in Istanbul and its vicinity, formed an important source for Byzantine Studies.³² Lacking any Byzantine art historian, many rescue excavations were conducted by the museum archaeologists, especially from the Istanbul Archaeological Museum and the Ayasofya Museum, some of them in collaboration with Western Byzantinists. The names of Feridun Diritimtekin, Nezi̇h Fıratlı, Rüstem Duyuran, Necati Dolunay, and Muzaffer Ramazanoğlu are familiar to Byzantine art historians as well, due to the studies and short reports they published on the surveys and excavations directed by the museums. Museums in Istanbul also conducted several surveys in neighboring cities — including Gebze, Tuzla, Hereke, İzmit, İznik, Yalova, Silivri, and Vize. Findings and results of the rescue excavations by the museum in the urban areas were mostly published in short reports, both in Turkish and English, in the museum periodicals. Excavations in the urban area mostly began due to the rapid and unplanned development of the city and, thus, were carried out in very short time spans as rescue excavations, rather than as scientific excavations. Therefore, they generally lack accurate and systematic recording of the evidence before it disappeared forever. Publications were mostly very short, inaccurate and insufficient reports published in the annual of the Ayasofya Museum and the annual of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums. Yet, these publications were important for Byzantine studies in Turkey, for in many cases they remained the only documentation of a find. Unfortunately, the annuals, an important source for Byzantine studies and of international benefit, have discontinued publication. The first issue of the *Annual of the Istanbul Archaeological Museums* was published in 1934, and the periodical continued

²⁸ Discovered in 1960 during the construction of the Haşım İşcan intersection at Saraçhane and excavated by R. Martin Harrison and N. Fıratlı between 1964 and 1971.

²⁹ When Ordu Avenue was enlarged in 1956/57, remains of the triumphal arch of Theodosius were exposed under the demolished northern facade of the Simkeşhane and studied by the Archaeological Museum (Duyuran 1957 and 1958).

³⁰ During the construction of the new Palace of Justice, rescue excavations were conducted by the Archaeological Museum at the site, including the Church of St. Euphemia and other remains belonging to the Palace of Antiochos. The results were published in Duyuran 1952 and 1953.

³¹ Duyuran 1955.

³² For a more detailed evaluation of the studies by the museums in Istanbul, see Eyice 1973.

to be published more or less regularly until its fifteenth and sixteenth issues in 1969. Its seventeenth issue was published after a hiatus of 33 years, in 2001, but thereafter publication was discontinued again. The *Annual of the Ayasofya Museum* was published beginning in 1959, its first six volumes appearing in seven years; however, the publication of the second set of six volumes took 26 years, and the twelfth and last volume appeared in 1992. Today, scholars and students in the field feel the absence of these museum annuals, because the academic world has great difficulty in following the rescue excavations that the museums conduct in Istanbul.

Foreign institutes, particularly the Dumbarton Oaks Research Center, have shown great interest in the progress of Byzantine Studies in Istanbul. This interest began in the late 1950s and continued until the mid-1970s. Especially the period between the early 1960s and the mid-1970s was very fruitful for Byzantine field studies in Turkey, due to Dumbarton Oaks' allocating considerable funds for such projects. If we were to look at the institute's publication, the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, out of the ten volumes issued between 1951 (11) and 1966 (20), 11 of the total of 13 field surveys supported by the institute were projects in Istanbul. In the first ten volumes, issued between 1941 and 1950, this number is two, and they were in the last two volumes. In the ten volumes issued between 1967 (21) and 1976 (30), three out of nine field studies supported by Dumbarton Oaks were in Istanbul. Among the most important studies supported by Dumbarton Oaks in Istanbul, we may count the excavations and restoration of the Kalenderhane Cami,³³ the excavations of the Church of St. Polyeuktos,³⁴ the excavations at Fenari İsa Cami,³⁵ the restoration of the frescoes and mosaics of the Kariye Museum,³⁶ and the Ayasofya.³⁷ The Kalenderhane excavations by Striker and Kuban in the 1960s should be considered one of the turning points for studying Byzantine monuments in Istanbul. Contrary to the hasty museum excavations, the Kalenderhane excavations were carried out very carefully, the building was well documented and, in the end, restored. Moreover, a group of experts, who later contributed to similar studies in Turkey, were trained during the excavation and restoration studies. The institute also supported several surveys of Byzantine sites in Anatolia.

One of the important events of the 1950s was the Tenth International Byzantine Congress in Istanbul in 1955. Although it took place only a few days after the catastrophic 6–7 September events in Istanbul, the congress became a great success, with 115 contributors presenting papers, of which nine papers were given by Turkish

³³ Striker and Kuban 1997.

³⁴ Five Preliminary Reports on the excavations of the Church of Polyeuktos excavations were published in Harrison and Fıratlı 1965, 1966, 1967, and 1968. See also Harrison 1989.

³⁵ Megaw 1964.

³⁶ Underwood 1966.

³⁷ Whittemore 1933, 1936, and 1942.