ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE BLACK SEA REGION IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY 1993–2007

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INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

The last report, including the year 1992, (Hind 1992–1993) was published only 3 years after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the year following the collapse of the Soviet Union. This has been a decisive factor in the strongly renewed interest of Western scholars in the Black Sea region. In general since the last report, the Black Sea world has moved closer to the West. In 2004 2 of the Black Sea countries, Romania and Bulgaria, became members of NATO and on 1 January 2007 they joined the European Union. Turkey, since 1952 a member of NATO, is currently negotiating with the EU concerning the conditions of membership, and Georgia and Ukraine currently aspire to membership of NATO.

The fall of the Iron Curtain also proved to be the turning point after which many collaborative projects between Eastern and Western scholars were initiated. At the institutional level this led to the formation of Black Sea research groups at several Western universities and other research institutions. The renewed interest is also reflected in several new periodicals dedicated to the Black Sea region, or at least part of it, as well as a series of publications that treat the Black Sea region from a holistic perspective and a number of international conferences and comprehensive exhibitions. Thus, knowledge of the Black Sea region in the West is decisively much better today than when the last report was made, and, as this report will show, many researchers have seized the new opportunities for East-West collaboration. However, a counter current can be observed in the new millennium. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, Western scholars were optimistic about the new possibilities for collaboration; however, due to strengthened nationalism in many Black Sea countries many East-West projects were given up after a few seasons. So in 2008, in fact, there are fewer running collaborative projects than was the case in the 1990s. This is an alarming development for the scientific investigation of the region.

The anc. world plays an increasing role in the formation of new national identities, which came out of the break up of the Soviet Union. However, the new emphasis on the region and its material remains also has its draw backs. First of all, the number of illicit excavations, especially in S Russia and Ukraine, has exploded as the result of, on the one hand, increased wealth among the region's many new wealthy people, who are interested in collecting Cl antiquities, and, on the other hand, the new Western focus on the region has provided growth for the international art market.

In the period covered by the present report several leading scholars in the field of archaeology of the Black Sea region passed away: Ja.V. Domanskij, A. Fol, O. Lordkipanidze, D.M. Pippidi, D.B. Šelov, V. Velkov, Ju.G. Vinogradov to mention only some of the most well known and highly esteemed in the West.

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INSTITUTIONS

In 1995 the Eurasien-Abteilung of the DAI was established in Berlin. This research institution is engaged in the study of interrelations between the nomadic and sedentary cultures of Eurasia, and its work thus intersects with half of the Black Sea region. Currently, DAI carries out 3 archaeological field projects in the Russian part of the Black Sea region: investigation of Taganrog (from 2004; O. Dally, W. Rabbel, H. Stümpel, Ch. Müller, G. Wendt, M. Ullrich, A.O. Kozin, P.A. Larenok and V.P. Kopylov), of the Kislovodsk basin in the LBA and EIA (from 2006; S. Reinhold, D.S. Korobov and A.B. Belinskij) and prospection in the Taman' Peninsula (from 2007; H. Brückner, U. Schlotzhauer, H. Stümpel and D. Žuravlev). The Eurasien-Abteilung publishes the periodical *Eurasia Antiqua. Zeitschrift für Archäologie Eurasiens*; to date 13 volumes have appeared.

The British Institute at Ankara (BIAA) supports research focused on Turkey and the Black Sea littoral in all academic disciplines within the arts, humanities and social sciences. For 3 years they financed the British Academy Black Sea Initiative (BABSI) (2002–2005). Among other projects they co-finance is the joint British-Georgian Pichvnari Expedition established in 1998, partly published by the directors M. Vickers and A. Kakhidze (2004; Kakhidze 2007).

In 2000, Zentrum für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte des Schwarzmeerraumes (ZAKS), an interdisciplinary research platform, was created by the archaeological institutes of the Martin-Luther-Universität in Halle-Wittenberg (directors: F. Bertemes and A. Furtwängler). ZAKS publishes the series *Schriften des Zentrums für Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte des Schwarzmeerraumes*. To date 11 volumes have been published.

The organization most recently established, which is dedicated to the Black Sea region, is the Centre for Black Sea Studies, University of Aarhus (Denmark), created in 2002 by the Danish National Research Foundation (director: P. Guldager Bilde). The centre works on a grant lasting until 2010. It publishes the series *Black Sea Studies* of which to date 7 volumes have been published. Six of these volumes are the proceedings of international conferences hosted by the Centre (http://www.pontos.dk/publications/books).

In 2003 F. Fless became Professor at Freie Universität in Berlin; since then a number of Black Sea activities have been hosted by that institution, such as the investigations of Alma Kermen (2003–2007; F. Fless and J. Zaycev) and Ak Kaja (2007; K. Moede and J. Zajcev) in the Crimea.

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