Building Beyoğlu

Histories of place in a central district in Istanbul

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GALATA

teutonia
In Galata, along the Galip Dede Caddesi, previously known as the Grand Rue de Pera or Cadde-i Kebir together with the present-day İstiklal Caddesi, lies the building of the German Teutonia club. A modest building with neoclassical details and in restoration for several years now. Since its construction the building has been, with ups and downs, a centerpoint for German speakers, students, migrants, expats and tourists. In the popular imagination of historical Istanbul and Beyoğlu the German-speaking communities appear to play a lesser role when compared to their counterparts of French, Italian and even English origin. Yet although the presence of communities from Italian city states and France predates that of German-speaking communities, the heritage of the latter communities remains physically omnipresent in Istanbul and Beyoğlu. Prominent examples are for instance the Sankt Georg Kolleg, Church and Hospital, the German School, the former Prussian embassy (in place of which is an apartment building known as Doğan Apartmanı since the 1890s) the Teutonia club building and the former German Embassy, currently housing the German Consulate and German Archaeological Institute. Istanbul/Constantinople had held a German-speaking community since before the 1800s.¹

NATIONAL COMMUNITIES IN ISTANBUL AND THE GERMANOPHONE COMMUNITIES

A great variety of national and multinational societies in Istanbul emerged in the nineteenth century, from the French Union Française (1894), the Italian Società Operaia Italiana di Mutuo Soccorso a Istanbul (1863), the multinational Cercle d’Orient (1882) to a variety of Masonic
Lodges which adhered to various national European Grand Lodges. These societies can be usefully examined by adopting the framework on the dissemination and cultivation of national culture developed by Joep Leerssen. These societies fit the ‘bottom-up’ category of Leerssen’s social ambiances – associations, societies, clubs and others – in which national culture could blossom through its active cultivation. As will be pointed out below, these societies are also excellent examples of ‘embodied communities’, as a category which critically complements Benedict Anderson’s definition of the ‘imagined community’. Anderson argued that most members of nations, including the smallest ones, will never meet face-to-face, resulting in the national community primarily being an imagined one. Ann Rigney, however, points to the interaction of imagined and embodied communities, with national and other societies such as those quoted above, having a significant role in the dissemination of national culture through the performance of imagined traditions as lived experiences.

In the context of Istanbul/Constantinople, the German community was extremely diverse both in terms of geographical provenance, hailing from various German principalities, Austria and Switzerland, as well as in terms of class. The community started to expand from the nineteenth century onwards, particularly after the trade liberalizations that were initiated in the 1830s. As historian Erik-Jan Zürcher points out, the Ottoman government during the reign of Mahmut II (1808-1839), aware of its falling behind the major imperial powers of Europe, sought to recruit instructors in Europe to build an officer corps for the new Ottoman army. Due to the Ottoman Empire’s troubled relations with the British, French and Russians, the government decided to invite instructors from the Prussian army. Zürcher argues, however, that the Prussians were confronted with strong reservations by the Ottomans due to their non-Muslim background.

The base for a long-lasting Prussian and later German cooperation with the Ottoman Empire were laid nonetheless. A small community of traders and diplomats, mostly from Prussia and the Hanseatic states, also resided in Istanbul/Constantinople. Malte Fuhrmann describes that engineers from German and Habsburg lands tried to compete with the British in the construction of railway networks and harbour facilities. Only after the creation of the German Empire and after
the French and British pushed their policies towards the Ottoman Empire into an increasingly wary and hostile direction, the Germans would gain significant influence in the Ottoman Empire. The German influence on the Ottoman reforms – that took off after Sultan Abdülmecit’s announcement of the Tanzimat reforms in 1839 – would rise after 1876 and German officers from Prussia began to acquire an increasingly larger role in the modernization of the Ottoman army. İlber Ortaylı points out that especially from the 1880s onwards the Ottoman army’s organisation increasingly resembled one that was based on the German system, strongly connected to the strategies of the German military command, the German arms industry and dependent on the officers that were designated to the Ottoman Empire by the German command.

It was also from this period onwards that the German Empire started to gain influence in the Ottoman Empire and consequently the German community in Turkey and Istanbul/Constantinople in particular started to grow. Around 1880 mostly Ottoman officers were sent off for training to the German Empire, though from 1890 onwards also students of medicine started to head to Germany for training, followed by students of related professions. Selçuk Akşin Somel explains that though German was hardly known in the Ottoman Empire before 1870, it became one of the foreign languages taught at Ottoman schools in 1900. The numbers of German-speakers show a drastic increase between 1800 and 1900. Accordingly, the ambiguous question of who counted as ‘German’ in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire became, as argued by Erald Pauw, Sabine Böhme and Ulrich Münch, reflected in the diversifying landscape of Germanophone societies or clubs. Although according to these authors the Teutonia club, established in 1847, held a pivotal role in the German-speaking social life of Istanbul/Constantinople until the 1970s, there were also other societies with a more substantial Austrian or Swiss member profile. The predecessor of the German School, the ‘German and Swiss Civic School’ (Deutschen und Schweizer Bürgerschule), reveals how these identity demarcations were rather vague in a gradually expanding German-speaking community. Nonetheless, the issue of what and who was ‘German’ and who was not appeared to have been an intensely debated topic among German speakers living in mid-nineteenth century Istanbul/Constantinople.

Somel indicates that Teutonia was founded by a socio-econom-
ically heterogeneous community including tradesmen and craftsmen. According to Anne Dietrich, the authors of the Munich-based humorous weekly *Fliegende Blättern*, suggested in 1850 that the German-speaking community of Constantinople comprised approximately 1000: 320 from the German states and all others from the Austrian Empire. Most were said to be craftsmen, only 50 or so at most were bureaucrats or tradesmen.13 Franz von Caucig, member of the Teutonia board in the 1950s and author of a historical overview of Teutonia’s early history, cites Dr Säuslein, the chairman and organiser of Teutonia theatre plays around the 1870s, who argues that the origins of Teutonia lay in a group of about 10 to 12 German glass traders who would gather in a Greek restaurant every day to chat and sing in 1846.14 This alleged history of origins is in fact in line with the dissemination of national culture through choral societies. Leerssen describes how these forms of gathering as embodied communities could facilitate a fertile breeding ground for the promotion of national loyalty.15 He argues that these and other forms of embodied communities, for instance gymnastic societies (another significant element in the German community of Istanbul/Constantinople), made crucial contributions to the making of cultural nationalisms in this era. The development of Teutonia in fact holds significant parallels with the broad definition that Leerssen provides regarding the increase in the number of choral (and other musical) societies in Europe and chronologically emerges around the mid-nineteenth century, a period of a few decades that Leerssen acknowledges as foundational for the dissemination of choral societies in the German states.16 Teutonia’s association with music would resonate in the decades after its foundation in the many concerts and prominent musical guests that were invited to Istanbul, among others, the ‘Wiener Chor’ (presumably the *Wiener Singverein*, the concert choir of the *Wiener Musikverein*) in 1891. Moreover, notable German artists were celebrated with festivities and other ‘national’ holidays were celebrated regularly as the club developed beyond its roots as a group of singing and drinking men.17

Franz von Caucig argues that Säuslein, a medical practitioner, composed a handwritten history of Teutonia’s first fifty years based on oral narrations of older members.18 According to these, the idea arose to formalize their gatherings in an institution and thus Teutonia was born, with ‘die Hebung des geselligen Lebens durch die Pflege deutschen Gesanges’ (the improvement of the social life through the practice of German singing) as the main aim of the club.19 Dietrich points out that despite uncertainties about the early years of the club – such as the supposed founding date: 1 June 1847 – the club gradually developed from a drinking club for men into a ‘respectable’ association where festivities were celebrated in the presence of families.20 The 1850s proved to be fruitful years for the new club, bringing together members who played in Teutonia’s theatre company, attended plays, concerts and parties or used the club’s first library facilities, skittle alley or billiard.21

According to Von Caucig and Säuslein, the club settled in various rented locations during the 1850s and 1860s. The many changes were required due to the many fires in the city, as well as the dilapidated state of buildings, the unsafe nature of the area and the desire to have a building in the centre.22 All locations which are described by Säuslein, however, were in the Pera district and the direct vicinity of the Grand Rue de Pera.23 Around the early 1870s, the club’s chairman at the time, a Mr Köhler, rented a ‘somewhat dilapidated timber house’ next to the Dervish Tekke on the current Galip Dede Caddesi. Säuslein describes the disappointing state of the house as follows:


The owner of this house, who is described by Von Caucig as a rich and high official at the Sublime Porte, was requested to have a new timber house constructed which Teutonia would rent for five years.25 After a mere 21 days the building was destroyed by a fire, caused by a gas leak in the building. In the night after the fire, chairman Säuslein and the accountant sat together to draw up an invitation for a member meeting the day after. During this meeting it was decided that a new house should
be built in stone. The faulty gas pipes, which according to Säuslein had caused the accident, were dug out and brought to the German embassy at the instruction of the German ambassador. The purpose was to safeguard evidence for a lawsuit against the gas company, which eventually Teutonia would lose in 1878. The club did manage, however, to reclaim the advance in the rent paid to the owner of the burned down building.

**CRUCIAL BEGINNINGS: TOWARDS A NEW BUILDING**

The architect who already designed the German embassy in Gümüşsuyu, Hubert Göbels, was commissioned to design a new building on the Grand Rue de Pera, the parcel of which had been bought for the amount of 4048 Turkish Pounds. The building process was supervised by Giovanni Battista Barborini. Teutonia member Barbara Radt argues that by 1874 the club had turned into a respectable and frequented meeting place, with a gymnastics and choir singing club. This is confirmed by Von Caucig who states that when Säuslein retired as chairman, the position would be held by the Ottoman imperial inspector of mines, Mr Ernst Weiss and Wilhelm Albert, director of the Metropolitan Railway. This prominent manifestation of a German presence in the development of Ottoman public infrastructure and state building is strikingly similar to other regions in the world where the German Empire started to make its presence felt, notably in Japan. Hoi-eun Kim argues that in the context of Meiji Japan the German teachers and advisors that were sent to Japan, should be considered as an attempt of the German Empire to gain foothold in Asia, which was otherwise predominantly under the influence of Great Britain. Likening them to the Japanese in Korea, Kim suggests the term ‘brokers of empire’ for these Germans in Japan, who provided, similar to the Germans in the Ottoman Empire, knowledge and expertise while communicating an image of the German Empire as a collaborative power and an alternative to other European powers, notably France and Great Britain.

Von Caucig argues that the fact that Teutonia had its own building was of crucial importance for the flourishing of its club life and that of other German clubs, such as the Deutsche Turnverein, an Austrian charitable society and the Swiss Helvetia club. A recurring problem in
these years of Teutonia, however, appears to have been finding suitable board members. Teutonia’s building – Radt speaks of Teutonia – was turned into a restaurant annex bar around the turn of the century. This process was further stimulated by the growing amount of activities that are organised in the other German clubs, such as the *Deutsche Handwerker Verein* (Alemannia from 1912 onwards), the *Deutscher Turnverein*, the *Deutsche Frauenverein*, the *Deutsche Hilfsverein*, and Helvetia. Around 1892 a large number of members left the club and Dr Schwatlo, director of the German School between 1893 and 1907, argues that a lack of decisive and energetic young men was a cause for Teutonia’s decline. Another cause mentioned by Schwatlo and Von Caucig, was the abusive behaviour of Teutonia’s innkeeper towards his wife (who apparently beat his wife before the eyes of their guests). His qualities as innkeeper are also contested by Von Caucig who mentions the innkeeper was accused of ‘bad food and dirtiness’. The new building would, moreover again be burnt down to the ground floor walls in 1895 during another one of Pera’s fires. Von Caucig indicates that the fire this time spread from the timber houses in Ester Çıkmaz (Currently Yörük Çıkmaz) and hit the back part of the Teutonia building. Two-third of the library, some furniture and a few paintings were all that could be saved. Von Caucig is of the opinion that this incident helped create a further sense of solidarity within the German community. The club had been in tough waters prior to the fire due to an apparent lack of commitment, but thanks to the fire and the new chairman, a German engineer, Otto Kapp von Gülstein, chief of construction at the Anatolian Railways, Teutonia was brought back to life. Kapp led the reconstruction of the club on the same site as the former building. A temporary reading room was set up in the German School, the board meetings would take place in the Janni Brasserie, while large meetings or events were organised in the newly-constructed Pera Palas hotel, the Tokatlıyan Hotel, or the building of the *Società Operaia Italiana* in the Rue Ezadjji (currently Deva Çıkmazı). By 1896, the remains of the old walls were torn down, foundations were laid and the construction was supervised by an architect mentioned by Von Caucig as Semprini (presumably Guglielmo Semprini, architect of the Istanbul Research Institute’s building). On 16 January 1897 the new building was inaugurated.

With Kapp’s building a new period would begin. Von Caucig mentions that member numbers would increase from 130 in 1896 to 249 in 1912. Radt points out that in the following 20 years the club’s esteem started rising and it became referred to as the ‘Deutscher Club’, a meeting place for embassy staff, bank directors, influential businessmen, German officers and members of the evangelical Church community. Von Caucig explicitly points to the presence of non-German nationals, high-ranking Ottoman officials and officers as well as other ‘reputable’ German-speaking individuals from ‘Turkish’ and other communities. It seems thus that at least until the Balkan Wars in 1912 Teutonia indeed housed a lively club life. Mr Scheuermann, director of the German School between 1929 and 1944, however, argues that after nationalist tensions started to rise, the club’s visitors profile started to change notably. As the Ottoman Empire’s military ties grew closer with the German Empire, the number of military men in the Ottoman Empire increased as well. As a consequence, Teutonia turned into a ‘Deutsches Haus’ rather than a club house, when officers from the German Empire and its allies started frequenting the club. The accommodation appears not to have lived up to the desires of this Deutsches Haus, however, since already in 1913, when the building of the Swedish Consulate was for sale a discussion on its acquisition by the club started. Insufficient funding was available and the club resorted to taking an option on a building across the Saint Antoine Church on the Grand Rue de Pera instead. The building was for sale for 27,000 Lira, but Teutonia would never acquire it.

When the First World War broke out and the Ottoman Empire sided with the Central Powers, Teutonia tried to move to a different building one more time. The German-Turkish Association wanted to have a ‘Freundschaftshaus’ built, for which a first stone was laid in 1917 on the historical peninsula near the Cisterns of Philexenos (*Binbirdirek Sarnıcı*) to bring – in the words of Teutonia’s board – Germanness in Istanbul/Constantinople to ‘a new and worthy stature’. According to Radt, the plan was then to sell the property that was used since 1897 for an amount of 40,000 Liras. That, however, would never happen. Following the armistice signed on 31 October 1918 at Moudros, Greece between the British and the Ottomans, the Triple Entente stipulated an armistice treaty that effectively legalized military interventions by the Entente wherever and whenever it saw fit. This culminated in the Brit-
ish occupation of Istanbul in March 1920. Dietrich indicates that at the end of the year the Germans and Austrians were deported from the Ottoman Empire, with the exception of elderly, sick and women married to men of other nationalities. They were put under the protection of the Swedish Embassy. The German properties were seized by the English and French occupation forces. Teutonia came into the hands of the English; the building was handed over to the occupying forces of the Triple Entente on 3 December 1918. The club was disbanded and its building was used as an officers club by the British, a barrack for non-commissioned officers, a shelter for Russian refugees and finally as the building of the British YMCA.

On 12 September 1923 the property would be transferred to the Swedish envoy Holstein, who represented the German interests during the occupation. On the same day the envoy sent an invitation to the Teutonia members that he was acquainted with and asked them to discuss the restitution of the seized property. A new board was elected on 2 November 1923, with approval of the Swedish envoy. The statutes of Teutonia had to be adjusted to the new situation and the club had to be registered with the new Turkish authorities. Money for a restoration was particularly hard to find, according to Radt, but in the end emergency loans were provided by German banks and companies. Compensation from the British was never received. The social position of the club, which also becomes clear from the desire to build new property befit to the stature of the German Empire during the war, before 1918 was a top priority. Radt writes that while previously it was considered an honour to be member of Teutonia, the exclusivity was lost after the war.

TROUBLE AT HOME, TROUBLE IN ISTANBUL: NAZISM AND TURKEY’S GERMAN COMMUNITY

The club was still reserved for Germans and German speakers, but of all socio-economic levels. Adolf Hitler’s ascent to power in 1933, however, would have a strong impact on Teutonia. Interestingly, Von Caucig argues that Teutonia risked to become a political forum as well, but the leaders of the club at the time managed to prevent this and thus managed to prevent closure of the club preceding and during the war.
He also states that Teutonia was a place where all Germans in Istanbul could meet and speak freely, ‘without anyone judging them’. Dietrich, however, comments to this that Teutonia in fact was a political forum, where Nazi holidays, festivities and the Führer were celebrated, where the local Hitlerjugend was gathered and indoctrinated. Since the Turkish educational law forbade public antisemitism and classes on Nazi racial theory in the German School, racial theory was taught to German children in Teutonia's building. The so-called Heimabende, for ideological indoctrination of the children in the Hitlerjugend took place in Teutonia. Dietrich quotes a phrase from the activities of the Istanbul Jungmädel during which the leader of the Hitlerjugend, a man named Walter, discussed with the children what they should be cautious of, with Jews mentioned explicitly: ‘Kamerad Walter sprach von den Juden, und wie wir uns gegen sie zu benehmen hätten und noch von allerlei Dingen, auf die wir hier achtgeben sollen.’ Meanwhile the role of Jewish members was rapidly marginalized. It should also be pointed out that Von Caucig himself was a representative of the National Socialist German Worker’s Party. Von Caucig, himself a German refugee and academic, indicates that though these numbers did not equal the numbers of refugees who headed to the United States, the impact of particularly German academics was nowhere felt more strongly than in Turkey. The reason was that most of the refugees who were academics came together with their families and assistants. Azade Seyhan notes, however, that despite of the relatively large intake of German and Austrian refugees by Turkey, many were also refused access. It was not necessarily a humanitarian incentive that led the Turkish state to grant refugees access, but the need for intellectual capital. Atatürk and his circle wished to modernize the Ottoman Dar-ül Fünun (House of Multiple Sciences) and reform it into an institute of higher education comparable to universities in Europe. This desire would be the basis for the closure of the Dar-ül Fünun on 31 July 1933 and its reopening as Istanbul University on 1 August 1933. The exact numbers that were recruited among German refugees to replace and expand the academic staff of the newly founded university varies, but the most conservative estimate seems to be 96. Regine Erichsen estimates that around 1000 people from Germany came as political refugees to Turkey from 1933 onwards, though this number includes a far larger group than the German academics alone.

One of the chief reasons for academics to leave Germany for Turkey – apart from those who were forced out of their profession and country due to issues of an ideological or social nature – was their Jewishness. With the ‘Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service’ that was instated in Germany on 7 April 1933, a few months after the National Socialist German Workers’ Party came to power. This law stipulated for the dismissal of all civil servants who were of ‘non-Aryan’ descent. The Nazis further specified what this meant: ‘A person is to be regarded as non-Aryan if he is descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish, parents or grandparents. It is enough for one parent or grandparent to be non-Aryan. This is to be assumed especially if one parent or one grandparent was of Jewish faith.’ This meant the end of the ca-
reevrs of Jewish civil servants and thus academics in Germany. Stephan Conermann indicates that around 3000 academics in total fled Nazi Germany to various destinations, which was approximately thirty percent of the total German academic community at the time.\textsuperscript{56} The acceptance of some of these Jewish refugees by the Turkish Republic is all the more remarkable considering the cultivation of antipathy and hatred towards non-Turks and non-Muslims in the 1930s. As Konuk and others indicate, the formation of the new Republic's national identity was strongly based on ethnicity and religion. The Muslim citizens of the Turkish Republic were forcibly homogenized into the category of ‘Turkishness’. Christians and Jews were subjected to aggressive assimilation, forcing them to abandon their mother tongues and communicate in Turkish and many adopted Turkish rather than more typical Jewish, Greek or Armenian names. Konuk argues that to the Turkish hosts, the Jewish Germans on the other hand – as well as a smaller group who had other reasons to be forced into exile – were perceived as ‘Europeans’. The chief reason for the Kemalist regime to invite these scholars was their ‘Europeanness’, rather than their ‘Jewishness’.\textsuperscript{57} He refers to Turkish minister of education Reşit Galip who stated the academics’ arrival compensated for the Byzantine scholars who had fled Istanbul/Constantinople in 1453.\textsuperscript{58}

Turkish authorities chose not to stress the reasons as to why these academics were no longer welcome in Germany, one viable reason for it being the parallels that may have been drawn between the Turkish strategies of exclusion and assimilation and the attitude of Nazi Germany towards dissident voices.\textsuperscript{59} Interestingly, Bahar indicates that the German scholars themselves were in fact hardly if at all performing their Jewish identity while in Turkey. Both representatives of the native Istanbul and Ankara Jewish communities noted that on the rare occasions that they interacted with some of the German Jewish scholars, they did not show in any way that they were practicing Jews. Aykut Kazancıgil, Uğur Tanyeli and İlber Ortaylı argue that no records of Jewish marriages, birth, brit mila or bar mitzvah from these scholars were registered in Istanbul’s Ashkenazic community registers.\textsuperscript{60} Those who died in Istanbul were buried in Muslim rather than Jewish graveyards. Bahar argues the German Jewish intellectuals were ‘aloof’ to their religion, relying more strongly on Bildung ideals – a humanistic ideal of self-development. Despite of their disassociation with religion, however, exiled scholars such as Fritz Neumark, Karl Hellmann and Felix Haurowitz indicate that it was also not uncommon – as an insurance against rising anti-Semitism in Turkey – for German Jews to have their children baptized.\textsuperscript{61}

In July 1933 the \textit{Dar-ül Fünun} (House of Multiple Sciences) was closed and Istanbul University was opened, based on a German model of university education.\textsuperscript{62} Some of the exiled academics, like Ernst Hirsch, even became Turkish citizens when Nazi Germany took away their citizenship. Yet the Turkish authorities’ attitude towards Nazi Germany (and Fascist Italy) remained ambivalent due to its desire to remain neutral. As Sibel Bozdoğan and Esra Avcıkan indicate this ambivalent attitude is for instance reflected in the diverse array of political preferences of German architects working in Turkey. Bruno Taut poses one of the most prominent examples of an architect and refugee from Germany in Turkey, designing various university buildings in Ankara.\textsuperscript{63} Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, Wilhelm Schütte and Ernst Reuter were active in movements against Nazism. Yet other architects such as Hermann Jansen, who designed the master plan for Ankara, and Paul Bonatz had and maintained their ties with the regime in Berlin.\textsuperscript{64} The indebtedness to the Nazi and Italian Fascist architectural styles is in any case visible up to this day, particularly in Ankara.

When World War II broke out, Turkey decided to stay neutral. Only at the very last moment it decided to join the allied forces, in order to avoid not being able to become a member of the United Nations in 1945. After the war, all residents with German passports were ‘repatriated’.\textsuperscript{65} Those who refused were put into camps, able to return after 16 months of internment in December 1945. Those who did return to Germany were not able to return until 1951. The members of Teutonia that were able to remain in Istanbul were the Swiss, German Hungarians, German Czechs and those who had taken up Turkish citizenship.\textsuperscript{66} The club was closed, while the building was watched over by a caretaker and the Swiss consulate posed as a trustee for German properties.
POST-WAR TEUTONIA AND THE CHANGING RELATION WITH ISTANBUL’S GERMAN COMMUNITY

It would take until 1954 before the club’s building was transferred to the club once again. Teutonia’s post-war constellation may well be considered as a reflection of what Jörn Rüsen has described as the first phase of Germany’s dealing with its past: the initial externalization and suppressing of the memory of the Holocaust and Nazism in general. With the presumption that it was a ‘devilish Nazi seduction’ that made ‘ordinary Germans’ victims of a totalitarian rulership.67 In the context of Teutonia, a letter from Teutonia’s archive to a lawyer named Murad Ferid cited by Dietrich is significant to comprehend how this first phase was echoed in Istanbul. In the letter Ferid is asked for his advice in re-acquiring the building. Interestingly, in the letter Teutonia’s connection with the NSDAP and Nazi ideology is portrayed as an imposed one. The author claims that Teutonia was forced by the local Landesgruppenleiter of the NSDAP to have their building made available for party activities. It was thus not the club itself, the writer states, but its building which was subjected to Nazism.

Many members of Teutonia decided to stay away from the building, according to the letter Dietrich cites. Dietrich points out that no-one appeared to take responsibility, as it were always ‘others’ who were responsible for complicity.68 She, however, also points to the first chairman of the new board, Rudolf Belling a sculptor who had been forced to move to Turkey after his art had been denounced as ‘entartet’ by the Nazi authorities during the 1930s. Belling’s case provides insight in the complexity of Teutonia’s post-war appreciation by the Germanophone community. Belling became the head of the sculpting department at the later Mimar Sinan University for the Fine Arts upon arrival and later a professor at the department of architecture of Istanbul Technical University. Dietrich suggests that Belling’s nationalist sympathies for Germany allowed for a rehabilitation in Istanbul by the local NSDAP authorities, particularly due to the sympathy that NS-Landesgruppenführer Martin Bethke felt for him, yet granted his difficulties with the regime it is interesting, however, that after the war he became the chairman of an institution which until recently had been so closely connected to local representatives of the regime.69

Despite Belling being a victim of the Nazi regime, he did not choose to denounce an institution that had become embedded in Nazi organizational structures. Dietrich also points to the fact that Belling would become chairman after the war yet claims that he would not stay on as chairman for long, vacating his position several months after. She provides dates nor references to these claims. The minutes from Teutonia’s archives in fact show that one of the earliest dates in which he is mentioned as president are the minutes from 13 November 1952 and he would not resign as the club’s chairman until March 1957 when he was succeeded by Sylvio Raymund.70 This may well show that the attitude of some members and board members towards the post-war Teutonia, despite continuities in the club’s leadership, may have been more complex than Dietrich suggests. Belling’s attitude in that sense may be considered to be in line again with Rüsen’s definition of first phase of coming to terms with Nazism in the post-war period: by suppression and denial rather than by displaying outright aversion.71

The club in any case tried to push forward its mission of regaining the status of a centerpoint for the Germany community in Istanbul. That did not occur without problems. In a document titled ‘Richtlinien über die Aussprache mit Herrn Botschafter Dr Oellers’ from 27 November 1956, it is indicated that although Teutonia had always had serious financial difficulties, the successive boards had managed to keep the club alive. It is indicated that this was not in the least thanks to a support fund from Germany, and only through this was it possible to ‘endow the club with the regard that granted it with considerable recognition from both the German and Turkish side.’72 The report also recounts how several old members took the initiative in 1952 to bring Teutonia back to life and the building was, through the intervention of the German embassy in Ankara, returned to the club in 1953. The writers indicate that great financial misfortune hit the club subsequently since the building had been badly damaged during its confiscation.73 They go on by indicating that other German institutions, such as the German Hospital, The German Archaeological Institute and the Evangelical Church had all received contributions from the state in Bonn to repair the damage of the preceding years. Teutonia, however, was treated ‘like a stepchild’ (stiefmüterlich) by the government. The board asks the German ambassador to mediate between the club and the government and re-
quested an amount of 190,000 Deutsche Marken in order to ‘arrange the German prestige in Turkey of our society in as good a manner as it used to be in the past decades’. To underline the appeal to the ambassador and the Federal German Republic’s government they closed with a quote from Goethe’s Faust: ‘what you inherit from your father must first be earned before it’s yours!’ (‘Was du ererbt von deinen Vätern hast, erwirb es, um es zu besitzen!’).

The club held a first meeting with its members, a group of approximately 40 with their partners, on 27 February 1954. The club appears to have been quickly revived by this group, since a reflection on the first years of the club after the reopening claims that the cultural programme of the years 1954 and 1955 consisted of 50 activities. Exactly a month after its first gathering in the old club house, the club welcomed Chancellor Konrad Adenauer in its building during his visit to Turkey. The poor state of the building was pointed out in the same document as well. The club’s statutes meanwhile had retained their validity after they were last updated in 1939, though in 1960 new statutes were introduced. In the first issue of the Teutonia bulletin – *Teutonia Mitteilungsblatt* – from May 1956 the editors of the Teutonia Bulletin memorize how the club was reopened in September 1951 and how until 1954 meetings would be held in various locations in Beyoğlu: the Park Hotel, Lido, Liman Lokantası, Taxim Kasino and the Municipal Marriage House (Belediye Evlenme Dairesi). With the cooperation of the German consul, Dr Seelos, the club got its building back and after a number of repairs the building was reopened on 27 February 1954. The board appeared to be also pleased that in the same year the club’s private beach and sports fields on the Anatolian side in Moda was acquired anew. By April 1957, however, the Teutonia bulletin reports that in a general meeting of the club, the chairman had announced that the club was forced to let go of its private beach and sport fields, after the decision of an Ankara court of appeal. In 1958 a new beach and sport field was found in Fenerbahçe, Kalamış. Meanwhile the library had been reopened on 17 May 1956.

The board reports to its members in 1959 that in line with the club’s desire to become a meeting point for Germans in Istanbul once again, its member base has increased to approximately 220. They proudly announced that many new members who recently settled in Is-
Istanbul had joined Teutonia and that the member base comprised over 50 percent of the total German community in Istanbul. Nevertheless, the club appears to have experienced some problems in motivating its members to participate in the organization of the club’s activities nonetheless. On the opening page of the Teutonia bulletin’s second issue, the editorial board considers it necessary to remind its readers of the lexical definition of a society or club: ‘a society is a network of people with the purpose of fostering common interests’. The authors ask their readers to contemplate on this definition. What follows is a slightly disgruntled appeal to the members to contribute to organizing activities, rather than paying their contribution and simply enjoying the programme. They ask if it is still possible to find a common cause for over 200 members, from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Turkey. Interestingly, however, the authors wish to stress that it is not only the wide variety of interests – sports, concerts, film screenings, theater plays and socializing (geselligkeit) – that they wish to cater to, but to be the centerpoint of Germanness in Istanbul and to help deepen the ties between club members and Turkey.

In 1957 to the occasion of the club’s 110th anniversary, the bulletin’s board argues there is no older club in Istanbul and that the club’s member base has never been as big. Later that year at a general assembly 212 registered members are cited. It seems that the initial problems were somewhat resolved as the report from the 1958 general assembly cites a table tennis group, a theater group, a library with volunteers, as well as numerous events; theater plays, concerts, carnival and anniversary celebrations. Another major development was the opening of a seamen’s home in 1957, which aimed to replace the one that was lost in 1918 (presumably following the disownment of German properties in Istanbul/Constantinople after World War I). It should be noted that elsewhere the opening of the seamen’s home is cited to have taken place a few years earlier, in 1954. The club was indeed an important meeting point for members in those years, frequented, according to the Teutonia bulletin in 1961, even during the low-season in the summer. The restaurant was a meeting place for members, despite of a lack of activities in the summer season. The club’s restaurant had been reopened again in 1953 and, according to Radt, held a significant position in the German colony. Men would gather here for their lunches and women, many of whom would not become members, came here after afternoon shopping in Beyoğlu. It turned out to be difficult to retain a reliable innkeeper and after successive German, Greek and Turkish innkeepers the restaurant was finally closed in 1970.

‘DER ALTE TEUTONIA’: A ‘NEW’ TEUTONIA FOR A NEW GERMAN COMMUNITY

In the meantime, Teutonia’s building at Galip Dede Caddesi appeared to continuously provide problems despite renovations in the past years. In 1963 the Teutonia bulletin reports a lunch meeting of club members and their wives. The authors of the bulletin argue here that the renewal and enlivenment of the club is not only dependent on the building’s deplorable condition, but also on the spirit which ought to govern the house and the requirement of members to get to know each other more closely. Yet, problems became of such nature that in the summer of 1964 the bulletin announces that, after many years of talking and false promises, the building would finally be renovated. The chair of Teutonia’s board Sylvio Raymund meanwhile was supervising this makeover ‘from roof to basement.’ Contrary to renovations after the First and Second World War, which aimed for continuation and small repairs, the author states that according to the chairman everything was being renewed. In the old kitchen a new club and play room was introduced, with a skittle alley, pool tables and table tennis, aimed at becoming ‘the midpoint of club life in the future.’ The chairman hoped for a reopening of the building in November 1964. In the same year, a report from the Teutonia board states that for the past two years the club held a member base of 240, yet mentions this fact in a point titled ‘take up the struggle against the indifference of members’. The club gradually grew towards a role as caretaker and landlord of its building, with the rents of various institutions using its facilities becoming increasingly important for the continuing existence of club and building.

It is important to note that Teutonia had acquired new functions in Beyoğlu from 1954 onwards. On 26 April 1954 the seamen’s home was opened with the cooperation of the local German church community. As indicated earlier, the opening (although the Mitteilungstblatt sug-
Figures the opening actually took place in 1957) of a home for German seamen aimed to fill a ‘cultural void’ (eine kulturelle Lücke) following the disownment of the home in 1918. The Teutonia bulletin described it as a particular meeting point for seamen from German ships docking in the harbours of Istanbul. Despite its conflicted history, Teutonia once again aimed to be a cultural and social meeting point for Germans. Interestingly in that context is also the diverse range of people the seamen’s home would cater to. It seems that essentially all German institutions in Istanbul had become connected to the Federal German Republic (FRG or Bundesrepublik Deutschland) rather than the German Democratic Republic (GDR or Deutsche Demokratische Republik). Teutonia would occasionally also feel the geopolitical impact of the homeland’s separation into West and East part. As options for East Germans to flee the GDR grew more and more limited, they would become more resourceful and desperate in finding ways to cross over to ‘the West’. One of the dangerous passageways was jumping into the Bosphorus while GDR ships passed from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea. The second floor of the Teutonia building, reserved for the seamen’s home, would therefore also shelter other travellers, working migrants and notably refugees from the GDR. Radt writes that the seamen’s home came under the supervision of a pastor named Bott. Ingeborg Çeçik, a former kindergarten teacher at Teutonia, recounts how this pastor would ready small rowing boats whenever the East German passenger ship Völkerfreundschaft travelled through the Bosphorus, often successfully saving refugees who jumped from the ship into the sea. That this appeared to be common practice is recounted by a traveler on a ship called the Völkerfreundschaft, Hartmut Ehbets, who planned to leave the ship together with his wife while sailing through the Bosphorus. Ehbets recounts, however, how many young people were very disappointed to see that sails would be used to cover the safety rails, while men with bats in front of the rails would keep an eye on the passengers.

Following the decreasing amount of ships that had the ports of Tophane and Karaköy as their destination, due to the introduction of container freight facilities in Kadıköy and an increase in passenger air travel, the importance of the seamen’s home decreased through the course of the 1960s. New renovations of the Teutonia building and the seamen’s home were nonetheless announced in the bulletin in 1966, as
well as the construction of a consular school in the garden of the Teutonia building. Interestingly, another example of the enduring usage of the Teutonia building by the German community was the Kindergarten. The aforementioned pastor Bott and four German mothers took the initiative to open a Kindergarten for the German community in Beyoğlu around 1961 as the community’s numbers were increasing. Marcel Geser points out how historically there had been a German kindergarten in Istanbul since the 1850s, yet in 1944 – following Turkey’s decision to join the Allied Forces and the closure of German institutions – all German nationals were ordered to return to Germany or deported to camps in Anatolia. In December 1945, those in the camps were allowed to return to their residences. Despite of the intention of the German School’s new rector, Karl Steuerwald, to reopen the kindergarten and a promise from the German Ministry of Education’s, the kindergarten was not reopened. The official reason was that the demand was too low and that many of the parents who were entitled to bring their children to a kindergarten lived too far away. Many parents therefore entrusted their children to au pairs or private kindergartens, but Geser explains that in 1961 the aim to teach children German at an early age led the mothers and Bott to set up the Teutonia kindergarten. A lady named Helga Blanké was hired as the first teacher and the kindergarten received children from teachers of the German School, business people and employees of the German consulate. 34 small children were under the supervision of a kindergarten teacher in the afternoons, the Teutonia bulletin reports in 1965, though Geser argues that the number generally did not exceed 25. A report from Teutonia’s general assembly in the early spring of 1965 indeed reports that until 1965 25 children would be admitted, but since an additional supervisor could be hired 34 children were admitted. As time progressed, Dutch children were admitted to the kindergarten as well, while the kindergarten’s supervision remained with Teutonia.

Meanwhile, the German-Turkish cultural institute – supported by the Goethe Institut from 1957 onwards and the official Goethe Institut since 1991 – was also housed in Teutonia as the German Library. Contrary to the kindergarten that would change in the 1970s. Istanbul’s urban development during the 1970s started to have an impact on the usage of the Teutonia building as well. More generally speaking, rising migration, the construction of new suburbs and the construction of new commercial buildings particularly meant that Beyoğlu’s older buildings lost some of their historical occupants. Construction of commercial properties in the old centre of Beyoğlu was relatively limited, possibly in part due to the complexity of opening Beyoğlu to mass car traffic, with the notable exception of the Odakule Building along the İstiklal Caddesi. It was there that the Goethe Institut would move to in 1980.

Radt claims that as of 1968 the evolving social and spatial structure of Istanbul also had strong implications for the city’s, and particularly Beyoğlu’s, social life. The Beyoğlu district became less and less desirable. The middle classes withdrew entirely from Beyoğlu and moved to Topkapi, Etiler and districts that started to be industrialized. Unfortunately, this could not be confirmed with member lists from the 1960s or 1970s. Member lists from the 1980s, however, do indeed show that the majority of members had moved to Bosphorus districts like Tarabya, Etiler, Emirgan, Bebek and Rümelihisarı or Levent and Yeğiköy. Only a few were registered as living in Tophane or Cihangir, including Barbara Radt and her husband.

From this perspective it is important to realize nonetheless that it was only in 1959 when Beyoğlu was still described as the ‘residential district par excellence’ in the Istanbul edition of Hachette’s Guides Bleus. The guide goes on by stating: ‘It is here where you will find the most comfortable hotels frequented, in general, by the foreign tourists’. What follows is a description of İstiklal Caddesi’s institutional richness, which hardly gives the impression of a waning district. This certainly holds true for the German institutions in the area as well. In fact even after the late 1960s, the German School, research institutes, consulate and German-Turkish Cultural Institute remained. Different reasons may have been at play here. It may have been tough to get a good price for the properties, institutions may have attributed a certain attachment to their real estate, yet as shown in the case of the English School for Girls and German School, it was also complicated for foreign institutions to acquire or construct new properties elsewhere in Istanbul. The case of Teutonia, however, shows an increasing detachment from the club as an institution. That being said, members, other German-speakers and German institutions in Istanbul were interested in using Teutonia’s facilities. The building was used daily as a kindergarten and
Building Beyoğlu Teutonia

128

primary school, was intensively used by the German School and housed the German Library. Newly constructed parts for the schools were still executed in the name of the club, though this appeared to have become a growing problem for the Turkish authorities. The club had been nearly inactive in the second half of the 1960s and the last general meeting had taken place on 5 June 1968, though Turkish legislation called for annual meetings. The club in the end came to a standstill in 1971. The decline in the club’s activity during this period is reflected in the relative scarcity of source material in Teutonia’s archives; whereas there is an abundance of material – correspondences, notes, minutes, invitations, reports – from the 1950s, 1960s, 1980s and 1990s, the material from the 1970s is limited to some communication and reports on the problematic situation in which the club found itself.

The changing social life in Beyoğlu runs parallel to the decline in the periodical announcements of Teutonia’s activities in the Cumhuriyet newspaper. Numerous classical music concerts and lectures are organised and announced in Cumhuriyet since 1954, approximately two to three times a year, but in 1968 the announcements disappeared, not reappearing until 1986. The general meeting of the club on 5 June in the club building was announced by the board on 1 June 1968 in the Cumhuriyet daily. In the minutes from a meeting at the German Consulate General on 6 May 1970, it is decided that the club’s beach in Kalamış would be closed. A period of relative abandonment was followed by the removal of the club from the Turkish registry in 1972, because no activities or required general meetings had taken place. A variety of factors may have been at issue here and the archives of Teutonia did not provide me with a single conclusion. Dietrich has pointed to the stigma of Teutonia, although this seems to have been less of an issue during the 1950s and 1960s, and Radt, more plausibly, has mentioned how German residents of Istanbul moved away from Beyoğlu and towards the new districts of the city or the areas around the Bosphorus. In earlier times, moreover, the lack of engagement of Teutonia’s members with its administration has also been quoted as a persistent problem. These, in addition to Beyoğlu’s changing demography and socio-cultural composition at large may all have been elements that contributed to the status quo that Teutonia reached in the early 1970s. It could have had severe consequences, however, for Teutonia. The club did not meet the
bureaucratic requirements of the Turkish state, which, among other things, meant that registered clubs and associations needed to organise regular member meetings.

The club was thus at risk of losing its building to the Turkish state. A new club under a new name needed to be founded in 1974, but this new club was not entitled to the ownership of the building. Arthur Kapps, the manager of the old club and building as well as the initiator of the new club, had been appointed to ensure that daily affairs in the building would be able to continue. He pointed out in a letter from 1979 that there had been a risk that the building would have been confiscated by the Turkish state. As this did not happen, the new club made efforts to claim ownership of the building, of which the plot of land in itself represented a value of 60 million Turkish Lira. In 1978, through the involvement of the German Consul General, the old club managed to absolve itself in a special general meeting and transfer its assets to the new club. Radt describes how it was, nevertheless, near to impossible to sustain a community that would build a flourishing club life. She argues that it would have been one thing to become part of a flourishing community, but another thing to become a participant in the preservation of a ‘national’ institution. What she means by this is that the incentive to preserve German heritage in Istanbul was not felt significantly enough throughout the community of German-speakers in Istanbul. One reason may have been, as indicated by Dietrich, the fact that Teutonia’s reputation still was overshadowed by its pre-war past.

The question remains, however, what the founders of the ‘new’ Teutonia, fronted by Arthur Kapps was. Uncertainty about the building’s future had started to arise since the 1960s. In 1972 Teutonia was even removed from the club register, but this did not have a direct consequence for the building. The Teutonia building was never sold to a third party, possibly because the building’s condition made it a tough sell. The German Bundesbaudirektion came to check the building to ensure its suitability for a Goethe Institut in Turkey, but argued against it in the end. In the annual report of 1964, the board indicates three options for the future of the club house, namely selling it and constructing a new house elsewhere, renting the ground floor for commercial purposes (making it an iş hane or office building with ‘Teutonia Pasaji’ as the suggested name), or acquiring funds to renovate the building. The board decided to choose the third option, but indicated that the first option, i.e. selling the building and constructing a new one elsewhere, would have been the ideal option. The reasons not to sell were that the board could not be sure whether the club could acquire a plot of land and construct a new building. It was, moreover, unsure whether the sale of the old building would yield the necessary funds for such a move. Other foreign parties around these years also had considered selling their monumental buildings: the British consulate at Galatasaray had unsuccessfully been on the market.

In the 1970s, however, Teutonia’s building had been at risk of being lost as a ‘Treffpunkt der Deutschen in Istanbul’ forever. The decision of Kapps and others to prevent this could not have been an entirely economic one and it seems very likely that motivations of a more ‘sentimental’ nature instigated the decision to save Teutonia from being permanently expropriated by the Turkish state.

At the start of the 1970s, Radt describes the building to be in a poor condition despite several renovations in the 1950s and 1960s. This is reflected also in the notes that Kapps makes in his letters, explaining that the roof of the building had been fixed with funding from the German consulate. The financial situation of Teutonia also was such that its daily costs could be barely met. The only income the club had came from the rooms that were rented to the embassy school and the cultural institute, since the members at the time were not willing to make any financial contributions. The dire situation that the club found itself in did not mean it was no longer recognized as a ‘German landmark’ in Istanbul. This is exemplified by an unfortunate outcome when it became linked to Germany’s geopolitical vicissitudes as well. In 1977 a bomb was thrown into the building by a group of 15-20 people while they supposedly screamed ‘German murderers’. Not entirely clear about the ideological orientations of the perpetrators, the Milliyet daily reported on 26 October 1977 that some individuals called the newsdesks of newspapers stating that the attack was a response to the termination of the Lufthansa 181 hijacking on 18 October 1977 by a German anti-terror unit in Mogadishu. The children from the primary school who were in the building at the time were quickly evacuated and apart from significant damage to the façade and the site inside the building where the bomb exploded and three wounded passers-by, the consequences of the attack were limited. In spite of these difficulties, the usage of the club's
building fared rather well. In addition to the cultural institute, the embassy school and the kindergarten, an initiative was started in 1979 to teach German courses to Turkish teachers in several of the rooms of the Teutonia building by instructors from the German High School. It is interesting to note that, unlike the German School, Teutonia appears to have built few connections with Turkish citizens who had temporarily lived in Germany but returned to Turkey. The chapter on the German High School contains, indeed, further discussion of the effects on the School of the return to Istanbul of large numbers of Turkish guestworkers from Europe during the 1970s and later.

From the perspective of the club's building it should be mentioned that the condition of the building was far from unique in Beyoğlu. Just like Teutonia, many monumental buildings in Beyoğlu had suffered from severe neglect throughout the second half of the twentieth century. The disrepair of such previously important sites drew the attention of resident European and indeed two Dutch consul generals wrote in respectively 1979 and still as late as 1995 about the condition of buildings in Beyoğlu. In 1979 consul D.H.M. Speyaert wrote about how the church community of the Union Church of Pera had gotten used to being relieved by the view of the flowery consulate general's garden after strolling through the neglected streets of Istanbul. In 1995 consul Bloembergen complained about the desolate condition of the consulate general's building itself to his superiors in The Hague. He writes: 'even Turkish guests, who are definitely used to the sight of shabby buildings, have started noticing the sorry state of the Palais de Hollande'. Beyoğlu was losing ground to the modern districts of the rapidly expanding city. Çelik Gülersoy, one of the key actors in the (controversial) restoration and preservation initiatives and chairman of TURING Club, writes about Beyoğlu in a travel guide, published in 1969: ‘This is İstiklal Caddesi. It was the main meeting place for Europeans 70 or 80 years ago. Since the modern part of the city has been greatly enlarged, İstiklâl Caddesi has not kept its monopoly. Moreover, the fact that it is a one-way street has caused it to lose a great deal of importance. But all the same, old or new, there are 10 cinemas, 7 theatres, 4 exhibition galleries, a large number of snack-bars and restaurants on this street, which leads to Taksim.’

The building would turn out to remain a cause of worry for the board of Teutonia as well. The chairman in the mid-1980s, Stephan Kroll, argues...
that according to the strict Turkish club regulations the club was barely eligible to conform to regulations which could have consequences for its ownership of the property. To avoid the risk of losing the building altogether, the club decided to provide the German Consulate General with a leasing agreement for the duration of 99 years, during which the club would be able to use the building together with other parties, among others the Embassy school, Kindergarten, German High School and the Turkish state television channel TRT, that had been using the building up until then. The board even considered to disband the club altogether and transfer their assets to the Consulate General, but in the notes from 20 October 1987 the board states that this had proven to be ‘politically impossible’. If the club were to be disbanded in the future, however, the immovable assets would be transferred to the General Consulate. The club that had 57 members on 17 March 1988, thereby had been able to safeguard one of its main rationales of existence, whatever would happen to the club itself.

The Beyoğlu area meanwhile is described in a building report by two engineers, Adolf Hoffmann and Klaus Nohlen, from 1984 as ‘somewhat neglected’. Only four years earlier the social and political turmoil at the national and local levels had been brought to a halt by Kenan Evren’s military coup. A year before Turgut Özal had managed to bring his Motherland Party to power, with Bedrettin Dalan as his representative in the metropolitan government. In the years to follow politicians would not let an opportunity go by to stress how they would change the face of Istanbul and “clean up” Beyoğlu in particular. A telling example is a publication from the Beyoğlu municipality, Beyoğlu İçin (For Beyoğlu – 1984) with articles titled ‘Famous Beyoğlu is returning to its old beauty’ (Ünlü Beyoğlu eski güzelliğine dönüyor) and quotes from the Beyoğlu mayor Haluk Öztürkatalay that indicate the discovery of the district’s marketing potential: ‘Istanbul is famous for Beyoğlu’ (İstanbul Beyoğlu'yla bilinir). The report by Hoffmann and Nohlen also indicates that the area will soon be restored by the Beyoğlu municipality, with the prospective pedestrianization of the İstiklal Caddesi contributing to the reinvigoration of the district’s profile as well. The building’s location is described as ‘favorable’ due to the adjacency of the Tünel funicular. Access with private cars is on the other hand complicated, though this is – according to the report – a general problem in Istan-
bul. It does not appear from any document that the Teutonia board expressed the desire to sell its building and its decision to connect its future in the case of Teutonia’s dissolution to the Consulate General indicates that it was felt to be important that the building would be preserved for the German community even if there was no future for its namesake. That, in fact, was an implicit expression of the de facto situation for over two decades; despite of recurrent calls to recruit members among the local German and Germanophone community, the reality was that a large part of the building’s users had no formal connection to the club. Compared to the celebrated mid-1950s its member base dropped by a factor of four, while the majority of its users were non-members and other institutions.

As such it is fair to conclude that Teutonia has continuously played a significant role in the German and Germanophone community, though since the mid-1960s less as a club and more as the caretaker of a building that catered to the different needs of the community. The crisis of the early 1970s, during which the club risked losing its building to the Turkish state, rendered visible the changed relationship between club and building: whereas the building served the club at first, it became clear during the 1970s that the reality was that the club was serving its building. Since so many had become dependent, for practical reasons primarily, on sustaining the occupation of the Teutonia building, it was in their interest that the club would remain, at least in a somewhat artificial manner, active. Both Radt and Geser hint at this when they respectively mention the involvement of the German School’s teachers in Teutonia in the 1980s and the overlap between the board members of the Kindergarten and Teutonia’s board. It should therefore be considered what the meaning of this place in Istanbul as a locus for a variety of institutions with a German connection and not limited to the historical club. Though it may have become increasingly difficult for the club to live up to the aims indicated in its statutes, its caretakership of the building ensured that one of its important goals – being a centerpoint for Germans in Istanbul – was indirectly met for a long time after the club itself failed to be a relevant contributor to the social life of the German community. The building’s adjacency to the German School more or less around the corner – its relatively close proximity to the German Consulate in Gümüşsuyu and its housing of various German institutions ensured the continued existence and link with Istanbul’s German-speakers. In that sense the building may be seen as a place-marker that bears witness to the continuing presence of German communities in Istanbul.

Within Teutonia’s long history, the composition of the German community had grown and shrunk several times before. Although its member base had different proportions relative to the German community, the ‘crisis’ that Radt and Von Caucig described around the turn of the nineteenth century, during which the club house had become something that resembled a members-only restaurant rather than a club, also shows that what made Teutonia was very much connected to the interests and motivation of Istanbul’s Germans at the time rather than a static and stable entity. On the other hand the enforced or voluntary involvement of Teutonia with the NSDAP in the 1930s and 1940s, and the differing historical representation of how events would unfold, can possibly show the intricate connection of the building and the institution. The absence of discussion regarding the club’s Nazi associations, referred to in the Teutonia archives in euphemistic terms (war years or Kriegszeit) mirrors the general attitude to the (lack of) memorialization in Germany in the immediate years following the Second World War. The stigma of the building’s involvement and the club’s integration in the infrastructure of the Third Reich abroad, may have had an impact on the club’s appeal, although this hardly showed after its reopening in the immediate war years. It seems more likely that local factors, the moving away of German-speakers from the old city centre and the gradual change of Istanbul’s and the Beyoğlu district’s socio-cultural, demographic and services profile had a more considerable impact on Teutonia’s post-war history. Even then, the building was used by various German actors, which – as will be shown in the chapter on the German High School – were unable to move to different areas. Today, the club’s activities are quite limited while its building is being renovated, with the aim that in the future it will host new institutions, including the Orient Institut research institute.
ENDNOTES


4 Ann Rigney, ‘Embodied communities: Commemorating Robert Burns, 1859’, Representations, Vol. 115 (2011) 71-101. Rigney provides a critique to Benedict Anderson seminal concept of imagined communities, by arguing that they were not just imagined communities which provided the foundation for national (and other communal) identities, but also the interaction between imagined and embodied communities.


9 Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 41.

10 Particularly Prussian officers because Prussia was considered to be a role model by the Ottoman government. The Prussian state and army had successfully reformed itself and had been able to occupy France in 1871 almost without the assistance of other German states, providing the Ottomans with a substantial source of inspiration for their own reforms. See: Malte Fuhrmann, ‘Istanbul, die Deutschen und das 19. Jahrhundert – Wege, die sich kreuzen’, in: Erald Pauw (ed.), Daheim in Konstantinopol / Memleketemiz Dersaadet: Deutsche Spuren am Bosporus ab 1850 / 1850’den İtibaren Boğaziçi’ndeki Alman İzleri (Neurenberg: Pagma Verlag, 2014) 38.


37 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 41.
38 Von Caucig, ‘Geschichte der Teutonia’. Von Caucig probably refers to Turkish-speaking Muslims here.
39 See Ortaylı, İkinci Abdülhamit Döneminde. For a study of the significance of the military and arms trade in the German-Ottoman relations see Naci Yorulmaz, Arming the Sultan: German Arms Trade and Personal Diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire before World War I (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014).
40 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 43.
41 Ibidem.
42 Zürcher, A Modern History, 133, 140.
43 Dietrich, 144.
44 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 64.
46 Ibidem.
48 Dietrich, Deutsche in Istanbul, 214.
49 Ibidem, 214, 402.
50 Ibidem, 402-403.
51 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 67.
52 Ibidem, 68.
57 Konuk, East West Mimesis, 84.
60 Bahar, ‘German or Jewish’, 57.
64 Bozdoğan and Akcan, Turkey, 50-59.
65 Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 205.
66 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 96.
68 Dietrich, Deutsche in Istanbul, 402-403.
69 Ibidem, 401-403.
71 Rüsen, ‘Holocaust Memory and Identity Building’, 252-270, 262-266.
72 TAI, ‘Richtlinien über die Aussprache mit Herrn Botschafter Dr. Oellers’, 27 November 1956, 1.
73 TAI, ‘Richtlinien über die Aussprache mit Herrn Botschafter Dr. Oellers’, 27 November 1956, 2.
74 TAI, ‘Richtlinien über die Aussprache mit Herrn Botschafter Dr. Oellers’, 27 November 1956, 3.
76 Ibidem.
81 TAI, ‘Opening address for the season of 1958/59’, undated – approximately fall or winter 1958.
83 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 2.
Building Beyoğlu

Teutonia

88 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 100-102.
91 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 2.
96 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 104.
102 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 125.
103 Ibidem, 106.
106 Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 106.
110 Dietrich, Deutschsein in Istanbul, 402-403; Radt, Geschichte der Teutonia, 106, 118.
112 Dietrich, Deutschsein in Istanbul, 403.
113 National Archives, ‘FO 366/2472 Disposal of Pera Embassy Building and Therapia 1947. This letter formally initiated the question of a possible sale, but the entire file in fact engages the issue.
119 Archive of the Foreign Ministry of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Dep 273631 111, 21A and 25.