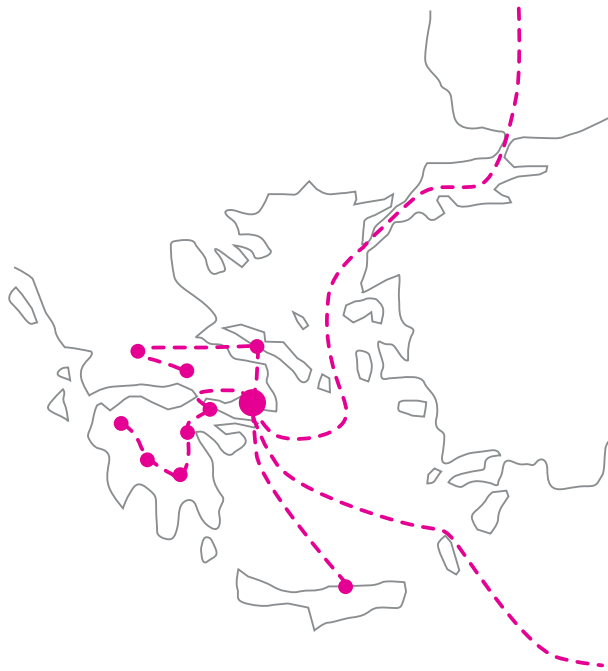


Das Ahnenerbe in Greece

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Map of the Ahnenerbe expeditions in Greece

The Ahnenerbe Forschungs und Lehrgemeinschaft (Ancestral Heritage Research and Teaching Society), was founded in July 1935 by Heinrich Himmler, Hermann Wirth and Richard Walter Darré. The society was originally devoted to scientific and pseudo-scientific researches concerning the anthropological and cultural history of the German ethnic group, and to identify the wellsprings of the Aryan race.

Before and during World War II, expeditions were sent to a number of countries in most continents, from South America to the Tibet. In Europe, archaeological expeditions were sent to Bulgaria, Croatia, Iceland, Greece, France, Cyprus, Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Norway and Scandinavia among others.

One of the countries where the Ahnenerbe was more interested in was Greece, where it organized several investigations. Apparently, the Nazis believed that ancient Greeks were of Nordic stock and were thus the forefathers of modern Germans. To investigate this link, the Ahnenerbe developed several expeditions and excavations in Greece. Ahnenerbe investigators were in Athens, Thebes,

Delphi, Eretria, Rhamnus, Thorikon, Aegina, Korinth, Epidavros, Nafplio, Argos, Sparta, Megalopolis, Olympia and Herakleion in Crete. In these endeavors, the Germans counted on the collaboration of Greek authorities as well as the German Institute of Archeology in Athens.

The Delphi treasure

The Ahnenerbe was also investigating the Delphi oracle, but no one seems to know what exactly. Some accounts claim that the Ahnenerbe was looking for the Delphi fabled treasure. According to ancient sources, the Delphi temple held a marvelous treasure which consisted of the gold, silver and precious stones offers that believers gave the priests so that the Oracle would be generous with them.

In 279 BCE, the Celtic chief Brennus led 200,000 soldiers into Greece to raid the Delphi treasure. On the point of victory at Parnassus, the Celts suffered a series of natural calamities: lightning storms, falling rocks, hail stones and heavy snow assailed the Brennus' troops causing mass slayings of the besiegers. The Oracle told the townsfolk of Delphi that Apollo would not let allow them to suffer distress.

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Entrance to the "Gates of Hades"

Because of the nature of its procurement the booty was henceforth considered cursed and no one dared to steal it anymore.

The Nazis thus believed that the Delphi treasure may still have been somewhere around the oracle, and tried to find it.

The Gates of Hades

One of the most curious expeditions of the Ahnenerbe in Greece was related to the so-called "Gates of Hades". During the German occupation of Greece (1941-1944), SS-Reichsführer and Ahnenerbe chief Heinrich Himmler heard that there were caves in the Southern Peloponnesus that linked with other caveways and stretched all the way to Berlin. Himmler believed that these caves could have been the pathway through which ancient Germanic peoples had reached Greece escaping a natural catastrophe.

Himmler's hypothesis was related to Hans Hörbiger's Glazial-Kosmogony (Glacial Cosmogony) theory, a theory that had been embraced by the Ahnenerbe

that claimed that ancient Greeks were actually Germans who had survived a cataclysm in the North and had migrated to the Mediterranean, where they evolved a highly developed culture.

The Ahnenerbe dispatched immediately secret agents to the Gates of Hades (as the Greeks called the caves) to explore this possibility. Heading the expedition was archaeologist Hans Reinerth, a high-ranking official in the Rosenberg Office. The ancient site of the Gates of Hades was located at the small village of Tainaro, in one of the Southernmost points of Continental Europe.

The ancient Greeks believed that Hades lay far to the west, beyond the horizon where the river Oceanus, which encircled the earth, began. Later, some stories contained descriptions of dark caverns and long, gloomy passages which led down to the Underworld from districts on the mainland of Greece such as Thesprotia in the west or from across the Aegean Sea in Asia Minor or somewhere in Peloponnesos, near Sparta. Thus, the Gates were thought to lead in the Kingdom of the Dead, the Hades, hence the name.

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The Psychomantium of Poseidon

Near the Gates of Hades, which is a hole now covered with concrete slabs, is the Psychomantium of Poseidon, the Oracle of the Souls. A psychomantium is an ancient form of mirror gazing which is used to contact spirits of departed loved ones. Near the Poseidon's oracle there is yet another enigmatic spot. In the middle of a land surface littered by thousands of rocks in various sizes there is a bare circular area cleared by any rock or pebble whatsoever. Not far from the Tainaro Cape, in the place called Phrearton Inousson, there is where the greatest abyssal zones of the Mediterranean are hidden, about 4850 meters deep.

The Research Report of the Reichsbund for German Prehistory, July to December 1941, reported the nine-week Reinerth expedition, claiming to have discovered major new evidence of Indogermanic migration to Greece during Neolithic times.

Many years later, the famous French undersea explorer Jacques Cousteau knew all about this legend and requested permission from the Greek Government to conduct scientific oceanic research in the area. The permission was initially granted; but a few days before the French diving was to get

underway, the Greek Government reneged on the deal and denied the request, the reason being that this was a "sensitive military area" and off-limits to such exploration. One can only speculate about the true motives behind the Greek government's change-of-mind.

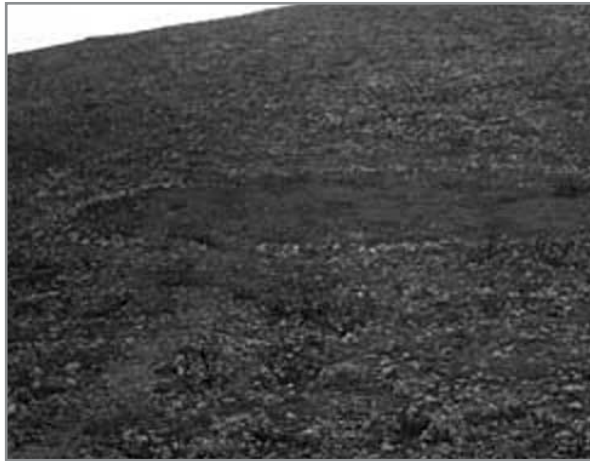
The Ahnenerbe in Kafiristan

The Ahnenerbe conducted similar operations in many other parts of Greece and Europe. Farther, also in the occupied part of Russia, as well as Lybia, Egypt and Iraq. They were also very active in the Far East, mostly in Tibet, but the Ahnenerbe did also send an expedition to Kafiristan, a province in the Hindukush region of Afghanistan.

Kafiristan takes its name from the inhabitants, the Kafirs Kalash, a fiercely independent people with distinctive culture, language and religion which is believed to have descended from the Greeks, specifically from the armies of Alexander the Great.

They are an ethnic phenomenon that attracted the Nazis, especially Walter Wüst, the second president of the Ahnenerbe, who was extremely interested in

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A mysterious spot near the "Gates of Hades"

Kafiristan. To the Ahnenerbe, the Kalash were very interesting because they spoke a tongue which is close to ancient Greek, because they had a pagan religion very similar to the Greek Dodekatheon, and because they were much more advanced and refined than their Muslim neighbors around.