Turkish and Venetian Archives Digital Access Guide

Version Control

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
v3.0	2026-01-06	**CRITICAL CORRECTION**: Distinguished İstanbul Deniz Müzesi (Naval Museum) from İSAM (Islamic Studies Center) - these are separate institutions; Naval Museum now correctly positioned as primary institution for Ottoman naval/maritime research; İSAM retained as reference example of well-digitized Turkish archive; restructured comparative analysis accordingly
v2.0	2026-01-06	Added comprehensive metadata access section; technical reconnaissance of all three archives; corrected Venice URLs (Progetto Divenire migrated to moreveneto platform); added EAD/XML export capabilities
v1.0	2026-01-06	Initial version with basic access information

Executive Summary

This research briefing addresses two potential research priorities for Colin Greenstreet and colleagues for their February-March 2026 Ottoman Turkish HTR testing programme:

1. **Ottoman naval and maritime history materials** from Turkish State Archives (Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı) and İstanbul Deniz Müzesi (Naval Museum)

2. **Ottoman-Venetian relations and spy reports** from the Archivio di Stato di Venezia

Four institutions provide varying levels of remote digital access:

Archive	Primary Focus	Remote Catalogue	Remote Images	XML/EAD Export	Login Required
Turkish State Archives	Government records	✓ (with login)	✗ (Turkish citizens only via e-Devlet)	✗	Yes
İstanbul Deniz Müzesi	Naval/maritime history	✓ (collection listings)	✗ (physical visit required)	✗	Yes (archive)
Venice State Archives	Venetian Republic	✓	✓ (migrated collections)	✗ (no public API)	No
İSAM Library Archive[1]	Islamic studies	✓	✓ (full access)	✓ (EAD 2002, Dublin Core)	No

[1] *İSAM is included as a reference example of a well-digitized Turkish archive, not as a primary source for Ottoman naval/maritime history.*

Key Findings:

1. **Venice State Archives' Miscellanea Documenti Turchi** (2,022 Ottoman documents, 15th-19th centuries) has been migrated from the defunct Progetto Divenire platform to the new **moreveneto** system (asve.arianna4.cloud) - the most accessible collection for remote Ottoman Turkish HTR testing.

2. **İstanbul Deniz Müzesi (Naval Museum)** holds approximately 20-25 million documents in its Naval History Archive, including Bahriye Nezâreti (Ottoman Naval Ministry) records, 4 Piri Reis Kitab-ı Bahriye manuscripts, and extensive map/chart collections - but requires physical visit for archive access.

1. Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı (Turkish State Archives)

1.1 Institution Overview

- **Official Name**: T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri Başkanlığı

- **Location (Ottoman Archives)**: Talatpaşa Mahallesi, İmrahor Cad., Sadabad Mevkii No:31, 34400 Kağıthane/İstanbul

- **Location (Republic Archives)**: Gayret Mahallesi 95. Sokak No:3, 06180 Yenimahalle/Ankara

- **Contact**:
  - Email: dab@devletarsivleri.gov.tr
  - Tel: +90 (312) 307 90 00 (Ankara), +90 (212) 314 90 00 (Istanbul)

- **Hours**: Monday-Friday 09:00-19:00, Saturday 09:00-17:00

- **Website**: https://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/

1.2 Digital Access URLs

Resource	URL	Access Level
Main Website	https://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/	Public
Catalogue (BETSİS)	https://katalog.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/	Login required
Membership Form	https://katalog.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/uyelik.aspx	Public
e-Devlet Portal	https://www.turkiye.gov.tr/devlet-arsivleri-baskanligi	Turkish citizens

1.3 Access Requirements - Foreign Researchers

Physical Access:

- No citizenship or institutional affiliation requirement (tourist visa sufficient: 90 days/180 days)

- Two documents required at entrance: passport + secondary ID (driver's licence or ID card)

- Passport with visa required for registration (ID cards not accepted for registration)

- Complete Turkish-language "Researcher Request Form" (Araştırmacı İstek Formu)

- On-site photograph for researcher card (valid for visa duration)

- Security: cloakroom available, elevator access to reading room

Digital Access (Two-Tier System):

- **All registered users**: Can browse catalogue metadata, add documents to work list, view partial previews

- **Turkish citizens with e-Devlet**: Full remote access to digitized document images via "belge tarama sistemi" (BETSİS)

- **Foreign researchers**: Document images accessible ONLY via computer terminals in reading room; NO remote image access; NO WiFi (power sockets available)

1.4 Metadata Access Details

Feature	Status
Platform	BETSİS (Belge Tarama Sistemi)
Language	Turkish only (no interface language switching)
Structure	Hierarchical: Fon → Defter/Dosya → Belge

Feature	Status
EAD/XML Export	✗ Not available
API Access	✗ No public API
Image Format	JPG (reading room terminals only for foreigners)
IIIF	✗ Not implemented
Page Counts	✓ Visible in document preview (sayfa sayısı)
Item-Level Metadata	Date (Hijri/Gregorian), summary (özet), type, page count

1.5 Reproduction and Fees

Service	Cost (as of 2025)
Digital scan (per page)	0.50 TL (£0.01/$0.015)
Payment method	Card only
Bulk orders	Can request entire defters/dosyas

Note: Since 16 April 2020, watermarked preview images are viewable free online (for registered users); high-resolution images without watermark require payment.

1.6 Key Holdings for Ottoman Maritime/Naval Research

- **Bahriye Nezareti fonds** (Navy Ministry records, 1879-1892)
- Tersane-i Amire records (Imperial Shipyard)
- Kapudan Paşa records (Grand Admiral)
- Maritime surveys and maps

2. İstanbul Deniz Müzesi (Istanbul Naval Museum)

2.1 Institution Overview

- **Official Name**: İstanbul Deniz Müzesi Komutanlığı (Istanbul Naval Museum Command)
- **Affiliation**: Türk Deniz Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı (Turkish Navy Command)
- **Location**: Sinanpaşa Mahallesi, Beşiktaş Caddesi No:6 D:1, 34353 Beşiktaş/İstanbul (adjacent to Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa's tomb and monument)

- **Established**: 31 August 1897 (Turkey's first military museum)

- **Modern Building Reopened**: 4 October 2013

- **Contact**:

  - Email: deniztariharsivi@dzkk.tsk.tr (Archive)

  - Tel: +90 (212) 327 43 46

- **Hours**: Weekdays 09:00-17:00, Weekends 10:00-18:00 (Closed Mondays)

- **Admission**: 10 TL (as of 2025)

- **Website**: https://denizmuzesi.dzkk.tsk.tr (Turkish and English available)

2.2 Institutional Structure

The Naval Museum comprises three major research divisions:

Division	Function	Holdings
Deniz Tarihi Arşiv Müdürlüğü (Naval History Archive Directorate)	Document preservation and researcher services	~20-25 million documents in ~25,000 folders
Deniz İhtisas Kütüphanesi (Naval Specialized Library)	Maritime reference collection	~21,395 books (Ottoman Turkish, English, French)
Piri Reis Araştırma Merkezi (Piri Reis Research Center, est. 2005)	Maritime history research and publication	Academic support and publications

2.3 Archive Holdings (Deniz Tarihi Arşivi)

The Naval History Archive holds documents from the **Bahriye Nezâreti** (Ottoman Naval Ministry) period, spanning approximately the last 200 years of Ottoman and Turkish naval history.

Archive Structure:

- 8 classic catalogues + 1 index catalogue

- 15 catalogues currently serving researchers

- Three main sections:
  - **Belge Arşivi** (Document Archive)
  - **Fotoğraf Arşivi** (Photo Archive)
  - **Harita Arşivi** (Map Archive)

Key Holdings for Ottoman HTR Research:

Collection	Description	HTR Potential
Bahriye Nezâreti Belgeleri	Naval Ministry correspondence and orders	High (administrative Ottoman Turkish)
Kitab-ı Bahriye manuscripts	4 manuscript copies of Piri Reis's portolan atlas	High (16th-century Ottoman)
Osmanlı Deniz Haritaları	Ottoman maritime maps and charts	Medium (cartographic text)
Tersane-i Amire Kayıtları	Imperial Shipyard records	High (technical/administrative)
Bahriye Salnameleri	Naval yearbooks	High (printed Ottoman)

2.4 Library Holdings (Deniz İhtisas Kütüphanesi)

- **Total volumes**: ~21,395 books

- **Languages**: Ottoman Turkish, Modern Turkish, English, French

- **Special holdings**: 4 manuscript copies of Piri Reis's Kitab-ı Bahriye (the museum holds 4 of 44 known copies worldwide)

- **Manuscript No. 888**: Currently under restoration with planned multilingual replica

2.5 Museum Collection

- **Total objects**: ~23,000 items (only ~10% on display)

- **Key collections**:

    - 14 imperial caiques (saltanat kayıkları), some dating to 16th century

    - Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa's personal galley (kadırga)

    - Historical flags (sancaklar)

    - Navigational instruments

    - Ship models

    - Naval uniforms

2.6 Access Requirements

Archive Research Access:

- **Registration**: Required (contact deniztariharsivi@dzkk.tsk.tr)

- **Eligibility**: Open to researchers working on naval history and related topics

- **Remote Access**: ✗ Physical visit required

- **Digital Catalogue**: Collection listings visible on website, but no searchable online catalogue like BETSİS

Digital Access Status:

Feature	Status
Website	https://denizmuzesi.dzkk.tsk.tr (TR/EN)
Online Catalogue	✗ No searchable database
Remote Image Access	✗ Physical visit required
XML/EAD Export	✗ Not available
API Access	✗ No public API
Digitization Status	Unknown (no published statistics)

2.7 Historical Note

The archive was previously housed at Lalahan, Ankara (1971-present) but has been reintegrated into the Beşiktaş museum complex. The archive's history traces back to the Mahzen-i Evrak (Document Repository) of the Bahriye Nezâreti in the 19th century, which established systematic archival practices following modern Ottoman archival regulations.

3. Archivio di Stato di Venezia (Venetian State Archives)

3.1 Institution Overview

- **Official Name**: Archivio di Stato di Venezia
- **Location**: Campo dei Frari, San Polo 3002, 30125 Venezia
- **Additional Sites**: Sede della Giudecca; Deposito di Mestre
- **Contact**:
  - Email: as-ve@cultura.gov.it
  - PEC: as-ve@pec.cultura.gov.it
  - Tel: +39 041 522 2281
- **Director**: Andrea Erboso
- **Hours**: Consult website for current schedule
- **Website**: https://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/it/

3.2 Digital Access URLs

Resource	URL	Status
Main Website	https://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/it/	Active
New Catalogue (moreveneto)	https://asve.arianna4.cloud	Active
Military Registers Database	https://leva.archiviodistatovenezia.it/	Active
Online Resources Page	https://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/it/patrimonio/risorse-in-rete.html	Active
~~Progetto Divenire~~	~~archiviodistatovenezia.it/divenire/~~	**DEPRECATED** - Migrated to moreveneto

3.3 Platform Migration: Divenire → moreveneto

CRITICAL UPDATE: The **Progetto Divenire** platform (online 2006-c.2023) has been **discontinued** and all content migrated to the new **moreveneto** platform (https://asve.arianna4.cloud).

The migration consolidated:

- Former SIASVe catalogue data
- Divenire digital reproductions
- Guida generale degli Archivi di Stato descriptions
- Andrea Da Mosto indices

Current Digital Holdings in moreveneto:

- ~15,000 archival description records
- 25,303 digital images
- 2,109 units (documents, finding aids, maps)

3.4 Key Holdings for Ottoman-Venetian Research

Collection	Description	Digitization Status
Miscellanea Documenti Turchi	2,022 Ottoman documents (15th-19th c.) including 21 ahdname (treaties), imperial correspondence, diplomatic records	Migrated to moreveneto
Bailo a Costantinopoli	Venice's ambassador records	Not digitized

Collection	Description	Digitization Status
Senato Dispacci Costantinopoli	Senate dispatches from Constantinople	Not digitized
Cinque Savi alla Mercanzia	Trade regulation records	Partial
Relazioni di Ambasciatori	Ambassador reports	Limited digitization

3.5 Metadata Access Details

Feature	Status
Platform	Arianna4 (moreveneto)
Language	Italian only
Standards	ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF) compliant
EAD/XML Export	✗ No public export function
API Access	✗ No public API documented
Image Format	JPG via Arianna4 viewer with zoom
IIIF	✗ Not implemented
Page Counts	Recorded in physical description fields
PDF Finding Aids	Some available at archiviodistatovenezia.it/it/patrimonio/versione-testuale-degli-strumenti-di-ricerca.html

4. İSAM Library Archive: A Reference Example of Digitized Turkish Archives

Note: İSAM (İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi / Center for Islamic Studies) is included as a reference example of a well-digitized Turkish archive, demonstrating best practices in open access and metadata export. It is **not** a primary source for Ottoman naval/maritime history.

4.1 Institution Overview

- **Official Name**: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi Kütüphanesi Arşivi

- **Location**: Bağlarbaşı, Üsküdar, Istanbul (29 Mayıs Üniversitesi campus)

- **Contact**: kutuphane@isam.org.tr

- **Primary Focus**: Islamic studies, Ottoman legal history, religious institutions

- **Platform**: AtoM (Access to Memory) - open-source archival description software

- **Archive URL**: https://arsiv.isam.org.tr/

4.2 Why İSAM Matters as a Reference Model

İSAM demonstrates technical capabilities that could inform future digitization efforts at naval archives:

Capability	İSAM Implementation	Benefit for HTR Projects
Open Access	No login required	Enables remote material selection
Bilingual Interface	Turkish/English via ?sf_culture= parameter	Accessible to international researchers
EAD 2002 XML Export	Available at /index.php/[slug];ead?sf_format=xml	Programmatic metadata harvesting
Dublin Core Export	Available at /index.php/[slug];dc?sf_format=xml	Simplified metadata extraction
Explicit Language Recording	Per-item (e.g., "Osmanlı Türkçesi, Fransızca")	Pre-selection by language
Script Type Recording	Per-item (e.g., "Arap, Latin")	Pre-selection by script
ISAD(G) Compliance	Full hierarchical description	Standardized navigation
OAI-PMH Potential	Standard AtoM feature	Automated harvesting

4.3 Sample Collection: Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa Papers

As a demonstration of İSAM's capabilities, the Hüseyin Hilmi Paşa collection shows what comprehensive digitization enables:

Metric	Value
Total Documents	3,328
Digitized Items	1,729
Period Covered	1796-1969
Languages	Ottoman Turkish, French, English, Arabic, Slavic
EAD Export URL	https://arsiv.isam.org.tr/index.php/huseyin-hilmi-pasa-evraki;ead?sf_format=xml

5. Comparative Analysis

5.1 Access Model Comparison

Feature	State Archives (TR)	Naval Museum	Venice	İSAM (reference)
Open Catalogue	Login required	Limited listings	✓ Free	✓ Free
Remote Images	Turkish e-Devlet only	✗	✓ Migrated collections	✓ Full access
Login Required	Yes (catalogue)	Yes (archive)	No	No
Language Options	Turkish only	Turkish/English (website)	Italian only	TR/EN toggle
EAD XML Export	✗	✗	✗	✓
API/OAI-PMH	✗	✗	✗	Potential
IIIF	✗	✗	✗	✗

5.2 HTR Suitability Assessment

Factor	State Archives (TR)	Naval Museum	Venice	İSAM (reference)
Remote Preprocessing	✗ Visit required	✗ Visit required	✓ Partial remote	✓ Full remote
Ottoman Naval Content	✓ Bahriye Nezareti	✓✓ Primary source	✓ Ottoman-Venetian	Limited
Metadata for Selection	Limited	Unknown	Good	Excellent
Language Identification	Manual	Unknown	In descriptions	✓ Structured

5.3 Research Priority Matrix

Material Type	Best Source	Remote Access	Visit Required
Ottoman naval administrative records	Naval Museum / State Archives	✗	Istanbul
Piri Reis manuscripts	Naval Museum	✗	Istanbul (Beşiktaş)
Ottoman maritime maps/charts	Naval Museum	✗	Istanbul
Ottoman-Venetian treaties	Venice (moreveneto)	✓	Optional
Ottoman spy reports	Venice (undigitized)	✗	Venice
Ottoman diplomatic correspondence	Venice / State Archives	Partial	Likely

6. Turkish Archival Terminology Glossary

6.1 Document Types (Belge Türleri)

Turkish	English	Description
belge	document	General term
evrak	loose documents	Individual unbound documents
defter	register/notebook	Bound volume (marked .d in codes)
dosya	file/folder	Collection of related documents
mektup	letter	Correspondence
hüküm	decree/order	Imperial or judicial command
ferman	imperial edict	Sultanic command document
berat	patent/diploma	Appointment or privilege grant
yazma	manuscript	Handwritten work
sicil	court register	Kadı sicilleri = qadi court records
muhasebe defteri	account book	Financial records
tahrir defteri	survey register	Tax/census surveys

Turkish	English	Description
mühimme defteri	important affairs register	Imperial Council decisions
salname	yearbook/annual	Provincial/departmental almanac
name-i hümayun	imperial letter	Formal sultanic correspondence
ahdname	treaty/capitulations	Formal agreements with foreign powers
telgraf	telegram	Telegraphic communication
harita	map	Geographic map

6.2 Archival Structure Terms (Arşiv Yapısı)

Turkish	English	Description
arşiv	archive	General term
fon	fond/collection	Major archival grouping
katalog	catalogue	Finding aid
numara (nr.)	number	Document/page number
sayfa (s.)	page	Abbreviated in references
varak	folio/leaf	Single sheet (recto/verso)
gömlek	envelope/wrapper	Document wrapper number
sıra	sequence/order	Sequential numbering
referans kodu	reference code	Archival citation

6.3 Search and Interface Terms (Arama ve Arayüz)

Turkish	English	Description
arama	search	Search function
basit arama	simple search	Basic search
detaylı arama	detailed search	Advanced search
tarama	scan/browse	Belge tarama = document scanning

Turkish	English	Description
görüntü	image	Digital image
üyelik	membership	Registration/account
araştırma	research	Araştırma salonu = reading room
indirme	download	File download
ücret	fee/charge	Cost/payment
başvuru	application	Request form
özet	summary	Document abstract

6.4 Naval and Maritime Terms (Bahriye ve Denizcilik)

Turkish	English	Description
bahriye	navy/naval	Bahriye Nezareti = Navy Ministry
deniz	sea/marine	Deniz müzesi = naval museum
gemi	ship	General vessel term
tersane	shipyard/dockyard	From Persian
donanma	fleet/navy	Naval fleet
kapudan paşa	grand admiral	Ottoman naval commander-in-chief
reis	captain	Ship's captain
kadırga	galley	Oared warship
kalyon	galleon	Sailing warship
seyir	navigation	Seyir aletleri = navigational instruments

7. Recommendations for HTR Testing Programme

7.1 Immediate Actions (Remote)

1. **Explore moreveneto catalogue** - identify Ottoman Turkish materials in Miscellanea Documenti Turchi for remote HTR testing

2. **Register at katalog.devletarsivleri.gov.tr** - browse Bahriye Nezareti fonds metadata to plan Istanbul visit

3. **Contact Naval Museum archive** - request information on researcher access procedures (deniztariharsivi@dzkk.tsk.tr)

4. **Review İSAM as methodology reference** - test EAD XML export workflows that could inform future naval archive digitization advocacy

7.2 Sample Materials for Initial Testing

Venice (Remote via moreveneto) - HIGHEST PRIORITY FOR REMOTE TESTING:

- Miscellanea Documenti Turchi treaty samples (ahdname)

- Ottoman-Greek diplomatic correspondence

- Documents with both Ottoman and Italian text (for cross-validation)

İSAM (Remote - Methodology Testing):

- Test EAD/Dublin Core export workflows

- Evaluate structured language/script metadata for material selection

7.3 Physical Visit Requirements

Istanbul Visit Required For:

- Turkish State Archives full image access (foreign researchers)

- İstanbul Deniz Müzesi archive access (Bahriye Nezâreti documents, Piri Reis manuscripts, Ottoman naval maps)

- Deniz İhtisas Kütüphanesi consultation

Venice Visit Required For:

- Undigitized spy reports with Ottoman warship drawings

- Bailo a Costantinopoli records

- High-resolution reproductions

7.4 Advocacy Opportunity

The contrast between İSAM's open-access AtoM implementation and the closed systems at the Naval Museum suggests an **advocacy opportunity**: engaging with the Piri Reis Research Center (established 2005) about potential digitization partnerships could yield significant HTR material. The Naval Museum's stated mission

includes "bringing our maritime archive to light" (denizcilik tarihimize ait arşivimizi gün ışığına çıkarmak) - aligning with HTR accessibility goals.

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8. References and Further Reading

Key Catalogues and Inventories

- Pedani Fabris, Maria Pia. *I 'Documenti turchi' dell'Archivio di Stato di Venezia: Inventario della miscellanea* (Rome: Archivio di Stato, 1994)

- Pedani, Maria Pia. *Inventory of the Lettere e Scritture Turchesche in the Venetian State Archives* (Leiden: Brill, 2010)

- Korkmaz, Mehmet. "Yakınçağ Tarih Araştırmalarında Deniz Tarihi (Bahriye) Arşivi'nin Önemi", *2. Uluslararası Osmanlı Coğrafyası Arşiv Kongresi Bildirileri*, c. II (Ankara, 2019), s. 751-768

Online Resources

- İstanbul Deniz Müzesi: https://denizmuzesi.dzkk.tsk.tr

- HAZİNE Ottoman Archives Portal: https://hazine.info/

- Turkish State Archives: https://www.devletarsivleri.gov.tr/

- Venice State Archives (moreveneto): https://asve.arianna4.cloud

- AtoM Documentation: https://www.accesstomemory.org/en/docs/

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