

In the 1984 issue of the American Journal of Archaeology Professor F.E. Winter of the University of Toronto offered a short survey of modern study of Greek art and architecture, together with comments on appropriate directions that study might take in the future. Professor Winter is one of the most respected authorities in his field, and I can attest from personal experience the clarity of his insights as presented in the classroom. His words are well worth pondering.

The scientific study of Greek architecture did not begin until the 1870's. Before that time ancient architecture meant Roman and Italian architecture to the scholars and antiquarians of Europe. Greece itself, owing to the Turkish occupation, was virtually inaccessible except to the most determined of travellers. Many of these were much less interested in the academic analysis of art than in decorating their own homes, and although we must acknowledge that many great works were saved from certain destruction by the activities of these collectors, their plundering of another country's heritage must also be deplored. The most famous and controversial case of wholesale raiding is that of the Elgin Marbles in The British Museum (see Labyrinth no. 28, January 1984, p. 7).

Heinrich Schliemann, discoverer of Troy, is generally called the father of modern archaeology. It is true that his spectacular finds dislodged scholars from their armchairs and showed them that they had to go to a now liberated Greece for themselves. Schliemann, however, for all his enthusiasm was an amateur; but his young accomplice Wilhelm Dörpfeld was able to combine his mentor's

zeal with training as a professional scholar and with Ernst Curtius begin the great German excavations at Olympia which inaugurated the true modern era of archaeology. Within the next fifty years teams of scholars from Germany, France, Britain and America were to uncover many important sites, such as Delos, Delphi, Corinth, Epidaurus, Ephesus, Pergamon and of course Athens.

Our knowledge of ancient Greece was transformed. Whole new periods of Greek art and architecture were defined for the first time; our understanding of the history of art was freed from Romantic preconceptions and placed on a firm scientific basis; hitherto untouched types of art and architecture (such as town planning and private houses) became objects of study unto themselves. The increase in knowledge, however, brings certain dangers with it. It is all too easy to spend one's whole life studying some very small part of ancient art without regard to the wider purpose of one's study. The more difficult it becomes to take a broader perspective, the more essential it is that the effort be made. Moreover, we have the challenge of showing a world increasingly indifferent to its classical heritage the vital importance of keeping that classical heritage alive. Students of ancient art, says Professor Winter, must not only be able to show the position of art and architecture within the whole experience of the ancient world; they must also emphasize "that the humanistic experience of ancient Greece, through its failures as well as its successes, can still offer both caveats and encouragement for a world becoming increasingly dehumanized." Wise words indeed.