

REVIEWS

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Dyson, Stephen L. (2006) *In pursuit of ancient pasts: a history of classical archaeology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press. XV, 316 p. ISBN-10 0-300-11097-9, ISBN-13 978-0-300-11097-5.

Dyson's book is about the development of classical archaeology in the 19th and 20th centuries, when classical antiquity was rediscovered. The history of classical archaeology is bound with the political events reverberated by the author, likewise the founding of museums and the acquisition of antiquities. The book comprises seven chapters, starting with the protohistory of classical archaeology in the middle of the 18th century and ending with the period after World War II.

Dyson starts with a prologue to the history of professional classical archaeology, focusing on J. J. Winckelmann's theories about ancient art, the collecting mania that began with the Grand Tour, the start of the excavations in Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the founding of the antiquities market. Dyson characterizes this epoch as the activity of the antiquarians' informal community.

In the first half of the 19th century, professionalism grew in classical archaeology. Additionally, the institutional form matured as evidenced by the rise of the *Instituto di corrispondeza archaeologica* and the archaeological schools in Rome and Athens. One of the most important changes in the 19th century was the emergence of Greece as an archaeological stage (so far little-known and rarely studied) aside Italy. Hereupon Dyson concentrates on the political events that took place at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the nationalism and national traditions in Europe, which played a significant role in the shaping of classical archaeology until World War I.

The major archaeological sites came through the war relatively intact, and excavations were resumed. Unlike World War I, World War II did not spare the archaeological sites and monuments, and the after-war period was politically quite complicated. Nevertheless, the excavations were continued; the Americans played a considerable role in this. Dyson also writes about one of the most important sub-disciplines of classical archaeology, underwater archaeology, which emerged after the war.

Although references to museums can be found all over the book, one separate chapter is devoted to the emergence of the great museums in Europe and America. By the end of the 18th century, some of the classical art museums had come into existence. Dyson investigates the evolution of the collections in the Munich Glyptothek (the Aegina marbles), the British Museum (the Elgin marbles), the Altes Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and others. He briefly touches upon the activity of scholars such as Gisela Richter, Sir John Beazley, the collector Lord William Hamilton, and others.

As a whole, Dyson's work is compendious and fascinating reading material. He has fulfilled the aim to observe the growth of professionalism in classical archaeology, how the collections of museums were founded and the antiquities acquired. In addition, he investigates the theme of private collections, the market of antiquities, and government intervention in their activities. Two centuries of classical archaeology are described in the book, along with important political events in Europe that influenced the field.

Furthermore, it is worth pointing out that the book is illustrated with forty fascinating black-and-white reproductions and photos about the archaeologists and the excavations.