





GERMAN ARCHAEOLOGISTS IN GREECE

Speaking of their country, Greeks often say "you cannot build anything or dig anywhere without discovering ancient remains of our glorious past". Likewise, for this feature, it was difficult to provide an exhaustive list of German archaeologists who worked in Greece because upon finding one, there was always another. As a testament to Germany's contribution to the preservation of Greece's glorious past, the following men were uncovered for helping this country to constantly discover itself anew and maintain its immortality.



Karl Otfried Müller (1797-1840)

With an enthusiasm for Greek literature, art and history, this archaeologist and classical scholar's primary goal was to present a vivid picture of Greek life in its entirety, thereby classifying his books and lectures as landmarks and developing a new conception of Hellenism.

In 1839, he was granted permission to travel and went to Greece where he visited and investigated the ruins of ancient Athens and the Peloponnese. He finally arrived in Delphi, a place where kings and warriors once came to consult the Oracle for which they showed appreciation with treasures, and a place where musicians, poets and philosophers came to compete in the Pythian games to honor the god Apollo.

Müller began extensive and systematic excavations that revealed the Temple of Apollo, Sanctuary and Sacred Way, but was attacked by fever and eventually died in Athens.

Ernst Curtius (1814-1896)

Archaeologist and historian, he was chosen to make a journey to Greece for the prosecution of archaeological researches in the wake of Hitler's invasions. Curtius then became Karl Otfried Müller's companion in his exploration of the Peloponnese, but returned to Germany in 1840, became a professor at the University of Berlin and tutored Prince Frederick William until 1850. After another journey to Greece in 1862, Curtius was sent to Olympia by the German state in which excavations were assigned exclusively. By examining the levels of silt deposit, he dates the temples to the early-Christian era and destroys the myth that temples were put on this site by the god Zeus.

Curtius and other German archaeologists also mapped out the remains of the famous site of the ancient games, after which the modern Olympic Games are named. His findings on Olympia are presented in several of his archaeological and scholarly works that also include the Acropolis, Naxos and the Peloponnese.

Heinrich Schliemann (1822-1890)

Heinrich Schliemann's passion for Homer's *Odyssey* began with his fixation on a description and photo of Troy in flames from a book given to him by his father at Christmas in 1829; he followed this with an essay about Odysseus and Agamemnon in Latin by age 11. His first love -a girl named Minna who used to dig around with him in the local castle and churchyard- was connected with his obsession for archaeology.

A self-educated, self-made and well-traveled man who spoke more than 10 languages fluently, he kept his promise to learn Greek and find Troy when he became a multi-millionaire and his marriage failed. Schliemann was comforted by Homer's idea of a hero returning home, so he went to Greece to become an archaeologist though he had no training in the field.

Excavating the island of Ithaca in 1868 with hopes of finding Odysseus' kingdom, he found vases and other important artifacts, but no kingdom. After taking a Greek wife, Sophia Engastromenos, he worked in Hissarlik with Englishman Frank Calvert seeking King Priam's palace. Although excavations revealed a hoard of treasures and several ruins, they were not from the Homeric period of Troy and much of it was never recorded, but instead smuggled offsite. In exchange for the return of his finds, the Greek government allowed him to start excavations at Mycenae in 1876 where the infamous tombs, Lion Gate and Agamemnon's mask were discovered. Although Schliemann's finds redefined the birth of civilization and a new understanding of Greek pre-history, he was simply disappointed the artifacts did not belong to Homer's Agamemnon.

Obsessed with finding something to "fit" the stories of Homer, he returned to Ithaca again in 1878 and uncovered the ruins of 190 houses, and then again to Hissarlik where he found a cache of gold and silver jewelry. From 1878-1888, he oversaw digs at several sites including Olympia, Hissarlik, Marathon, Tiryns and Orchomenus, Boeotia.

Schliemann would live out his last years in a grand house he had built in Athens now known as the Numismatic Museum where he lived out his fantasy to rule like a King -hosting elaborate parties to read Homer aloud and speak Greek at the dinner table, renaming his servants after characters in Greek mythology, insisting that his messages be sent to him in ancient Greek, decorating his home with themes celebrating Pompeii, Mycenae and Troy.

Though his methods were controversial, he was a pioneer in that he approached archaeology as a science in which one forms hypotheses and then tests them. His mausoleum stands in the first

cemetery of Athens adorned with, of course, the immortal heroes of Troy that he spent his life trying to find and emulate...and in the end, Schliemann's name is forever connected with Troy, thus fulfilling his wish of immortality.

Wilhelm Dörpfeld (1853-1940)

Specializing in Greek architecture, Wilhelm Dörpfeld studied at the Academy of Architecture in Berlin under Friedrich Adler who sent him to help excavate Olympia in 1877. It was here that Dörpfeld developed a method of dating ancient archaeological sites based on the strata in which objects were found, and the type of building materials. Duly impressed, Heinrich Schliemann (see above) successfully persuaded him to assist with excavations at Troy. From 1882, Dörpfeld organized the excavation and corrected many of Schliemann's conclusions, including those at Mycenae. From there, they moved to Tiryns in 1884 and made the first major Bronze Age discovery.

Beginning in 1886 he excavated the Hekatompedon (the pre-Classical Parthenon) on the Acropolis in Athens, and was then appointed Director of the German Archaeological Institute in Athens in 1887, a position he held until 1912. Following Schliemann's death in 1890, Dörpfeld oversaw the Troy expedition, and his subsequent excavation from 1893-94 is considered a milestone in the field of archaeology. By examining the wall, gates and enclosed city streets that were uncovered, Dörpfeld's investigations concluded this new city perfectly matched the description of Homer's Troy in *The Iliad*.

From 1905-1929, he went back to Tiryns, and also devoted his attention and energies to several excavations around Greece, including those on Corfu where he not only uncovered the Temple of Artemis, but also a Neolithic settlement dating back to 3000 BC near Porto Timoni in search of the Palace of Alkinoos during the period 1911-1914.

Dörpfeld's last years were spent on the island of Lefkas where he died trying to convince himself and others that this (not Ithaca) was the true location of Homer's Ithaca, Odysseus' kingdom. A statue dedicated to Lefkas' local hero can be seen on the quay, an entire room showcasing his work at the Archaeological Museum and his grave peacefully placed near his former home in Agia Kyriaki.

Dörpfeld is a seminal figure in classical archaeology, and his method remains at the core of archeological site analysis. Like Schliemann, he spent much of his career trying to prove that Homer's *Odyssey* was based on real places. Fellow archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans called Dörpfeld "Schliemann's greatest discovery".

Adolf Furtwängler 1853-1907

Professor of classical archaeology and museum director, he pioneered modern methods of ancient Greek vase analysis that gave pottery shards great importance for dating, assembling and recreating ancient works. Working in several Mediterranean countries under a stipend at the German Archaeological Institute, he participated in Heinrich Schliemann's Olympia excavation site in Greece.

In 1879 he published a groundbreaking study that established the difference between Mycenaean and Geometric pottery, then issued a study on Greek gems and their inscriptions in 1900, demonstrating his breadth of classical knowledge.

On the island of Aegina in 1901, he found an inscription to the goddess Aphaia, shattering theories that the Doric temple was dedicated to Athena.

Furtwängler has been called "probably the greatest classical archaeologist of all time".

Ernst Buschor (1886-1961)

Born to a family of modest means and education, Ernst Buschor abandoned law studies and turned his attention to classical archaeology. Returning from World War I, he became a full professor before being appointed director of the German Archaeological Institute in Athens when it reopened in 1921.

Among his contributions, Buschor reopened excavations at the Temple of Hera on Samos that were previously closed since WWI began in 1914, and wrote about the architectural phases of the Rhoikos Temple from the Samos excavation, which was key to understanding classical building.

While continuing to publish important works on the Acropolis and books detailing archaeological methods, Buschor went on to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Athens in 1937 and gave his energies to researching and translating Greek tragedies.

In addition to being one of the first to identify the critical turn in ancient Greek art from the Archaic to the Classical age as taking place around 500 BC, Buschor is credited for turning archaeology into art history that attempted to understand the objects themselves, connecting them with the history and culture of their time.

A small A-Z of more German archaeologists...

Friedrich Adler: Architect, historian and archaeologist, he participated in excavations and was also responsible for the original 1883 museum at Olympia. In addition to being one of the first to realize the importance of Schliemann's digs, Wilhelm Dorpfeld was his son-in-law.

Alexander Conze: A specialist in ancient Greek art, Conze helped redefine 19th-century archaeology away from a humanistic and aestheticizing study of ancient art works and towards a technical science of painstaking historical reconstruction. One of the first to promote "big archaeology" (large-scale, highly-organized digs), he was also the first to include photos in the publication of his reports after his excavations on the island of Samothrace in 1873 and 1875. **Ernst Fabricius:** Surveyed and published a full description of the Eupalineio Tunnel of Samos, called the "Eighth Wonder of the World". **Rudolf Herzog:** Inspired by local author and antiquarian Iakovos Zeraftis, Rudolf Herzog starts excavations and discovers the famous Sanctuary of Asklepios in 1901. **Carl F. Haller von Hallerstein:** On an expedition with the first International Association of Archaeologists - a group of men from Britain, Germany and Denmark - Haller goes to Aegina and finds the ruins of the temple of Aphaia and thousands of fragments of Ancient Greek statues. Additionally, his studies and drawings from excavations conducted on the temple at Bassae from 1811-1812 represent one of the most reliable sources of information.

Baron Hiller von Gaertringen: In Ancient Thira on the island of Santorini between 1895-1902, Hiller and his colleagues find preserved ruins belonging to the Hellenistic and Roman phases of the city, predominantly a residential area and large parts of cemeteries. **Ferdinand Noack:** Following systematic excavations on the Kerameikos site begun in 1870 by the Greek Archaeological Society under the direction of St. Koumanoudis, Noack -who oversaw several sites in Greece- continued work here and uncovered several important ruins and artifacts. In 1913, the Greek Government entrusted the excavations to the German Archaeological Institute, which continues its investigation of the site, most notably discovering a Kouros (statue of a young man) dating back 2,600 years in 2002.

Gabriel Welter: A classical archaeologist assigned to several sites in Greece by the German Archaeological Institute, his most notable find is the 6th-century BC Temple of Demeter on Naxos.