

# Awarding of the Winckelmann Medal

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Before we come to the plenary lecture on tonight's program, I have an award to present in the name of the Institute: The Winckelmann Medal is the highest award that the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) has to bestow. The award was established in 1929 at the centenary celebration of the DAI.

The medal, which depicts the head of Winckelmann on the obverse and the Hyperborean griffin, the symbol of the Institute, on the reverse, was produced 75 years ago in a series of twelve by the sculptor Edwin Scharff, then resident in Berlin. Very few of the medals remain today.

The Winckelmann Medal has always been awarded for exceptional contributions to the promotion of archaeology. In 1929 Crown Prince Gustav Adolf of Sweden and the City of Rome received the medal. Between 1939 and 1974 the medal was awarded to the Greek Archaeological Society, the City of Frankfurt a. Main as well as the National Museum in Athens and the Acropolis Museum. On the occasion of the DAIs sesquicentennial celebration in 1979, the City of Berlin, the Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia and the Austrian Archaeological Institute were honored with medals.

This year in honor of the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the DAI we will be awarding yet another medal. The governing board of the DAI have unanimously agreed to recognize the achievements of the *Archaeological Institute of America* (AIA) with the Winckelmann Medal, whose President Jane Waldbaum has traveled all the way from Boston expressly to participate in our anniversary celebration and to accept the medal on behalf of the AIA. This is the first time the Winckelmann Medal has been awarded to an entity in a country outside Europe.

The *Archaeological Institute of America* is very similar to the DAI in terms of its creation and development, but it is a somewhat younger organization. In 1879, the same year in which, by the way, Thomas Edison succeeded in producing his first functional light bulb and Albert Einstein first saw the light of day, the *Archaeological Institute of America* was established. Like the DAI at first, it was founded as the result of personal initiative and as a private organization. The driving force behind the establishing of the AIA was Harvard Professor Charles Eliot Norton. Norton was deeply influenced by European archaeology, and the excavations of the DAI, which had just become a Reichsanstalt, at Olympia had made a lasting impression on him.

Barely a year later, the *Archaeological Institute of America* was supporting excavations in Italy, Greece, North Africa, Anatolia and the Near East, as well as in Mexico and Guatemala. The *Institute* was from the very beginning equally dedicated to the early civilizations of the Old as well as the New Worlds, and this characteristic has made it exceptional. Already in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it established the American Schools of Classical Studies, first in Athens (1882) and

somewhat later in Rome (1895). In 1899 the American School of Oriental Studies in Jerusalem followed, and by 1907 the School of American Archaeology in Santa Fe, New Mexico, had been called into being. After the Second World War the presence of the Institute in the Near East was expanded to include the 1951 founding of the American Research Center in Egypt, followed by similar establishments in Istanbul, Ankara and Teheran. At that point the *Archaeological Institute of America* was almost as widely represented in the lands of antiquity as the DAI.

Some of the AIA's most famous excavation sites include the Athenian agora, Corinth, Mycenae, Gordion, Sardis, Antioch, Troy, Murlo, and Cyrene, among many others. In addition significant publication series and journals were established and published by the AIA (the *American Journal of Archaeology*, *Hesperia* etc.) that today are indispensable in any professional archaeological library. Important international initiatives in our profession, such as the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*, have also been conducted under the auspices of the AIA since 1944.

The significance of this organization can also be seen by the fact that all of the important Classical archaeologists in the United States have, in the course of their careers, either been President of the AIA or Directors of one of the various Schools. Naturally they have also all been Corresponding Members of the DAI, a fact that underscores the close relationship between the two organizations, which helped to overcome the rifts that resulted following both World Wars, particularly the re-integration of German archaeology into the international scholarly community following the National Socialist regime and WWII.

The difference between the DAI and the AIA? Well, occasionally one hears from American colleagues that the DAI is simply better and more efficiently organized and publishes larger books. Perhaps that is even true. Perhaps however the main difference is that one is a state-run research institute while the other is a privately run *Society*. Through time, the *Archaeological Institute of America* has been able to maintain its political independence. In addition, it has always been more than just an American organization, since it has even had a non-American President in the past. And it has the distinction of having elected its first woman President as early as 1967.

Particularly worth mentioning are the efforts of the Institute on behalf of the preservation of world cultural heritage and its fight against the illegal transfer of cultural property. Already before the start of the Iraq War the *Institute* spoke out in support of heritage preservation in Iraq and warned of the dangers of war to Iraq's cultural patrimony. These efforts continue today, and deserve all our respect and recognition.

The *Archaeological Institute of America* is an institution that has dedicated itself since its inception to Classical antiquity and has expended a large part of its efforts to the exploration of early European civilizations. However, from the beginning the AIA also had the foresight to include wider cultural and temporal vistas in its research activities.

In recognition of the important achievements in the promotion of archaeology as a discipline it is an honor for the German Archaeological Institute to award the Archaeological Institute of America the Winckelmann Medal. We consider the fact that this ceremony simultaneously commemorates the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the AIA's birth a fortuitous coincidence.

I now ask you, Madam President, to accept this medal.