Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean Museum: A study in ancient and modern reception

Volume I: Text

Nicholas J West

Wolfson College, University of Oxford

A thesis presented to the University of Oxford in partial fulfilment for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Archaeology.

Hilary Term 2016

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Abstract

This thesis is an aetiological investigation of the Hellenistic and Roman figural bronze statuettes in the round that form part of the Ashmolean Museum's antiquities collection. The collection serves as a lens through which to study aspects of ancient and modern receptions of Classical sculptural forms. This approach is based on the premise that the collection's composition has been historically determined not only by how the modern parties responsible for its creation and growth responded to the sculptural forms and images recovered from antiquity, but also by how sculptural forms developed in Greece during the Classical and early Hellenistic periods were received by makers and users of bronze statuettes in antiquity.

The thesis has three primary objectives: firstly, to produce a useful and informative catalogue of the Ashmolean Museum's collection of Hellenistic and Roman figural anthropomorphic bronze statuettes in the round; secondly, to determine not only how that collection came to have the characteristics that it does, but also how the reception of ancient sculpture has historically affected the formation of collections of bronze statuettes and their compositions; thirdly, to use archaeological evidence of bronze statuettes to reconstruct possible contexts and to determine in greater detail the reception of canonical sculptural figure types in the form of small bronzes during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Part I of the thesis deals with the modern contexts for the statuettes, investigating the collection history, pulling out its salient characteristics and then comparing these to other major collections to make informed observations about how and why specific types of statuettes have survived from antiquity and the roles that modern reception of antiquity has played in shaping collections. This leads to Part II, which attempts to reconstruct possible ancient contexts for the Ashmolean bronzes by looking at the archaeological evidence for their production, movement use and display. Part III uses some of the figures of dwarfs, Herakles and Hermes in the collection to develop case studies that examine aspects of the visual relationships that existed between small bronzes and classical sculpture from the Classical and early Hellenistic periods.

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I would like to thank my supervisors, Prof. R. R. R. Smith and Dr Susan Walker, for their unwavering support and sage advice as I pursued this project. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the extremely kind and helpful staff in the Department of Antiquities, especially Helen Hovey and Ilaria Peraza, who welcomed me into the fold and showed me the ropes.

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IN MEMORIAM PATRIS
PRO MATRIS SALUTE

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Abbreviations and naming conventions

Abbreviations

AMS	Ashmolean Manuscript Series
Arch.	Archaeology/Archaeological
BM	British Museum
BnF	Bibliothèque nationale de France
FGrH	Jacoby, F. 2012. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker, Part I-III*. Brill Online Reference Works. http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/die-fragmente-der-griechischen-historiker-i-iii.
Inv.	Inventory number
JPGM	J. Paul Getty Museum
Mus.	Museum
NAM	National Archaeological Museum
Nat./Naz.	National/Nazionale
OUA	Oxford University Archives
Proc. Soc. Ant.	*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of London*
Reinach *Rép.*	Reinach, S. 1897-1930. *Répertoire de la statuaire grecque et romaine.* 6 vols. Paris.
RGM	Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne
RIC	H. Mattingly et al., *The Roman Imperial Coinage* (London 1923–)
SMB	Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
TAQ	*Terminus ante quem*
TPQ	*Terminus post quem*

Other standard works and journal abbreviations follow the American Journal of Archaeology format. (http://www.ajaonline.org/submissions/abbreviations)

Abbreviations of ancient authors follows *OCD*[3] guidelines.

Numbers referencing a catalogue entry appear in bold in the text. e.g. [**1**]

Naming conventions

This thesis has aimed for internal consistency in the use of Greek and Latin names for divinities and mythological creatures. Greek terms are used to describe most of the catalogue entries and have thus been retained in the main text, except where it was felt that context demanded the use of a Latin or Etruscan name. This primarily occurs when discussing deities with epithets (e. g. Hercules Curinus) attached and the names of specific temples (e. g. Temple of Jupiter). The following concordance of Greek and Roman divinities is observed:

Greek	**Roman**
Aphrodite	Venus
Apollon	Apollo
Ares	Mars

Artemis	Diana
Asklepios	Aesculapius
Athena	Minerva
Demeter	Ceres
Dionysos	Bacchus
Dioskouros/Dioskouroi	Dioscuri/Castores
Eros	Cupid/Amor
Hephaistos	Vulcan
Hera	Juno
Herakles	Hercules (Etruscan Hercle)
Hermes	Mercury
Kronos	Saturn
Nike	Victoria
Poseidon	Neptune
Tyche	Fortuna
Zeus	Jupiter

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the study

This thesis is an aetiological investigation of the Hellenistic and Roman figural bronze statuettes in the round that form part of the Ashmolean Museum's antiquities collection. The collection serves as a lens through which to study aspects of ancient and modern receptions of classical sculptural forms. This approach is based on the premise that the collection's composition has been historically determined not only by how the modern parties responsible for its creation and growth responded to the sculptural forms and images recovered *from* antiquity, but also by how those sculptural forms developed in Greece during the Classical and early Hellenistic periods were received by makers and users of bronze statuettes *in* antiquity.

The thesis has three primary objectives: firstly, to produce a useful and informative catalogue of the Ashmolean Museum's collection of Hellenistic and Roman figural anthropomorphic bronze statuettes in the round; secondly, to determine not only how that collection came to have the characteristics that it does, but also how the reception of ancient sculpture has historically affected the formation of collections of bronze statuettes and their compositions; thirdly, to use archaeological evidence of bronze statuettes to reconstruct possible contexts and to determine in greater detail the reception of canonical sculptural figure types in the form of small bronzes during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

1.2. Definition of the material

The body of material under examination in this thesis differs somewhat from that of many other studies of museum bronze collections. It is not a comprehensive catalogue of the Ashmolean's holdings of ancient bronzes from the classical world, which numbers in the thousands. Nor is it even a complete record of the figural bronzes. Rather, the bronzes in the appended catalogue are included based on applying the following criteria to the Ashmolean's digital database, manuscript registers, object history files, archival records and previously published catalogues.[1]

1. The statuettes are made of 'metal'. Due to a lack of standardised nomenclature in the database, bronze objects may be classified in it under a variety of terms such as 'bronze', 'copper alloy', 'copper, silver and gold alloy' or even simply 'metal'. To capture the greatest number of objects for this catalogue, the broadest terms were applied in searches. Entries were then checked against the paper accession registers to compile a list of suitable candidates for analysis. Metal objects not made of a copper alloy, such as silver statuettes, were excluded.

In this thesis, the term 'bronze' is applied to the range of copper alloys found in the statuettes and other objects discussed. In most cases this term will suffice to convey the intended meaning. Where the alloy composition has significant bearing on the interpretation of the evidence a more specific nomenclature will be applied.[2] The precise alloy composition of most of the collection remains unknown. Only six of the statuettes were tested with portable Energy Dispersive X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) for alloy

[1] This includes catalogues created before 1869, when acquisitions began to be recorded in sequential written registers. Tradescant 1656; Duncan 1836, Rowell 1870; MacGregor 2000; MacGregor 2006.
[2] See Podany and Scott 1990, 35 on differentiating copper alloys.

composition in connection with this study.[3] Increasing numbers of studies employing scientific analysis of alloy composition and bronze casting techniques have substantively increased our knowledge of ancient bronzes.[4] However, within the scope of this thesis and its analysis of the visual characteristics of bronzes statuettes, an alloy composition analysis was determined to be of minimal added value. Additionally, because the surfaces of most of the statuettes contain corrosion products, the non-destructive analytical instruments available would not be able to accurately determine alloy compositions.

Yet it is important to acknowledge that distinctions between copper alloys and their uses in casting bronze figures were made in antiquity. Pliny devotes substantial space to describing the quality and origins of different copper ores and distinguishing between Corinthian, Delian and Aiginetan bronze, which are widely agreed to refer to three different alloys.[5] Although Pliny's comments apply mainly to large bronze statues and bronze furnishings, he also discusses the famous and highly valued Corinthian bronze used for statuettes, stating that owners of *signis, quae vocant Corinthia* placed such value on these objects that they would constantly carry them around with them.[6] This statement implies that they were likely portable statuettes, which brings us to the next criterion:

2. They are small. A common benchmark height used by scholars writing about bronze statuettes is that they measure less than one metre in height.[7] This threshold captures figures that are smaller than roughly half life-size. It has little significance for

[3] Results are included in the catalogue entries. Another statuette [**63**] was tested at an unknown date, but the test method was not recorded. **139** was also tested for S. Walker's 2014 study.
[4] Some notable contributions include studies by P. Craddock, J. Riederer, H. Lie and A. Giumlia Mair.
[5] *HN* 34,1–6. On alloys: Haynes 1992, 83–84.
[6] *HN* 34,18. On the nature of Corinthian bronze: Jacobson and Weitzman 1992, Mattusch 2003. For the use of the term *signum* for depictions of gods in Roman statuary, see Stewart 2003, 20–24.
[7] Lamb 1969, vii; Bartman 1992, 9 and n. 1.

the material being examined in this thesis, as the bronzes in the catalogue rarely exceed 20 centimetres. The majority—about 55%—measure less than 10 centimetres. The largest is just over 40 centimetres [**63**]. These statuettes mostly belong to a different class of object than do those statuettes measuring closer to one metre in height. The smaller examples often cannot be considered artworks of high artistic merit, whereas many of the larger statuettes were often prestige objects with different functions within Hellenistic and Roman visual culture.

The small bronzes of unassuming size that comprise the Ashmolean collection enjoy a much higher survival rate than those closer to one metre in height. This may be due in part during earlier periods to the use of small statuettes as applied or integral decorations for objects used as grave goods, giving the statuettes themselves a better chance of remaining undisturbed over time. The purposeful deposit of bronze statuettes as votive offerings at sanctuaries has also provided a great deal of evidence for the Geometric and Archaic periods in Greece and a substantial amount of data for the Archaic through Hellenistic periods in Italy. Nevertheless, the large number of very small bronzes that survive raises important questions about their likely function and original contexts, as well as their portability. Whereas larger sculptures would necessarily remain in place during a crisis, as evidenced by empty statue bases found *in situ,* valued small bronzes could more easily be taken with a fleeing owner or hidden locally for later retrieval. These 'emergency deposits' are particularly evident in the third century AD and are often be associated with the waves of invasions experienced by the Roman provinces during that time.[8]

[8] For example, a deposit of probable *lararia* statuettes in a Roman well to the west of the Areopagus hill in Athens (Thompson 1950, 332). Kaufmann-Heinimann (1998, 206ff) lists a number of emergency deposits in the northwest provinces in her comprehensive survey of *lararia*.

3. They are anthropomorphic sculptures in or mostly in the round. The application of this criterion precludes implements, arms and armour, fibulae, engraved mirrors and mirror cases and metal vases, even though these objects may all contain figural decoration. The distinction made here is between three-dimensional objects made to stand alone or as part of a larger piece of furniture or equipment, and objects that fall into the category of relief or toreutic. This distinction is not always clear-cut. I have, for example, excluded figured handle attachments but included a number of decorative bust attachments in this catalogue where the figured busts are substantially in the round. Instances of statuettes in the round that have come from candelabras, mirrors, attachments to vases or from other furniture items have for the most part been included. In fact, the diminutive size of most of the statuettes suggests that many originally served as decorative elements on larger objects, a suggestion supported on occasion by evidence of holes, nails, tangs or other means for affixing the statuettes.

4. They appear to have been made between 300 BC and AD 300. This chronological range captures works created between the start of the Hellenistic period and the Late Imperial period. There are very few good methods for accurately determining provenance or date for bronze statuettes from this period. Alloy analysis can sometimes be helpful in separating out non-antique statuettes and is occasionally useful in identifying workshop relationships.[9]

This thesis will rarely address the dating of the bronze statuettes in the catalogue. I find little value in attempting to assign specific dates to the mostly unprovenanced

[9] For example, Mattusch's (2005) analysis of the alloy composition for the bronzes at the Villa dei Papiri.

bronzes in this collection because there are usually no sound methodological grounds for doing so. Stylistic arguments can rarely be convincingly made at the level of production from which most of these statuettes have come. There are some exceptions. Typological studies such as those conducted by B. Barr-Sharrar[10] on Hellenistic and Imperial decorative busts, I. Manfrini-Aragno[11] on bronze representations of Bacchus and H. Kunckel[12] on the Roman Genius have established useful chronologies. The fact remains, however, that drawing firm conclusions about the date of individual objects based on these relative chronologies should be done with caution.

Thus the application of this criterion depends as much on what the bronze statuettes *are not* as on what they *are.* That is, they do not display recognisable Archaic or Classical traits, nor do they exhibit evidence of the Late Antique tendency toward linearity and abstraction. The statuettes in the catalogue are products of an 'international style' that developed during the Hellenistic period and continued to be refined in the Early Imperial period. It was preeminent in sculptural output, which canonised this classicism as part of a coherent visual language that spanned the Hellenistic kingdoms and the Roman Empire.

Hellenistic and Roman statuettes consciously made in an Archaic or Early Classical style present a special problem and an effort has been made to identify such cases as they occur. Overall, however, there is likely some blurring at the edges of this chronological span.[13]

[10] Barr-Sharrar 1987.
[11] Manfrini-Aragno 1987.
[12] Kunckel 1974.
[13] For example, some of the characteristics of a dancing girl [**129**] and a male torso [**174**] could point to a fourth century BC origin.

Regional variation did of course exist, as did stylistic development. Complex political, economic and cultural factors had determining effects on the appearance of sculptural production on a regional basis. Scholars such as H. Menzel and S. Boucher have convincingly revealed regional variations and investigated workshop locations of common statuette types in the Roman period.[14] Nonetheless, it must be recognised that despite major advances in the scientific analysis of bronze, modern scholarship still has great difficulty placing Hellenistic and Roman bronzes temporally and geographically with an acceptable degree of accuracy based solely on stylistic arguments. This is partly because of a persistent retrospective tendency for sculpture of the period—small as well as large—to create endless variations on a limited range of types.

It is useful here to clarify some of the terminology that will be used throughout this study. Referring to the collection of bronze statuettes at the Ashmolean that are the subjects of this study, the phrase 'figural' and 'classical' are often employed. In the context of this study, the term 'figural' refers to the *human* figure, or rather, images that are anthropomorphic in form. The use of the term 'classical' is used here in its broad sense; that is, classical with a small 'c'. It is used to distinguish the bronzes made by the Greek, Roman and Etruscan civilisations. It refers in temporal terms to the period between advent of the Greek 'visual revolution' in the fifth century BC through to the end of the Roman Empire in the fifth century AD, as well as to the reception of Greek art by the Roman and other civilisations that came into contact with and assimilated Greek visual forms.[15]

[14] Menzel 1970; Boucher 1976.
[15] See Hölscher 2004, 7 on the narrow and broad definitions of 'classical'.

1.3. History of scholarship

Bronze statuettes have long been a part of the discourse of classical art history and archaeology. In the eighteenth century, Johann Winckelmann and other antiquarians developed their theories on ancient art with the aid of existing collections of bronze statuettes. Scholars also utilized the statuettes being discovered in the Bourbon excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum.[16] The series *Antichità di Ercolano Esposte* was published by the Accademia Ercolanese from 1758 to 1792 to illustrate and describe the finds in the king's collection deriving from excavations around the Bay of Naples. It dedicates two of its eight volumes to bronzes.[17]

Dedicated studies on bronzes in archaeological assemblages and collections began appearing in large numbers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. A. Furtwängler published a monograph on the bronze finds from German excavations at Olympia in 1880.[18] Bronzes discovered at other sanctuary sites in Greece also received attention in excavation publications.[19] Work at panhellenic sanctuaries has yielded hundreds of small bronzes from the Geometric and Archaic periods. These have been relatively well recorded in excavation reports, permitting a number of subsequent studies.[20] The distinct regional styles that characterise these earlier bronzes through the first half of the fifth century BC have also generated many regional examinations.[21] However, fewer scholars address the small bronzes of the Hellenistic and later periods.

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[16] Caylus 1752–1767. C. C. Mattusch (2012) has recently translated and commented on Winckelmann's reports of the excavations at Herculaneum.
[17] *Antichità di Ercolano*, vols. V (1767) and VI (1771).
[18] Furtwängler 1880.
[19] Dodona: Carapanos 1878 and 1890; Delphi: Perdrizet 1908/09. Athenian Acropolis: Ridder 1896.
[20] Olympia IV; Delphi V, i and ii; Isthmia VII; Thebes VI; Ridder 1896 (Athenian Acropolis); Carapanos 1878 and 1890 (Dodona).
[21] For example: Langlotz 1967; Charbonneaux 1962; Lamb 1969; Niemeyer 1964; Thomas 1981; Herfort-Koch 1986.

The archaeological record is much murkier and the majority of surviving artefacts have been removed from of their original contexts. The iconographic and stylistic similarities of Hellenistic and Roman statuettes makes placing and dating artefacts, the traditional mainstay of classical archaeology, a difficult task and thus scholarship has historically favoured shorter articles on individual objects over comprehensive treatments of the body of ancient bronzes.

Catalogues of bronzes in museum collections have also formed an important source of information since the nineteenth century. One of the earliest and the first to adopt a cultural-historical approach to ancient bronze statuettes was C. Friederichs' 1871 catalogue of the bronzes in the Altes Museum in Berlin.[22] A series of catalogues followed, published by the Cabinet des Médailles in Paris,[23] the British Museum,[24] the Louvre,[25] the Metropolitan Museum[26]and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo,[27] among others. Other royal,[28] aristocratic[29] and prominent private[30] collection catalogues were also published around this time.

Arguably, one of the most ambitious efforts in this period was the *Répertoire de la statuaire grecque et romaine* by S. Reinach—a kind of aggregate catalogue.[31] In six volumes published over thirty-three years, the French archaeologist produced simple line drawings of thousands of works of Greek and Roman sculpture, organised by subject. His

[22] Friederichs 1871.
[23] Babelon and Blanchet 1895.
[24] Walters 1899.
[25] Ridder 1913. This is the first catalogue to illustrate the entire collection.
[26] Richter 1915.
[27] Edgar 1904.
[28] For example, the Hapsburg cabinet in Vienna: Sacken 1871.
[29] Schumacher 1890; Bieber 1915.
[30] Among others, the Fouquet collection (Perdrizet 1911) and the Loeb collection (Sieveking 1913).
[31] Reinach 1897–1930.

corpus included marbles as well as bronzes and large-scale statuary as well as statuettes, but the majority of the objects illustrated by Reinach are bronze statuettes. Despite the lack of interpretation, the inclusion of many post-antique works and the limited information given by the line drawings, Reinach's work is a useful resource for looking at iconographical typologies and is still frequently cited in modern bronze statuette studies.

Catalogues of important collections have continued to be produced over the course of the twentieth century.[32] Since the 1960s, Roman bronzes have received increasing attention in their own right.[33] A number of smaller regional museums have produced catalogues of their bronze collections, particularly in France, Germany and Italy.[34] These collections can have a higher proportion of statuettes found or excavated within the local geographical region. This has permitted closer examination of potential regional contexts for bronze statuette production and use in antiquity, as well as the application of statuette evidence for studying cult practice. However, as Chapter 3 makes clear, many of these collections also contain a high proportion of unprovenanced material purchased from the art market. Roman bronzes in German, Swiss, Dutch, Belgian and Austrian collections have been aggregated in multivolume compendia.[35] In Britain, E. Durham has mapped the subjects and distribution of bronze figurines in the former Roman province using data from the Portable Antiquities Scheme and museum records.[36] Although precise archaeological contexts remain unknown for the majority of bronzes,

[32] Among others, the Goethe collection (Curtius 1930) and Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore (Hill 1949).
[33] See Menzel 1985 for the state of research on Roman bronze statuettes at the time, with extensive bibliography.
[34] Amongst many others: Fleischer 1962 (Linz); Rolland 1965 (Haute Provence); Boube-Piccot 1969 (Morocco); Boucher 1973a (Lyon); Franzoni 1973 (Verona); Di Stefano 1975 (Palermo); Ritter 1994 (Cologne).
[35] Germany: Menzel 1960, 1966, 1986; Switzerland: Leibundgut 1976 and 1980; Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977 and 1994; The Netherlands: Zadoks-Josephus Jitta, Peters and Es 1967; Belgium: Faider-Feytmans 1979; Austria: Fleischer 1967.
[36] Durham 2012.

these works are invaluable in understanding how Roman iconography was used for bronze statuettes produced in the provinces.

The implementation of online collections catalogues has aided twenty-first century research on ancient bronzes by increasing the accessibility of images and information about collections and individual objects. The British Museum has created an excellent online catalogue where the greater part of the collection of bronze statuettes is easily accessible.[37] An online database devoted solely to ancient bronzes was launched by the Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin that reconstructs the collection of bronzes as it existed in 1945, before much of it was destroyed or plundered during World War II.[38] Most recently, the Harvard Art Museums completed a multiyear project to catalogue its collection of ancient bronzes and make the information available online.[39]

A number of studies treat Greek and Roman bronzes generally. Early publications dealing substantially with bronze statuettes include works by K. A. Neugebauer[40] and W. Lamb.[41] Books written by J. Charbonneaux[42] and C. Rolley[43] focus primarily on bronze statues, but also treat statuettes extensively. More recently, R. Thomas has written on Greek bronze statuettes, devoting substantial space to a discussion of Hellenistic bronzes as well as examining the workshops, functions and contexts associated with the statuettes.[44] All of these general accounts are constructed chronologically around the

[37] www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/.
[38] www.smb.museum/antikebronzenberlin.
[39] http://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/special-collections/ancient-mediterranean-and-near-eastern-bronzes-at-the-harvard-art-museums. See also the associated contributions in Ebbinghaus 2014.
[40] Neugebauer 1921.
[41] Lamb 1929 (revised 1969).
[42] Charbonneaux 1962.
[43] Rolley 1986.
[44] Thomas 1992.

stylistic development of Greek bronzes. A lack of distinguishable stylistic progression and the consequent difficulty of assigning dates to Roman bronze statuettes likely accounts for the absence of chronological treatments of this material in the scholarly literature.

Several scholars have also written about bronze statuettes within the context of Etruscan bronze production. Venerable etruscologists S. Haynes, E. Richardson and M. Cristofani have written generally on the subject.[45] For the bronzes produced from the late fifth to the first century BC in Umbria and the Sabellic regions of Italy, G. Colonna's studies are still foundational.[46] M. C. Galestin's dissertation traces stylistic developments of Etruscan and Italic small bronzes from the eighth to the second century BC and discusses their functions and context, noting that freestanding figures are mostly votive in nature while applied statuary comes almost exclusively from funerary contexts.[47] M. Bentz's study of Etruscan votive bronze statuettes of the Hellenistic period is an extensive typological study, especially of the male and female votary figures that survive in large numbers.[48]

The number of articles that treat with small bronzes has proliferated greatly in the last few decades. Consequently, much more information has been made available concerning the body of surviving antique bronzes, both those emerging from new archaeological excavations and those that may have languished in museum storerooms for decades. This is due in part to a series of biennial international congresses on the topic

[45] General works: Haynes 1985; Richardson 1983; Cristofani 1985.
[46] Colonna 1970; Colonna 2005 [1975].
[47] Galestin 1987, 153.
[48] Bentz 1992.

of ancient bronzes inaugurated in Nijmegen in 1970.[49] The proceedings from these meetings contain short focused studies on specific objects, collections or regions. This has resulted in the publication of many lesser well-known collections of ancient bronzes as well as new insights on the established collections.

The international bronze congresses are often organised around exhibitions, many of which have made important contributions toward advancing knowledge on ancient bronzes. Many such exhibitions have been developed based on research into ancient bronzes from a particular region or country.[50] Others have brought together bronzes from various collections nationally or internationally. One such exhibition, *The Fire of Hephaistos: large classical bronzes from North American collections*, was organised by Harvard University Art Museums in 1996.[51] Most recently, in 2015, the exhibition *Power and Pathos*: *bronze sculpture of the Hellenistic world* broke new ground, bringing together the largest number of Hellenistic bronzes to date and producing a catalogue with the most up-to-date research available on Hellenistic bronzes.[52] While that exhibition and its catalogue concentrated on large-scale bronze statues, both also made substantive contributions to the study of bronze statuettes.[53]

[49] *Meeting on Roman Bronze Vessels at the Rijksmuseum G.M. Kam in Nijmegen from 20 till* [sic] *23 April 1970.* Nijmegen 1970. A list of the bronze congresses through 1999 can be found in Mattusch, Brauer and Knudsen. 2000, 10. Congresses since 2000: Thomas 2001b (= *KölnJb* 33); Giumlia-Mair 2002; Muşeţeanu 2004; Deschler-Erb and Della Casa 2015. The proceedings from the 2011 congress in Izmir have not been published.
[50] See for example Arce 1990; Bondoc and Dincă 2003; Bürge 2013.
[51] Mattusch 1996b.
[52] Daehner and Lapatin 2015.
[53] A concurrent exhibition to *Power and Pathos* was organized by the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Firenze and entitled *Piccoli grandi bronzi*. It was accompanied by a catalogue containing important contributions to current research on small bronzes based on the collection in Florence first developed by the Medici. See Arbeid and Iozzo 2015.

Other exhibitions have also moved forward research on classical bronzes. In 1967, the exhibition *Master Bronzes from the Classical World* was organised at the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University. It brought together the most geographically and chronologically diverse range of bronze statues and statuettes yet exhibited from North American and European public and private collections.[54] The exhibition was accompanied by a symposium dedicated to exploring ancient bronze-working techniques. Entitled *Art and technology: a symposium on ancient bronzes,* the volume is a series of detailed studies of the questions and problems that surround the analysis of ancient bronze working.[55] Further exhibitions followed, the most important being *The god's delight: the human figure in classical bronze* which opened at the Cleveland Museum of Art in 1988.[56] It expanded upon the ground laid in the *Master Bronzes* exhibition, exploring the production, consumption and functions of the bronzes in catalogue essays alongside the usual stylistic analyses.[57]

Technical studies of bronze statues have comprised an important avenue of investigation since the nineteenth century. The earliest comprehensive account was the fourth volume of H. Blümner's work on the technologies of Greek and Roman industries and art production, but the most influential study until the 1960s was K. Kluge's and K Lehman's *Die antiken Grossbronzen.*[58] Kluge's argument that the sand-casting technique developed alongside lost-wax casting in Greece during the Archaic period has now been thoroughly discredited by decades of technical studies on both the outer and inner

[54] Mitten and Doeringer 1967.
[55] Doeringer, Mitten and Steinberg 1970.
[56] Kozloff and Mitten 1988;
[57] A symposium at the J. Paul Getty Museum was organized in 1990 to complement the *Gods' Delight* exhibition. Entitled *Small bronze sculpture from the ancient world: papers delivered at a symposium*, it was dedicated to understanding the manufacture and contexts for small bronzes.
[58] Blümner 1887; Kluge and Lehman 1927, 82–90.

surfaces of bronze statues and statuettes. These have determined that the lost-wax technique was used almost exclusively for casting bronze statues.[59] Over the past four decades, one the most prolific writers on the technical aspects of bronze statues and statuettes and the workshops and foundries in which they were created has been C. C. Mattusch.[60] She has been especially influential in asserting the innate replicative nature of the bronze casting process and challenging modern viewpoints that overvalue the concept of the 'bronze original'.[61]

Several scholars have sought to move beyond stylistic and technical analyses in favour of a broader cultural-historical approach to bronze statuettes. B. Barr-Sharrar has written numerous articles attempting to develop a more precise chronology for Hellenistic and Roman bronze decorative busts and has examined the domestic use and contexts of small bronzes.[62] S. Boucher's important work on the pre-Roman and Roman bronzes of Gaul traces the distribution of several statuettes types using known finds spots in France and elsewhere to demonstrate possible Romano-Gallic types and workshops.[63] S. Ritter's catalogue of bronze statuettes discovered in the vicinity of Cologne and now in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum presents evidence of cult activity and shows that in this region bronze was primarily used to depict Mediterranean gods and symbols.[64] In a later article, Ritter examines some of his catalogue in greater detail to illustrate the spectrum of bronze statuettes found in and around Cologne. He also investigates the similarities and differences between these finds and those made elsewhere to posit Colonia Claudia Ara

[59] Bol 1985; Haynes 1992; Lahusen and Formigli 2001; Zimmer 1990. For a review of the important technical studies for ancient bronze casting techniques, see Mattusch 1988, 22–30.
[60] Mattusch 1977; Mattusch 1988; Mattusch 1996a; Mattusch 2005.
[61] Mattusch 1996a; Mattusch 2014; Mattusch 2015.
[62] Barr-Sharrar 1987; Barr-Sharrar 1988; Barr-Sharrar 1990; Barr-Sharrar 1996.
[63] Boucher 1976.
[64] Ritter 1994,148.

Agrippinensium as a regional centre for bronze statuette production, and interprets their cultic and decorative uses.[65] In her groundbreaking research on the bronzes from Augst, A. Kaufmann-Heinimann takes a comparative approach by compiling the contents of *lararia,* emergency deposits and votive caches throughout Gaul, Germany and Campania. She shows a striking homogeneity in the contents of *lararia* over a wide geographic distribution and argues that indigenous deities tend only to make appearances in bronzes that can be associated with local sanctuary rather than domestic contexts.[66] Recently, H. Sharpe has examined both domestic contexts and sanctuary sites in her study on the use of bronze statuettes in the Greece during the Hellenistic and early Roman imperial periods, emphasising the continuity of Hellenistic Greek subjects over distinctly Roman ones.[67]

1.4. Scope, questions and approach

The Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes in the collection of the Ashmolean Museum form the central point of interest for this thesis. As seen above, collection catalogues have played a significant role in the history of research on classical bronzes, particularly in the last half-century. The Greek, Roman and Etruscan bronzes at the Ashmolean have received only spotty and sporadic treatment. This thesis represents the first effort towards integrating a significant portion of the museum's collection into the broader scholarly discourse on classical bronze statuettes. Accordingly, the catalogue (vol. II) forms an important component of this work. It offers detailed information, description and interpretation for each statuette, and represents a contribution to the corpus of ancient

[65] Ritter 1999.
[66] Kaufmann-Heinimann 2000, 110.
[67] Sharpe 2006.

bronze statuettes that will be useful as a comparative tool for researchers working with other collections of small bronzes.

The catalogue also represents the starting point for a broader investigation. Publications on bronze statuettes in museum collections have tended to isolate their catalogues from any analysis of how collections of bronze statuettes may relate to each other. On its own, a catalogue of the Ashmolean's bronzes arguably tells us less about the civilisations that created them and more about those individuals and institutions that collected them. It is important, therefore, to understand the ways in which the Ashmolean collection is (or is not) a result of the processes and individual agents that have historically influenced the movement, trade and reception of ancient bronze statuettes. More specifically, this thesis is interested in interrogating how the reception of ancient art—and classical statuary, in particular—has shaped bronze statuette collections. Particularly important in this regard are the effects of fakes, forgeries and *all'antica* imitations in shaping attitudes towards ancient bronzes.

Emphasis on the archaeology of the domestic sphere has been growing since the 1980s. It has aided our understanding of domestic bronze assemblages and the social relationships inhabitants of a household had with sculpted and decorated objects, including bronzes.[68] Recently, four new bronze statuettes depicting Athena, Aphrodite, Asklepios and Hermes were found in a Roman house at Demetrias.[69] Continuing excavations of the terrace houses at Ephesos will also likely produce more small bronze finds.[70] For Roman bronzes in particular, excavations throughout Europe are revealing a

[68] Wallace Hadrill 1994; Gazda 1991; Bartman 1991.
[69] *ArchDelt* 56–59 (2001–2004) 1C', 520. I thank Maria Stamatopoulou for this reference.
[70] See for example Krinzinger 2010.

number of important caches of bronze statuettes found within archaeological contexts.[71] Increasingly, excavations in the former north-western provinces are yielding important information about the function and contexts of bronze statuettes. This information is, however, confined primarily to the first through fourth centuries AD. The Vesuvian cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum still provide us with the best evidence for contexts of bronze statuettes for the first century BC to the first century AD.[72] Recorded archaeological evidence for bronze statuettes from the late Classical and Hellenistic periods has also come from eastern Mediterranean and the Greek East, though this data is much scarcer.[73]

Precise contexts are impossible to reconstruct for the largely unprovenanced Ashmolean collection, but comparison with bronze statuettes like those mentioned above, for which archaeological information regarding context does exist, can present a range of possible contexts in which we might expect to find bronzes *like* the Ashmolean statuettes.

The study will also address the related question of the relationship between statuettes and their large-scale counterparts. How does this relationship change across cultures and through time? How are differing regional uses of statuary reflected in the small sculptures? To what extent are well-known statues by famous sculptors represented in small-scale bronzes or in other media such as terra cotta or marble? These are not easy questions to pursue. The difficulty of ascertaining with any degree of confidence the date and place for a bronze statuette devoid of any archaeological information has already

[71] The dozens of bronzes from Augst and Kaiseraugst are a prime example. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 66–147.
[72] See, for example, Boyce 1937; Fröhlich 1991; Zanker 1995; Dwyer 1982.
[73] See Sharpe 2006 for bronzes from the Greek mainland.

been mentioned. Studies of the relationship between large Greek and Roman statuary and their small counterparts have often been one-sided. Statuettes have formed an important body of evidence as a backdrop against which large statuary is viewed, but comparatively few scholars have addressed the other side of the relationship and examined the unique problems and questions that arise from isolating the role that statuettes played in the artistic and visual milieu of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. By applying a visual culture lens and attempting to understand the culturally constructed practice of making, buying and viewing bronze statuettes based on earlier Greek sculptural models, the present study will permit a better understanding of the place of the Ashmolean material and other figural bronze statuettes in the 'language of images'[74] of the ancient world.

One of the purposes of engaging such a wide chronological range for this study is to pursue the questions of how and why classical influence and the use of a 'classical' style persisted for centuries in Greek and Roman art. Archaeological and art historical scholarship is full of studies on Roman copying and the spread of Greek-style art in Hellenistic and later periods, but these again tend to focus primarily on the development of large-scale sculpture.[75] What role did statuettes and small-scale sculptures, particularly those in bronze, play in transmitting canonical forms developed in the Late Classical and Early Hellenistic periods to the outer reaches of the Greek *oikoumene* and the provinces of the Roman Empire? The sheer number of statuettes that must have been displayed, whether in public (at a sanctuary, for example) or in a household would have had greatly outnumbered that of large statuary. These portable objects also travelled more easily than statues and could be transported to distant locations or carried by individual artists or

[74] Hölscher 2004, 1.
[75] On Roman copies, see for example, Ridgway 1984; Gazda 2002; Perry 2005. For Greek copying and serial production of bronzes statues see Mattusch 1996.

households who were on the move around the Mediterranean. Could statuettes be responsible for the transmission of certain statue types or for the perpetuation of classical forms, even in the furthest outposts of the late Roman Empire?

Naturally, the bronzes in the catalogue will not all be equally useful in helping to understand the possible nature of their manufacture, use or context. Some are low quality examples of well-known types that have been the subject of extensive scholarly activity. While knowledge of the existence of these types in the Ashmolean collection may contribute to statistical analyses, they are unlikely to shed any new light on the type. At the other end of the spectrum, some statuettes appear to have few or no parallels that make for useful comparison. Absent archaeological information, these produce no new information and should be regarded suspiciously as potential fakes or modern forgeries.

As a supplement to the comparative approach outlined above, case studies will be built around individual objects. These are presented in order to explore in detail particular aspects of bronze statuette use, circulation and functions in antiquity. The case study approach allows detailed conclusions about specific statuettes that can be considered representative to a greater or lesser degree of a type or group of small-scale sculpture.

In placing the Ashmolean material among bronze statuettes in antiquity particular attention will be paid to what these objects imply regarding the visual culture of the societies or groups to which they belong, or to which they can be reasonably inferred to belong. Seeking to emphasise the role of these small-scale images of gods and humans in the visual environment of ancient viewers, a visual culture approach connects and relates

these works to their owners, their makers, to other figural representations and to their specific environment as a whole.

1.5. Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into three parts. The first is concerned with the modern contexts for the bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean collection. Chapter 2 investigates the historical development of the Ashmolean collection within the specific 'local' contexts of the Ashmolean Museum and the University of Oxford before describing the broad characteristics of the collection. Chapter 3 sets out to determine how typical the Ashmolean collection is when compared to the wider corpus of classical bronze statuettes surviving from antiquity. This chapter will also address the broader history of bronze statuette collecting and examine how collectors and markets have historically responded to interest in classical sculpture. It concludes with an extended case study using statuettes from the Ashmolean collection to demonstrate how the reception of classical forms has influenced the composition of the bronze statuette corpus.

The second part of the thesis examines the ancient contexts for Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes. Chapter 4 surveys the types of contexts in which bronze statuettes have been found, seeking to interpret the range of original functions of the types of statuettes commonly found in the Ashmolean collection. Chapter 5 investigates ancient evidence for the production and consumption of bronze statuettes in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds.

The final section consists of a single chapter presenting a theoretical approach to interpreting the visual relationships connecting the largely unprovenanced statuettes that make up the Ashomolean collection to the sculptural forms of the Classical and early

Hellenistic periods in Greece. This is followed by three extended case studies designed to synthesise the material presented in the previous two parts.

The appended catalogue provides detailed information, technical observations and iconographic interpretation of the individual statuettes in the collection, and should be read in conjunction with the main chapters.

PART I
Modern Contexts

Chapter 2: The Ashmolean Bronzes

2.1. Introduction

This chapter introduces the Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean Museum that comprise the objects of study for this thesis. I will first examine the historical development of this collection before looking at the characteristics of the bronzes. This will entail understanding the accumulation of classical bronze statuettes within the wider growth and management of the Ashmolean collections as a whole.

As with any archaeological site, it is best to approach museum collections as fundamentally constructed in large part by 'local' circumstances. The agency of specific individuals and the institutions of which they are a part are decisive factors in determining the character and trajectory of a collection.[76] Accordingly, this chapter will examine how the institution of the Ashmolean Museum, its collections, and the connected collectors, keepers and administrators operated within the cultural, political and intellectual environment of Oxford. The unique academic atmosphere at Oxford and shifting collecting mentalities in Britain have had a role in determining the types of objects that entered the Ashmolean, while also affecting the motivations for which they were acquired.

In the second part of this chapter, I will look at the broad qualities that characterise the Ashmolean's collection of bronze statuettes and give an account of their subjects and provenances. Due to the mostly uncontextualised nature of the material and because this thesis is particularly interested in examining the survival of Greek sculptural

[76] Cf. Pearce 1995, 390–391 on the relationships between museums, collectors and 'establishment values'.

forms in small bronzes, the iconographic types of the various subjects represented in the collection will receive the greatest attention. The discussion of the statuettes themselves will be conducted in broad terms to draw out the wider shared characteristics. A fuller analysis of the individual statuettes is undertaken in the appended catalogue.

While this project's focus is on Hellenistic and Roman bronzes, these form only a small section of the wide range of archaeological objects acquired over the long history of the Ashmolean Museum. The development of the collection of bronzes will be framed within the institutional history of the Ashmolean Museum, with an emphasis on the most relevant collectors, curators and other agents. Insights into personal histories, interests, collecting motivations and attitudes toward antiquities have a significant bearing and influence on how the Ashmolean's collection of bronze statuettes developed. In later chapters, I will examine how this museum fits into a wider antiquarian culture responsible for building collections across Europe and North America. Comparing the circumstances particular to the Ashmolean with those dictating the development of other significant collections will reveal its idiosyncrasies, allowing for a more nuanced analysis of how representative its holdings actually are of the types of bronze statuettes created and used in antiquity.

2.2. History of the collection

For the purposes of this thesis, the institutional history of the Ashmolean Museum is divided into three broad periods, each demarcated by significant structural change. The first period incorporates the founding of the museum on Broad Street in 1683 (with reference to the previous development of the founding collection) and ends in 1845 with the opening of the Charles Robert Cockerell building on Beaumont Street where the

museum is housed today. Despite the survival of a relatively large number of archival records regarding the museum, little can be said about its holdings of classical bronze statuettes during this period. As will be discussed, while classical antiquities were being donated to the University at this time, most were not entering the Ashmolean's collections.

Although the Ashmolean would not inhabit the building until 1894, the construction of the University Galleries in 1845 marks the start of the second period of development. The construction of the University Galleries initiated a forty-year period of museum building in Oxford and a critical review and redeployment of the University's scattered collections. This had a significant impact on the Ashmolean. Increasingly, new scientific disciplines and archaeological approaches to antiquity were gaining a foothold in British universities. The scientific and typological ordering that had been practiced in the natural sciences since the previous century began to be applied to the material culture of ancient civilizations. When Arthur Evans assumed the Keepership of the Ashmolean in 1884 he began transforming the museum into a centre for archaeology in Oxford. This is the period in which the greatest growth of the bronze statuette collection occurred. Indeed, bronze statuettes played a critical role in Evans' redefinition of the museum.

The official merger of the Ashmolean Museum with the University Galleries to become the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology in 1908 marks the start of the third period in the collection's history, one that continues to the present day. This merger again changed the character of the collection and the collecting priorities of the Ashmolean as an institution. The twentieth century also saw a maturing of the field of classical archaeology, which had a direct impact on the bronze statuette collection.

During this period there have been several significant donations of bronze statuettes, as well as important purchases and archaeological finds.

The early museum (1683–1845)

When the Ashmolean Museum, often cited as the first public museum in Britain,[77] opened its doors on 21st May 1683, it was a conspicuous affair according to Oxford antiquary Anthony à Wood:

> …their royall highnesses the Duke & Duchess of York & the princess Ann with a great number of Earles & Lords, & other persons of quality…were first entertain'd in it, & at the entrance were received with a set speech by Doctor Plot; the Vicechancellor, Bishop of Oxford, the Doctors of all faculties & both the proctors attending in their formalities. Which being ended, they proceeded to take a particular view of the chiefest curiosities, & afterwards were pleased to accept a banquet prepared for them at the charg[e] of the University…[78]

Three days later, Wood visited the museum with several others and related their reactions to the collections: 'Many that are delighted with the new phil[osophy] are taken with them; but some, for the old, look upon them as ba[u]bles.'[79]

Wood's concise observation reveals an interesting division among Oxford's community of scholars, between a progressive branch of scientists who sought to understand the natural world through extensive autopsy and systematic comparison of specimens and an old guard that continued to rely on Christian doctrine and ancient sources to order nature. Under the 'New Philosophy' large collections of natural specimens could play a pivotal role in the advancement of scientific knowledge by

[77] Ovenell 1986, 28–30.
[78] Wood 1894, 55.
[79] Wood 1894, 56.

allowing the collector-scholar—and in the case of a university museum like the Ashmolean, researchers and students—to examine and compare evidence first-hand.[80] That the University wished to move forward with this type of scientific inquiry is reflected in the design of the building housing the Ashmolean Museum.[81] The 'Musaeum Ashmoleanum' occupied only the first floor. On the ground level was a new School of Natural History and in the basement, a Chemistry Laboratory where 'experimental philosophy' could take place.

The museum was established to house the collection of 'Rarities' donated to the University of Oxford by Elias Ashmole (1617–1692), who studied astrology, alchemy, mathematics and natural philosophy at Brasenose College and maintained strong links with the University over the course of his life. A staunch royalist during the English Civil War, Ashmole served as Controller of the Excise in Worcester under Charles I and was granted a number of other lucrative offices by Charles II after the Restoration.[82] A strategic marriage to the wealthy widow Lady Manwaring in 1649 gave Ashmole the means to pursue his academic interests and to amass a collection of 'diverse valuable Pieces of Antiquity, & sundry Curiosities of Art and Nature.'[83] The collection of John Tradescant the Younger (1606–1662) comprised the core of this gift.

Tradescant had inherited his collection from his father—also called John—in 1638. The elder Tradescant (c. 1570–1638) was a renowned botanist and the gardener for a series of rich and powerful aristocrats, including the Oatlands estate of 'the Rose and

[80] MacGregor 2007a, 120.
[81] MacGregor 1994a, 344.
[82] For further material on Ashmole's life, including much of his correspondence, see the volumes edited by C. H. Josten (Ashmole 1966).
[83] Bodl. MS Ashmole 1136, ff. 100–1.

Lily Queen' Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I.[84] As part of his service, Tradescant travelled extensively to study and collect new species of plants for English gardens. He visited France, the Low Countries, Russia and Algiers, returning not only with botanical specimens, but also organic and inorganic objects as well as man-made cultural artefacts. Tradescant's collection of exotic plants and rarities, which he installed at his home in South Lambeth and allowed visitors to view for a fee, became well known as one of the 'most catholic collection of specimens assembled in Britain to that day.'[85]

The younger John Tradescant apprenticed with his father and succeeded him in the post of the Keeper of His Majesty's Gardens at Oatlands in 1638. He also continued to care for and augment the collection at South Lambeth, known to his contemporaries as 'The Ark'.[86] Tradescant made three journeys to the New World and collected a host of new species of plants, natural objects and cultural artefacts. The catalogue that he published in 1656, *Musaeum Tradescantianum: or, A Collection of Rarities. Preserved at South Lambeth near London,* lists (albeit with rather terse, vague descriptions) these exotic objects. It also lists gold, silver and bronze Greek and Roman coins and a few other objects thought to be of Roman make. The catalogue's publication was primarily financed by Ashmole.[87]

The ownership of the Tradescant collection passed to Ashmole in 1664, two years after the death of the younger John Tradescant, but only after a legal battle with Tradescant's widow Hester over their competing claims.[88] The case was eventually

[84] See MacGregor 1983 and Leith-Ross 1984 for the history of the Tradescants.
[85] MacGregor 1983, 97.
[86] But see also Ovenell's (1986, 3–4) discussion of the validity of the 'Ark' tradition.
[87] Coins: Tradescant 1656, 55, 57–66.
[88] See Ashmole 1966, 767–771. Berry 2003, 148.

decided in Ashmole's favour. He made a formal offer of the Tradescant collection of rarities to the University of Oxford in 1677 provided that an adequate facility was constructed.[89] The University complied and the Ashmolean building on Broad Street was completed in 1683.

Only a very few bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean collection can be traced before the nineteenth century.[90] The earliest written record comes from the Vice-Chancellor's Consolidated Catalogue (*Catalogus Cimeliorum Musei Ashmol*), a 1695 manuscript catalogue compiled by the Keeper, Edward Lhwyd (1660–1709), and combining six books that comprised the collections catalogues stipulated in the statutes for Ashmole's gift.[91] Two statuettes, figures of Ares and Priapos, appear in the Book of the Junior Proctor.[92] Curiously, the original Book of the Junior Proctor compiled c. 1685 was not included in the Consolidated Catalogue.[93] Instead, it was replaced by an inventory of mainly geological specimens, most given by the museum's first keeper Robert Plot (1640–1696), and other natural specimens given earlier by Martin Lister (1639–1712). This inventory was compiled by Lhwyd sometime in the late 1680s, after Plot had published *The Natural History of Stafford-shire* (1686) and while he was still under-keeper (until 1691).[94] The Ares statuette actually appears again in the Consolidated Catalogue, inserted into the sequence of the Book of the Dean of Christ Church when it was revised in 1756 by Keeper William Huddesford (1732–1772).[95] The bronzes are

[89] Bod. MS Rawlinson D. 912, fols. 670–671.
[90] Arthur MacGregor has published extensively on the history of the Ashmolean Museum and on its early collections, including the extremely useful transcriptions of the manuscript catalogued used for this thesis. See MacGregor 1983, MacGregor 2000, MacGregor 2006.
[91] AMS 11. Ashmole's statutes are preserved in AMS 1.
[92] AMS 11, fol. 585, no. 1 (Ares) and fol. 587, no. 31 (Priapos). MacGregor 2006, 190–191.
[93] AMS 18.
[94] MacGregor 2000, vii. See also, Ovenell 1986, 46.
[95] AMS 12, 26r. MacGregor 2000, 185 (no. 344). For Huddesford's overlooked achievements as Keeper, see MacGregor 2007b.

listed with other objects that were donated to the museum by Plot and these too were likely given by him. The Book of Benefactors has an entry praising Plot for his service and his benefaction, mentioning that he had given material from Oxfordshire and Staffordshire as well as from 'his native county of Kent and acquired elsewhere from all over Britain.'[96] Neither of the statuettes is illustrated in Plot's publications, but the entry for the Ares statuette records that it is from the Roman site of Reculver in Kent. Unfortunately, the two mentioned statuettes have either been lost or are unrecognisable in the current collection.

The growth and development of the collection of ancient bronzes over the course of the eighteenth century is somewhat obscure. The previously mentioned Book of Benefactors was maintained between the years of 1683 and 1766. Not a single classical bronze statuette can be recognised in this document. As the title indicates, the entries are more concerned with lauding the benefactors themselves than recording their donations in detail. Keeping the document up to date was not a priority. Nearly half of the entries are recorded within the first ten years of the museum's founding. The partial and unsystematic nature of the Book of Benefactors demonstrates the degree to which natural history specimens were held in high esteem as donations to the museum but helps little in reconstructing the development of the collections of classical bronzes.

At this time and for much of its first two centuries, collectors and donors did not regard the Ashmolean as a suitable repository for objects from the classical world. The subsequent development of the collection after Ashmole's initial gift instead reflects an emphasis on the collection as a resource for the study of natural history. In the eighteenth

[96] AMS 2, 14r–14v. MacGregor 2000, 7–8.

and early nineteenth centuries, while donations of a geologic, botanical and ethnographic nature made their way into the collection at the Ashmolean, the majority of objects related to classical antiquity were kept in various other institutions of the University, most notably the Bodleian Library, which hosted a number of paintings and curiosities in its Picture Gallery.[97]

The case of Thomas Shaw's donations to the University is illustrative. The Book of Benefactors records a donation by the young Shaw in 1716 of a large collection of insects from around Oxford.[98] After obtaining an MA from The Queen's College in 1720, Shaw took up a post as chaplain in Algiers. He spent thirteen years in there and travelled extensively in North Africa and the Levant. Returning to Oxford as a fellow of Queen's in 1733, Shaw later published the first edition of *Travels, or observations relating to several parts of Barbary and the Levant* in 1738. It contains images of several figured artefacts acquired in Egypt. In 1751, the year of Shaw's death, the annals of the Bodleian Library record the donation of his collection of 'natural curiosities, which was sent to the Ashmolean'.[99] It seems that this bequest also included Shaw's man-made curiosities as at least two bronze statuettes remained in the Bodleian's collections until transferred to the Ashmolean in 1887. These depict a seated Harpokrates [**86**] and a figure that may be a dwarf entertainer [**151**]. Both are published in Shaw's *Travels.*[100]

These small bronzes may have intentionally been kept at the Bodleian, or may have been overlooked and remained forgotten until their transfer in the late nineteenth

[97] A catalogue of several objects displayed at the Bodleian (mostly paintings) appear in a catalogue first printed and sold by the Under-Janitor Nathaniel Bull in 1759 (Bull 1759).
[98] AMS 2, 21r. MacGregor 2000, 11.
[99] Macray 1890, 224.
[100] Shaw 1757, pl. II, G and J.

century.[101] Other accounts strengthen the first impression, that the Bodleian was the desired destination for many kinds of antiquities at the University. What is today one of the Ashmolean's most valuable objects, the Anglo-Saxon Alfred Jewel, was originally intended as a donation to the Bodleian. How and why it came to the Ashmolean instead in 1718 in unknown.[102] The University already held the collection of inscriptions collected by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel by 1668 before the Ashmolean had been built, so it is understandable that these occupied the upper floor of the 'Old Schools' (Bodleian), but when the remainder of the collection was donated to the University by the Dowager Countess of Pomfret in 1755, this new addition of classical antiquities went not to the Ashmolean but to the University Galleries.[103] Coins and medals went to both institutions in parallel collections that continued until 1858 when the Ashmolean's holdings were ceded to the Bodleian. The combined numismatic cabinet was transferred back to the Ashmolean in 1922, nearly forty years after the move was first proposed by Arthur Evans.

The museum's first printed catalogue was published under the keepership of Philip Bury Duncan in 1836. The contents of this catalogue, over two-thirds of which comprises zoological collections, reflect the interests and expertise of Duncan and omits many of the earlier donations to the museum. The 'Antiquities' section contains only five entries describing bronze figures.[104] Of these, a Herakles of the Farnese type is labelled as modern in the catalogue itself. Two others, a Eros from Paestum and a figure of Antinous,

[101] I have come across no documentation of the bronzes transferred from the Bodleian having been displayed there. Several small bronzes are known to have been exhibited and are individually listed by Macray (1890, 475, 479), but cannot be matched with any of the statuettes moved from the Bodleian to the Ashmolean. It may be significant that in the handwritten inventory listing items to be transferred, statuettes are mentioned only as a group and not individually inventoried.
[102] MacGregor 2006, x.
[103] On the Arundel and Pomfret marbles in Oxford see Vickers 2006, esp. 38–40, 50–52.
[104] Duncan 1836, 123.

cannot be identified in the current collection. The remaining statuettes, 'A small Roman statue in bronze' and 'A small bronze figure with a turreted head, bearing on its breast the head of some horned animal' have been identified respectively as a figure of one of the Dioskouroi [**61**] and a Priapos [**115**].[105]

The work done by Duncan in reorganising and reinvigorating the collections according the taxonomic principles of the Natural Philosophy laid the foundation for the changes to come in the latter half of the century. Despite the strong emphasis on zoological collections, a donation by Sir Richard Colt Hoare of Anglo-Saxon archaeological material from Kent in 1828 provided a nucleus upon which later donations of archaeological material could build.[106]

Period of transformation (1845–1908)

During his 1884–1908 keepership, Arthur Evans was one of the major forces responsible for reinvigorating the Ashmolean and for crafting its new identity as a home for the study of archaeology at Oxford. The groundwork for his successful transformation of the museum was laid earlier in the century through modest progress in more effective management of the Ashmolean collections and facilities,[107] and through changes taking place within the scholarly and antiquarian communities of the University and national learned societies. This was the period of greatest increase for the Ashmolean's collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes, a growth fuelled primarily by a just a few collectors. This growth started with a donation of antiquities to the University Galleries

[105] Duncan 1836, 123, nos. 47 and 48.
[106] MacGregor 2001, 39.
[107] See Ovenell 1986, 189–249 for advances made under the keepership of John Shute Duncan, Philip Bury Duncan, John Phillips and John Henry Parker.

by Chambers Hall in 1855. By Evans' 1908 retirement the collection of classical bronzes was firmly established.

Chambers Hall and Greville Chester

Chambers Hall

Relatively little is recorded about Chambers Hall (1786–1855) as a collector. Before his death in 1855, Hall donated a number of antiquities to the British Museum along with a drawing by Raphael, watercolours by Thomas Girtin, and etchings by Parmigianino, Annibale Carracci and Anthony Van Dyck. His extensive gift to the University Galleries in the same year consisted of several very fine drawings by artists such as da Vinci, Dürer, Rubens, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, Claude Lorrain and Watteau; oil sketches by Rubens, Hogarth and others; and a collection of ancient and modern bronzes. Hall's connection with Oxford is unclear, but he stated in a letter to Henry Wellesley, the principal of New Inn Hall and a prominent contemporary art connoisseur, that the gift was 'a long cherished desire'.[108]

Hall is described as having 'a taste that was catholic'.[109] The gifts to the University Galleries and the British Museum reflect a preference for the drawings of Italian masters and their schools (da Vinci, Raphael, Correggio, Rosa), the landscapes of Claude Lorraine, the Flemish masters (Rubens, van Dyck) and eighteenth century English painters and draughtsmen (Hogarth, Gainsborough, Girtin). Hall's affinity for landscape paintings may have been related to his own practice as a watercolour painter.[110] He was

[108] Garlick 1983, 296.
[109] Anonymous 1855, 548.
[110] White 2004.

also a patron to the British painters John Linnell and David Charles Read. The latter's widow and her daughter were major beneficiaries of Hall's will.

Hall's antiquities collection comprised primarily small objects, though his gifts did also include a few Roman wall paintings. The composition of the collection suggests that most if not all his acquisitions were either made in or sent from Italy. Oxford was the recipient of most of Hall's ancient bronzes.[111] Although not given directly to the Ashmolean, Hall's collection and the donation of a number of other prominent antiquities collections proved an important catalyst for the movement to create a new archaeological museum for the university.[112]

Most of the statuettes that once belonged to Hall are complete or almost complete and most are characterised by an above average artistic quality. The 1855 document recording Hall's donation to the University Galleries frequently emphasises the quality of statuettes.[113] For the compiler of the list, for example, 'nothing can exceed' the statuette of Aphrodite holding a mirror [**2**]. Hall's involvement with the document is unknown, so the attitude with which the bronzes are described cannot be attributed to him, but the

[111] Hall's donation included seventy-eight small bronze objects, including figural statuettes as well several animals, fibulae, brooches and pieces of armour.
[112] Most notably the Castellani collection, which was also donated to the University Galleries. See Vaux 1876.
[113] This document is located in the Ashmolean Museum Department of Antiquities.



Fig. 2.1. Figures of Herakles (left) and of a youth (right) donated to the Ashmolean by Chambers Hall. Etruscan, fifth century BC. Inv. 1888.1472; AN1888.1484.

contents of his donation suggest that while he limited himself to smaller bronze objects he did collect with an eye toward artistic quality. The subjects of the Hellenistic and Roman examples are mainly those found with high frequency in other collections: subjects such as Aphrodite, Athena, Eros and Hermes. The figure of Icarus [**107**], which is more rarely found in the bronze statuette repertoire, was mistaken for an Eros in the donation document and was likely thought to be an Eros by Hall himself. In addition to the statuette in this catalogue there are several other Etruscan statuettes stylistically belonging to the sixth and fifth century BC that exhibit the same concern for completeness and higher quality. Among the finest are a statuette of Herakles from a bronze vessel and a figure of a youth that once served as a candelabrum finial (Fig. 2.1).[114] In addition, Hall's donation included a number of figured bronze handles from luxury vessels, the best of which is the head of a personification of Africa inlaid with silver and copper (Fig. 2.2).[115] Whether two Renaissance bronzes [**193**, **194**] included in

[114] Inv. AN1888.1472 (Herakles). Brown 1980, fig. 62. AN1888.1484 (youth). Haynes 1985, 279, no. 92. Riis 1941, 82, no. 10.
[115] Inv. AN1888.1409.

Hall's gift were known by him (or the University Galleries) to be post-antique is unclear, as the culture is not noted in the donation document.



Fig. 2.2. Handle attachment depicting a personification of Africa donated by Chambers Hall. Roman, first century BC–first century AD. Inv. AN1888.1409.

Greville Chester

The Reverend Greville John Chester (1830–1892) began donating to the Ashmolean in 1865. Chester's chief interest was in the art and artefacts of pharaonic Egypt. His donations consisted mainly of vast quantities of Egyptian material, but he had a keen eye and made several purchases of Greek and Roman bronzes during his travels in the eastern Mediterranean. Over the course of twenty-seven years, until his death in 1892, Chester donated thousands of artefacts to the Ashmolean.

Chester's interest in antiquities started early. As a young man, he sent notices to the newly founded Archaeological Institute about local finds in his native Norfolk and exhibited parts of his own collection while an undergraduate at Balliol College.[116] After taking his BA in 1853, Chester attended theological college and by 1858 was appointed to the parish of St. Jude's, Moorfields in Sheffield. He remained in Sheffield until 1865, when poor health forced him to seek warmer climates. It is at this point that Chester began traveling extensively in the Mediterranean and initiated his first donations to the Ashmolean.

[116] Seidmann 2006, 28–29.

These annual trips brought Chester most often to Egypt via Italy and Malta, but he also frequently visited other parts of North Africa and travelled in Syria and Palestine. While he did maintain a personal collection, the majority of the thousands of objects collected by Chester in his annual travels around the Mediterranean entered the collections of the British Museum or the Ashmolean through both sales and gifts. He usually collected with these museums in mind, along with a few other institutions including Balliol and the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. Chester's donations made a significant impact on the number of antiquities in the Ashmolean collection. Though they were rarely of significant monetary value, the quantities he gave or sold laid the foundations for developing several collection strengths, including the Ashmolean's world-class collection of Near Eastern cylinder seals.[117]

Like many of the collectors discussed here, Chester primarily collected small-scale objects. Not only were these the kinds of antiquities within his economic reach, they could also be transported easily and exported discreetly at a time when several countries were adopting stricter laws against the removal of antiquities from their territories. Egypt, where Chester acquired most of his artefacts, had laws against the exportation of antiquities since at least 1835. New measures in 1869, 1874 and 1880 further restricted these exports.[118] Chester's focus on small objects is mirrored by what A. Stevenson identifies as the increasing contemporary importance of the 'excavated artefact', the mundane, easily transportable pieces being uncovered by Flinders Petrie and others that could circumvent antiquities legislation and be dispersed to British and European museums.[119] Chester personally made the majority of his purchases during his travels. He

[117] Buchanan 1966, vii.
[118] Maget 2009, 241–243.
[119] Stevenson 2014, 91.

developed an extensive network of archaeologists, collectors and dealers in the usual hubs for antiquities trading: Rome, Athens, Beirut, Smyrna and Cairo. In Egypt, particularly, he also made use of a more informal network of village sheiks, grave robbers and Coptic peasants to acquire his small antiquities.[120]

Chester's prodigious collecting encompassed a wide range of antiquities and the records of his donations and the Ashmolean's purchases from him do not reveal a particular interest in bronze statuettes. Even bronzes from the dynastic period are not especially prominent in the 1881 catalogue of the Egyptian collection authored by Chester for the museum. The catalogue also reveals that Chester did not devote much of his effort to collecting Greek and Roman objects from Egypt. The Hellenistic and Roman bronzes from Chester in the current catalogue are mainly from the Levant and consist primarily of unexceptional representations of Hermes, Eros and Herakles. The largest and most surprising figure is a twenty centimetre high statuette of Apollon [**190**] that, was, unusually, bequeathed to the museum after Chester's death. Where Chester acquired this figure is unknown, but the presence in other collections of at least three other identical or nearly identical figures, all without secure provenance, make the authenticity of this statuette suspect.[121]

C. D. E. Fortnum and Arthur Evans

Chester donated his collections directly to the Ashmolean. Hall's gift was made to the University Galleries, which held a number of other antiquities including many of the Arundel and Pomfret marbles. The Bodleian also maintained a substantial collection of

[120] Seidmann 2007, 4. I am grateful to Dr M. Price for providing me with access to Gertrud Seidmann's unpublished papers and research on Chester.
[121] See catalogue entry for **190**.

antiquities, including forty-eight bronze statuettes.[122] Under the keepership of Arthur Evans, these would be brought together in the Ashmolean Museum and augmented by the large collection of C. D. E. Fortnum.

C. D. E. Fortnum

More than any other person, Charles Drury Edward Fortnum, has shaped the contents of the Ashmolean's collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes, and in nearly equal measure to Evans determined the future of the museum.[123] It was the promise of the gift of Fortnum's ancient and Renaissance bronzes (along with a substantial financial contribution) that gave Evans the leverage that he needed to spur the University into taking action to give archaeology a permanent home in Oxford. Over 20% of the statuettes presented in the catalogue (not including modern statuettes and dubitanda)—thirty-seven bronzes—were given to the Ashmolean by Fortnum, the most from any single source.

Fortnum's collecting began with entomological specimens gathered during his time as a settler in New South Wales, Australia. From there he maintained a correspondence with his friend F. W. Hope, whose own collection of insects he would help secure for Oxford's Natural Science Museum (now the Oxford University Museum of Natural History) in 1849.[124] Only after his return to England in 1844 and his 1848 marriage to his wealthy cousin Fanny Matilda Keats—an heiress of the Fortnum & Mason fortune—was Fortnum in a position to become a serious collector of antiquities.[125]

[122] Recorded as a group in the Ashmolean register when transferred in 1887.
[123] Fortnum was the subject of a group of articles in *The Journal of the History of Collections* (11, 2) in 1999, the centenary year of his death. That volume presented research on several aspects of Fortnum's life and his collecting. The brief discussion here aims to more specifically examine Fortnum's attitude toward collecting bronze statuettes.
[124] Warburton 1999, 137–8. On the Hope donation see Smith 1986.
[125] On the inheritance of Fanny Matilda Keats, see Tanner 1999, 149–50.

These marital funds allowed Fortnum to make purchases and expensive trips to Italy every year (though he was famously parsimonious).

Fortnum was a focussed collector, limiting his acquisitions primarily to three types of objects: bronze statuettes, Italian majolica and finger rings. He developed a high level of expertise and his opinions and advice were highly sought after within his circle of antiquaries and museum curators. Among others, the German art historian Wilhelm Bode had a great respect for Fortnum and looked to Fortnum's collection as something of a model for the collection of European bronzes he was aggressively building in Berlin.[126] For example, Bode's unsuccessful bid to acquire two bronze inkstands attributed to Peter Vischer the Younger from Fortnum's collection for Berlin is recorded in his letters to Fortnum.[127]

Fortnum's most prominent affiliation was with the South Kensington Museum (since 1899 the Victoria & Albert Museum) and for a long while was the obvious institution to receive Fortnum's collection. Fortnum had produced substantive catalogues for the bronze and majolica collections there.[128] He also acted as an adviser and buyer, making several purchases for the museum during his trips to Italy, often without prior approval. It was one of these purchases that opened a rift between Fortnum and the London museum that is credited with ultimately driving Fortnum's collection instead to Oxford. On the advice of curator J. C. Robinson, Henry Cole, the director of the South Kensington Museum, rejected a terracotta tondo purchased by Fortnum in Florence and attributed by him to Antonio Rossellino. Robinson was not convinced of the tondo's

[126] Warren 2014, 15.
[127] Fortnum Archive F/2/v/1, 8, 10, 13. See Warren 1996, 133–137 and Warren 1999b, 191–194.
[128] Fortnum 1873; Fortnum 1876; Fortnum 1877.

authenticity. This rebuff to Fortnum's connoisseurship still rankled Fortnum nearly twenty years later when he sold the tondo to Bode.[129]

Fortnum's involvement with the Ashmolean Museum began in 1865 upon meeting John Henry Parker in Rome shortly after the episode with Cole and Robinson. Over the course of several winters in Italy, Parker encouraged Fortnum to consider donating his collection to the Ashmolean. The possibility that he might be able to secure this collection for Oxford was a partial motivation for Parker to seek the Keepership of the Ashmolean, which he would gain in 1870.[130] For his part, Fortnum made clear that he would only give his statuettes if they received proper care and attention in a museum of art and archaeology. On 24 February 1881, he wrote to Parker, 'to entrust my loved children (my only family) to a baby-farm where they might die for want of proper nursing, clothing or care, would be the act of an extremely careless or unnatural parent.'[131]

The Keepership of Arthur Evans

The changes instituted by Evans during his tenure were precipitated by much earlier events, beginning with the construction of the new University Museum (now the University Museum of Natural History) to house objects 'appertaining to the study of Physical Science, by which the eye of the student will be appealed to as well as his intellect.'[132] The University Museum opened in 1860. A majority of the Ashmolean's natural specimens, including those from the Tradescant collection, were transferred at this time to the new building 'at the Parks.'[133] The donation of Augustus Lane Fox Pitt

[129] See Warren 1999b.
[130] Thomas 1999, 160.
[131] OUA WPß/2/4.
[132] Parker 1858, 3.
[133] Parker 1858, 3.

Rivers' extensive collection of archaeological and ethnographic materials to the University in 1883 and the subsequent establishment of the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1884 also had a significant impact, lending greater urgency to a debate about the purpose of the Ashmolean and the makeup of its collection.[134]

There had been calls for the Ashmolean to become a centre for archaeology decades before Pitt Rivers' donation. As the librarian for the Oxford Architectural Society, John Henry Parker made the suggestion to then Keeper John Phillips as early as 1858 that the University required a Museum of National Antiquities which could be built upon the collection already housed at the Ashmolean.[135] With the natural history collections removed to the University Museum, by 1862 questions about the viability of the Ashmolean as a museum had to be addressed. In 1878 a memorial signed by 132 tutors, professors and others was sent to the Hebdominal Council calling for the establishment of a museum of art and archaeology. However, the true transformation of the Ashmolean would only start in the late 1880s.[136]

The reorganisation came about largely through the efforts of Evans and Fortnum. In May 1881, Chester published an acerbic tract about the state of the archaeological collections at the Ashmolean, decrying its poor organisation, lack of object care and difficult access.[137] While Chester's diatribe appeared to have had little effect on University attitudes toward the Ashmolean, it inspired Fortnum to write a letter in December of that same year supporting Chester's criticisms and adding his own.[138]

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[134] See Larson 2008, 94–95.
[135] Parker 1858, 9–11. Parker was referring primarily to the Anglo-Saxon artefacts held in the collection.
[136] MacGregor 2001, 56.
[137] Chester 1881a. Ovenell 1986, 243–245.
[138] Fortnum 1881.

Fortnum's displeasure at the state of affairs carried more weight. As Keeper, John Henry Parker had made overtures to Fortnum about donating his important collection of bronzes to the Ashmolean and had written to the Vice-chancellor earlier in 1881 about his conversations with the collector and the latter's insistence that a new museum of art and archaeology was needed before he could consider any gift.[139] Evans built upon the groundwork laid by Parker and made Fortnum's collection the lynchpin in his plans for the Ashmolean. With Chester's and Fortnum's backing and with the Pitt Rivers donation forcing him to act quickly upon assuming the Keepership, Evans began to lay out a vision for the development of the archaeological collections at the Ashmolean.

In 1885 Evans began the transfer of the ethnographic collections held by the Ashmolean to the new Pitt Rivers Museum, retaining only some pieces from the original Tradescant collection. Evans was not altogether happy with this arrangement, nor was Pitt Rivers, both men seeing the division of archaeological and anthropological collections as largely arbitrary and putting the museums in direct competition.[140] In the end, Evans operated under what he described as a 'working principle' that the Ashmolean would collect 'objects illustrative of the arts and history of Great Britain, of the European peoples, and those parts of Asia and the Mediterranean with which they are historically, and in some cases, ethnographically bound.' The Pitt Rivers was to receive material 'from the more remote parts of the world.'[141] The mass transfer of material laid a path for Evans to bring under one roof the archaeological collections that had been divided amongst five different buildings.[142] Transfer of these archaeological collections to the

[139] OUA WPß/2/4. Ovenell 1986, 242–243.
[140] Larson 2008, 95.
[141] Evans 1884, 4–5.
[142] A University Gazette dated 20 May 1884 shows a motion to transfer the archaeological objects to the Ashmolean. See Thomas 1999, 163. The Pitt Rivers Museum still retains several classical bronzes. See chapters 7, 15 and 16 in Hicks and Stevenson 2013.

Ashmolean, which at this time was also relocating to an extension of the Charles Robert Cockrell building on Beaumont Street that was home to the University Galleries, did not reach completion until 1894.

Evans' success in transferring the archaeological collections and in acquiring new space for the museum in the University Galleries extension relied heavily on the support of Fortnum, with whom Evans maintained a close correspondence during the early years of his Keepership. Evans often consulted Fortnum regarding important decisions for the museum.[143] Fortnum's collection of ancient and Renaissance bronzes was already well known by this time. After his falling out with the leadership of South Kensington Museum (where he had previously exhibited his collection of bronzes and majolica), the ultimate fate of this collection became less certain. The promise of the presentation of Fortnum's bronzes should the Ashmolean be able to provide facilities worthy of it was a key point in Evans' argument for concessions from the University administration. With the progress made under Evans and other evidence that the Ashmolean could be a place where Fortnum's 'children' would be safe, Fortnum began to negotiate long-term loans from his collection.[144] By 1888, he had sent over 699 objects and officially donated his collection to the museum, though the University would not formally accept the gift until 1894.

Evans resigned his Keepership in 1908. Earlier that same year the Keeper of the University Galleries resigned and the two museums were merged along with the Department of Classical Archaeology to form the Ashmolean Museum of Art and

[143] For Fortnum's relationship with Evans see Thomas 1999.
[144] OUA, WPß/2/4. Cited by Ovenell 1986, 243.

Archaeology. Having received a rich inheritance after the death of his father and a cousin and having achieved the administrative restructuring of the Ashmolean that he had been working towards since the beginning of his tenure, Evans devoted all his time after this point to his research on Knossos.[145]

Twentieth and Twenty-first century collecting (1908–present)

The merger of the Ashmolean Museum, the University Galleries and the Department of Classical Archaeology into the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology did not have an immense impact on antiquities collecting. Where there were two museums before 1908, afterward there were two departments, the Department of Antiquities and the Fine Art Department, each operating largely independent of the other.[146] Individual benefactions continued to be important for the growth of the collection of bronze statuettes, but were increasingly supplemented by purchases.

John Evans and Arthur Evans

By the time of his death in 1908, John Evans was a renowned scholar with a profound influence on the advancement of the study of prehistoric archaeology in Britain. His empirical and scientific approach to the study of ancient material culture was formulated in the stimulating intellectual environment created by a group of Darwinists in London who were applying Darwin's methods to the study of archaeology, anthropology and ethnography.[147] Having started collecting at an early age, Evans' collection consisted of a wide range of prehistoric artefacts found in Britain and on the Continent, such as flints, axes and other stone tools. He was also a respected numismatist who collected Roman

[145] Harden 1983,14.
[146] MacGregor 2001, 74.
[147] Owen 2008.

coins and had a special interest in the coinage of Iron Age Britain.[148] But his collection was quite diverse. It also incorporated Greek and Roman artefacts, ethnological material and significant numbers of Anglo-Saxon and medieval objects. Evans' collection was characterised by its focus on small-scale objects and its emphasis on artefacts of scientific rather than aesthetic value. His collection is representative of a significant shift in the motivations of many collectors in the late nineteenth century.

The majority of Evans' collection was given to the Ashmolean in the years after his death by his son Arthur Evans, beginning with the donation of the collection of Anglo-Saxon jewellery in 1908 and the Iron Age coins in 1919. The largest donation occurred in 1927. Numbering nearly 3,500 objects, it included the Greek and Roman artefacts. Among this donation were John Evans' Roman bronze statuettes. The remainder of the collection was donated to the Ashmolean after Arthur Evans' death in 1941. Thanks to the care that Evans took to ascertain the provenance (if not the context) of his acquisitions, it is clear that, with the exception of a Harpokrates figure from Egypt [**83**] and two furniture appliques depicting Zeus with no recorded provenance [**50**, **51**], Evans' Roman bronzes were all acquired in England or northern France.

Bronze statuettes did not make up a very large portion of John Evans' collection. Unlike other types of artefact such as coins, stone instruments and perhaps even Roman brooches,[149] there does not appear to have been a systemic method behind Evans' collecting of this artefact type, with no special regard to establishing a type-series. Rather, a more spontaneous and *ad hoc* approach toward Roman bronze statuettes is evident. The

[148] Evans' 1864 volume *The Coins of the Ancient Britons* is still a foundational text for the study of Iron Age coinage. See Philip de Jersey 2008.
[149] On the collecting of brooches see MacGregor 2008b, 137.

network that Evans had built in Britain and France to supply him with new prehistoric finds would have also on occasion presented him with Roman statuette finds. The reported provenances of several of the statuettes in the catalogue are the same as those where Evans habitually acquired prehistoric artefacts.[150] There is also little evidence that Evans actively sought to collect statuettes (or classical antiquities in general) from the classical Mediterranean lands where many of his fellow antiquaries were making purchases. The bronze statuettes in Evans' collection can probably be interpreted as by-products of his other, primary collecting activities.

Arthur Evans is best known for his excavation of the Bronze Age palace at Knossos, which began in earnest in 1899 after five years of preliminary investigations, negotiations for the site and permissions to excavate.[151] In 1908, after the death of his father and the long fight for the merger of the University Galleries and the Ashmolean, Evans retired the Keepership to focus his energies on the work on Knossos and the publication of his finds there. It was at this time that he began donating parts of his father's collection. While the contributions of Arthur Evans' excavations and the donation of objects from his personal collection went a long way towards making the Ashmolean Aegean collection the largest and most comprehensive outside of Greece, like his father he did not appear to take a personal interest in collecting bronze statuettes.[152] During his time as Keeper, Evans did not substantially add to the collection of bronze statuettes as he did to other genres of antiquities. The number of new bronze statuettes is scarce compared to the substantial increases in Greek vases and coins from southern Italy

[150] MacGregor 2008b, 138.
[151] On Evans and Knossos, see Evans 1943, 308–351. Brown 1983.
[152] Evans 1943, 364 notes that A. Evans was particularly absorbed with the collection of engraved gems and Greek, Cretan and Sicilian coins.

and Sicily.[153] Only two figures in this study were acquired from the collection of Arthur Evans. Both are female figures from the Oxfordshire site of Woodeaton [**11, 12**].

J. D. Beazley

In 1966, Sir John Davidson Beazley and his wife Marie donated the entirety of their antiquities collection—some eight hundred objects—to the Ashmolean. Over the previous half century the Beazleys had already given the Ashmolean around four hundred antiquities.[154] Beazley's scholarly interests and lifelong devotion to the study of Greek painted pottery had a significant impact on the continued development of the Ashmolean collection of ancient ceramics.[155] Unsurprisingly, the majority of gifts given to the museum by the Beazleys consisted of vases and cups. Beazley was well connected with antiquities collectors and dealers who often sought his advice. He was thus well placed to know when good or important pieces came onto the market and could often secure them for his own collection or advise the Ashmolean to acquire them.[156] His close association with the American collector Edward Perry Warren, whose acquisitions form the foundation for the antiquities collection at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, is especially notable because of the clout Warren (and his agent in Rome, John Marshall) wielded in the Roman antiquities market in at the turn of the century.[157]

[153] See Vickers 1983.
[154] Ashmolean Museum 1967, 3.
[155] Boardman 1985, 51.
[156] Ashmole 1985, 65.
[157] Beazley published the catalogue of the gems Warren kept at Lewes House (Beazley 1920) and after Warren's death in 1928 published a memorium in *The Times* and *the Oxford Magazine* (Beazley 1929). For Warren and Lewes House see Sox 1991.

Bronze statuettes formed only a very small part of the Beazley donation in 1966.[158] The four Hellenistic and Roman bronzes in this catalogue are of comic and erotic figures, all of which were originally attached to an item of furniture, vessel or implement.[159] A more substantial donation of bronzes was made by Beazley in 1944. This donation is laconically recorded in the Visitor's Report for that year as a 'large group of terracottas and bronzes, mainly Alexandrian (Greek and Roman).'[160] Notably, all ten of the bronze statuettes in this catalogue from this donation were formerly in the collection of the brothers R. G. Gayer-Anderson and T. G. Gayer-Anderson.[161]

R. G. 'John' Gayer-Anderson was a prolific collector of Egyptian antiquities. He retired to Cairo in 1924, after a military career that included appointments as the Egyptian Recruiting Officer and Oriental Secretary to the High Commissioner. In 1942 his heath required him to return to Britain. During his time in Egypt, he amassed an extensive collection of pharaonic antiquities along with some Graeco-Roman material.[162] The latter contains numerous statuettes of Bes and Harpokrates (mostly terracotta).[163] T. G. Gayer-Anderson, John's twin brother, was also a collector of Egyptian and Oriental artefacts.

How Beazley came to be in possession of these bronzes and his relationship with the Gayer-Anderson brothers is unclear. John was treated at Somerville College (then an officer's hospital) for various health complaints in 1917 and spent time convalescing at his parent's home in nearby Marston. During this time, he became acquainted with

[158] A Department of Antiquities handlist drawn up for the 1967 exhibition of the Beazley gift lists twenty-eight bronze objects, consisting mainly of animal figures, attachments and fragments.
[159] 132, 142, 143, 159.
[160] Ashmolean Museum, 1944, 5.
[161] 67, 73, 74, 80, 87, 154, 156, 167, 169.
[162] The majority of the pharaonic collections are held in the Fitzwilliam Museum at the University of Cambridge.
[163] Ikram 2010, 183.

several Oxford Egyptologists, including Francis Llewellyn Griffith and Alan Gardiner. He also deposited parts of his collections at the Ashmolean for safe keeping during the war. Beazley was a student and tutor at Christ Church College and may have met Gayer-Anderson at this time. Gayer-Anderson was known for making gifts of antiquities to his friends and guests.[164] He gave away large parts of his collection to various institutions and individuals in the last years of his life. The date of Beazley's gift—1944, the year before Gayer-Anderson's death—may indicate that he had received the bronzes from Gayer-Anderson recently.[165]

Herbert James Powell Bomford and Brenda Bomford

MacGregor characterised the death of Herbert James Powell Bomford (1896–1979) as the 'end of an era.'[166] Bomford and his wife Brenda were important donors and benefactors for the Department of Antiquities throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In their collecting, the Bomfords focussed primarily on Near Eastern objects, amassing a large collection of Persian bronzes and gifting these to the museum in 1965. However, the catalogue of the gift reveals that the Bomfords had eclectic tastes and collected many high-quality Egyptian, Greek Roman and Etruscan objects as well.[167]

The Bomfords continued to invest financially in the museum. In 1967 they established the Bomford Trust to assist the department in purchasing new antiquities, and in 1970 gave the Ashmolean the opportunity to make purchases from their collection at significant discounts. The first acquisition (the inaugural gift of the Friends of the

[164] Ikram 2010, 179–180.
[165] My thanks to Dr L. Foxcroft for discussing parts of her research for a forthcoming book on the memoirs of R. G. Gayer-Anderson.
[166] MacGregor 2001, 63.
[167] Ashmolean Museum 1966.

Ashmolean, founded the previous year) was a bronze statuette depicting a Lar from the Bomford collection [**108**]. The museum launched a public appeal to raise the funds to acquire more of the collection and was able to purchase 200 antiquities in 1971 with the aid of the Friends of the Ashmolean, grants from the Victoria and Albert Museum and other benefactors.[168] Ten objects from this acquisition are bronze statuettes in this catalogue.[169]

The new acquisitions were exhibited later that same year and included several fine bronzes. One notable characteristic of the Bomford collection of bronze statuettes is that several were acquired at sales of older, established collections. A statuette of Athena [**20**] was once in the de Clercq collection in Paris. A dwarf figure [**153**] is pictured in the Greek art exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1904 and had belonged to Charles Newton Robinson. A statuette of Atalanta (or an Amazon) was previously in the collection of Captain E. G. Spencer-Churchill [**125**].

2.3. Collection characteristics

This section discusses some of the broad characteristics related to the subject matter and provenances of the Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes at the Ashmolean. The observations presented are based on physical examination as well as consultation of the electronic collection database, manuscript registers and archival material. Over the next two chapters, this information will be compared to other major European and North American collections as well as bronzes from known archaeological contexts.

[168] A full list of supporters appears in Payne et al. 1972.
[169] 20, 113, 125, 129, 131, 149, 150, 152, 153, 158.

It bears reiterating that this thesis is primarily concerned with anthropomorphic figural bronzes in the round, a subset of the total bronze collection at the Ashmolean which includes many statuettes of animals, various figured vessel fragments, reliefs and attachments, as well as statuettes of divinities, mythical beasts and humans from the Archaic and Classical periods. These excluded figures deserve further study, but for the purposes of this thesis and its questions about the visual and social relationships between small-scale bronzes and the Hellenistic and Roman societies of which they were a part, these limits on the catalogue are necessary to achieve a useful analysis within the confines of the space of this text.

Subjects

The figural statuettes in the appended catalogue are organised into five categories:

1. Olympian deities
2. Minor deities and heroes
3. Other mythological creatures
4. Human subjects
5. *Dubitanda* and modern imitations

Within each category, subjects are arranged in alphabetical order (by Greek name for the mythological figures and by subject for human figures).

In the course of examination and research, each statuette of a deity was assigned a level indicating confidence in its identification. The three possible levels are ‘certain’, ‘likely’ and ‘tentative’. ‘Certain’ identifications are those that can be recognised through

attributes or familiar iconography. Identification is 'likely' in the cases where attributes are missing but the iconography is familiar, or when familiar attributes are combined with unusual iconography. 'Tentative' identifications have been made when a figure lacks attributes *and* has unusual iconography, but still appears to depict a deity (i.e. possesses idealised features). This last label also applies to figures that appear to conform to a known type, but whose features are too deteriorated or difficult to make out. The statuettes for which it was questionable whether or not a deity is depicted have been categorised as 'Male figure' or 'Female figure'. Fig. 2.3 gives a synoptic view of the number of occurrences for each subject.

Each of the categories listed above is examined in more detail in the following discussion. The numbers and percentages given leave out 'tentative' identifications (marked in red on the charts). Dubitanda and modern statuettes are not included in the total count (184 for the total catalogue, of which 124 represent divine subjects).

The chart reveals that among mythological representations a small number of subjects predominate. When combined, depictions of Aphrodite, Eros, Herakles and Hermes total fifty-seven statuettes and make up 31% of the total number of bronzes in the catalogue and nearly 46% of the total number of deities. They form a cohesive group, with between ten and seventeen examples of each. A secondary group is also discernable in the statuettes representing Athena, Zeus, one of the Dioskouroi and Harpokrates (twenty-two statuettes). These subjects occur four to eight times each (about 12% of the total catalogue and 17.7% of the total number of divine subjects). All other depictions of deities, heroes and mythological creatures are represented by between one and three

statuettes. These comprise fifty-four statuettes representing thirty-five different subjects (29.3% of the total).

Among representations of mortals, the most numerous identifiable types (with seven or eight examples) are votary figures shown in the act of worship. The majority are Italic male and female statuettes of a common and standard Hellenistic type. These statuettes are found with high frequency in collections across Europe. Genre figures also feature prominently in the collection. A relatively high number of dwarves (five 'certain/likely' examples and one 'tentative') are joined by statuettes of comic actors, slaves, Africans and erotic figures. The largest share of the mortal representations, however, is made up of male figures that cannot be identified with a specific type. This varied group includes approximately 7.1% of the catalogue.

Finally, the collection contains sixteen statuettes whose authenticity can reasonably be doubted. These have been identified through anomalous iconographical or technical characteristics or through comparison with statuettes in other collections that have been convincingly identified as forgeries or imitations. Four of the suspect statuettes are mythological groups that are analysed more fully in the next chapter in an extended discussion of fakes, falsifications and imitations of bronze statuettes.[170]

[170] Below, section 3.4.

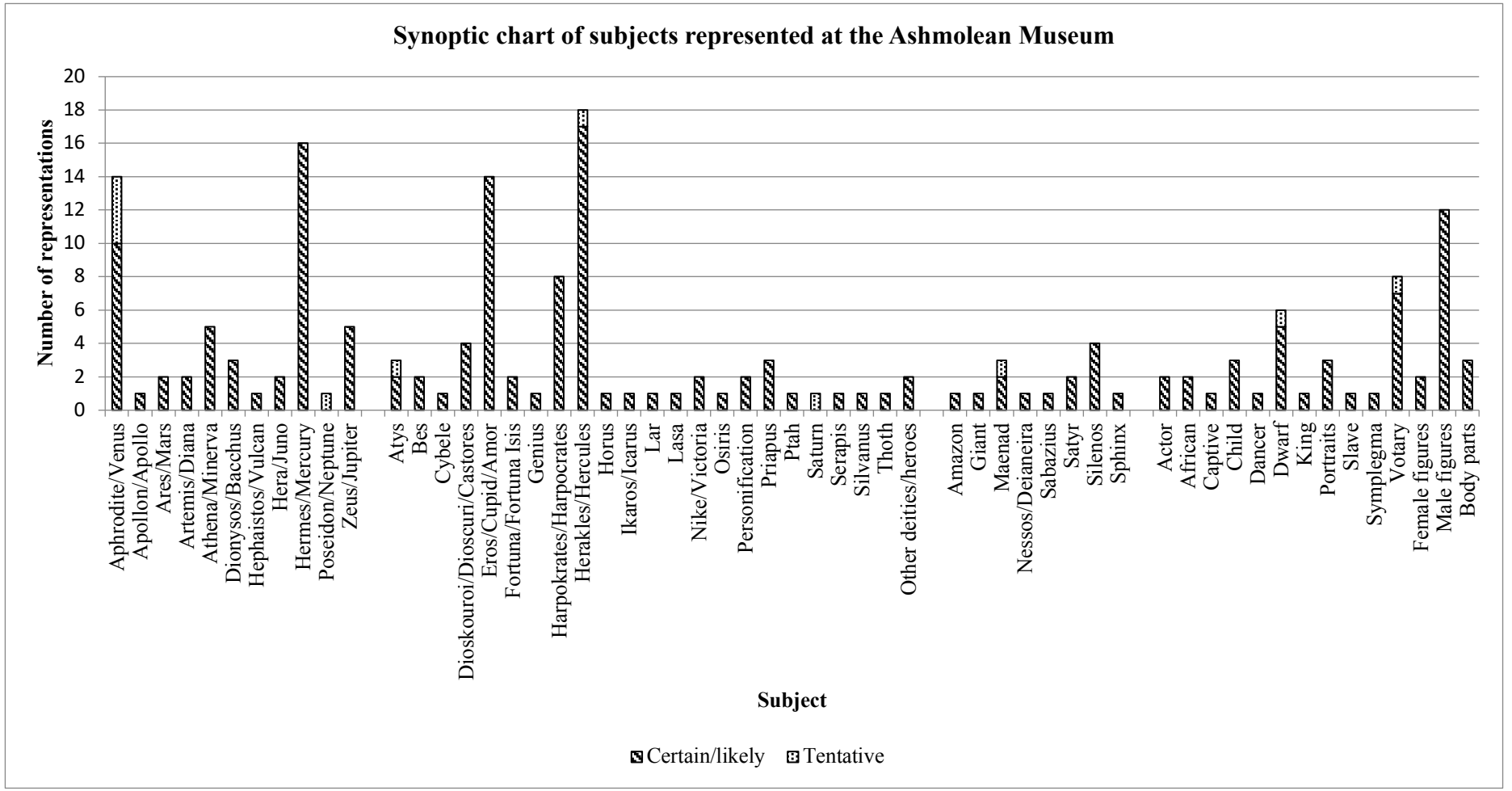

Fig. 2.3. Subjects represented in the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman small bronzes.

Olympian deities (Fig. 2.4)

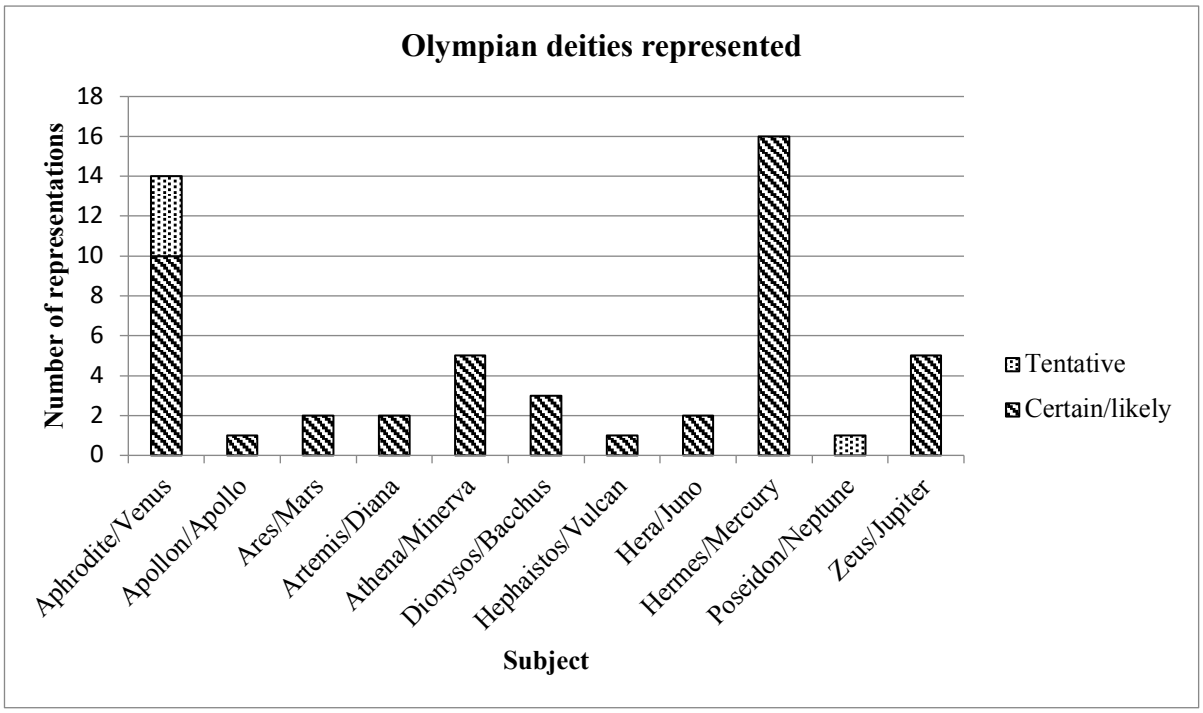

Fig. 2.4. Olympian deities represented in the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman small bronzes.

Aphrodite/Venus (**1**–**14**)

The goddess of love and beauty is one of the most frequently represented subjects in the Ashmolean collection with ten 'certain/likely' and four 'tentative' examples. Despite the mediocre quality of many of the figures, Aphrodite is recognisable through combinations of pose, nudity, headwear and attributes. Only two of the statuettes [**7**, **12**] wear any drapery (not counting headwear) and are covered from the waist down with a garment around the hips. The adapted use of poses known from large-scale sculpture also characterises several of the Aphrodite representations. Three statuettes [**3**–**5**] cover the genitals with the hand in a motif canonised by the Aphrodite of Knidos.[171] Another [**6**] is preserved concealing the breasts with the right arm. A discoloured ring around the

[171] See Havelock 1995 on the reception of the Knidos statue and the types derived from it. See also Pickup 2012.

pudenda suggests that the now missing left hand was covering the genitals.[172] The figure's head is turned and it just detectably bends at the waist in a posture echoing the Medici and Capitoline Aphrodite types. A small, crude figure on a round openwork disk is shown covering the breasts and genitals in a similar *pudica* pose [**14**] and is said to be from the Athenian acropolis. Two others [**7**, **8**] adopt variations of the Anadyomene type, grasping locks of hair with one hand.[173] Fortnum's most beloved ancient statuette [**1**] is the largest and best executed of the Aphrodite figures. This example holds a folded wreath in the raised right hand and may have held or engaged with another object or figure with the left.[174] The type is confined to small bronzes mostly from Egypt and Syria.[175] It has a late Hellenistic precedent in the Aphrodite figure in the famous marble 'Slipper Slapper' group from Delos.[176]

Some representations of the goddess are recognisable through the combination of nudity and a tiara worn in the hair [**13**] or by the presence of a mirror [**2**], attributes commonly associated with Aphrodite.[177] Other nude female figures lack attributes or poses recognisable from large-scale sculpture and are more difficult to interpret. Two works have been described as Polykleitan in their postures [**9, 10**], but have no attributes that definitively identify them as Aphrodite.[178] The pose of **9** has parallels with other

[172] Similarly, the corrosion pattern and lower position of the left breast on **3** suggests that the missing left arm originally covered the breasts.
[173] On the Anadyomene type: Brinkerhoff 1978, 56–69; Delivorrias 1984, 54–57; Havelock 1995, 86–93.
[174] Cf. two versions of the same type: A figure recently auctioned Christie's New York in 2011 (9 June, lot 169), formerly part of the de Clercq collection, holds drapery in the lowered left hand (Ridder 1905, 28, no. 7, pl. 1.) and a statuette at the Getty Museum in Malibu (inv. 57.AB.7) who interacts with a small Eros (Fig. 3.15).
[175] The Hertz Venus is a notable exception having reportedly come from Asia Minor. See catalogue entry for **1**.
[176] Athens NAM 3335, Smith 1991, fig. 314. Stackelberg 1837, 47; Hübner 1871, 92 on the 'chastising' gesture of this type.
[177] Delevorrias 1984, 59–61.
[178] For **9**, see Gardner 1910, 234–5. For **10**, see Himmelmann-Wildschütz 1958.

figures that can be confidently identified as Aphrodite.[179] **10**, on the other hand, adopts a pose that is very close to that of the central Grace in the three figure composition probably developed in the Hellenistic period.[180] Two further female figures [**11, 12**] found at Woodeaton in Oxfordshire have been identified by S. Walker as representing Aphrodite with fashionable contemporary Roman hairstyles.[181] This could very well be the case, but the statuettes do not otherwise conform to known Aphrodite types. The possibility that they are representations of Aphrodite syncretised with a Celtic mother goddess should remain open.[182]

Apollon/Apollo (**15**)

The single possible statuette of Apollon is a small (6.3 centimetre) figure on a circular base that can be identified as the god by means of the long hairstyle and the crown of laurel resting on the head. Any attributes once held in the hands are now missing. The musculature of the figure is well defined, but the squatter proportions and the Polykleitan stance are slightly unusual for a deity that was more frequently depicted in the languid style of the later fourth century in Hellenistic and Roman sculpture.[183]

Ares/Mars (**16, 17**)

The collection contains two standing Ares figures [**16**, **17**]. Both show the god as youthful and athletic, wearing only a crested helmet. **16** is more lithe. It is closer to supposed Lysippan models with a smaller head in relation to the long body as compared to the hard-modelled musculature and stouter figure seen in **17**. Both figures raise the right arm, and based on comparison with similar statuettes would have each presumably held a

[179] See comparanda for **9** in the catalogue.
[180] Sichtermann 1986, 203.
[181] Walker 2009. Durham 2012 interprets **13** as a mother goddess (no. 151).
[182] See catalogue entries for **12** and **13**.
[183] Lambrinudakis 1984, 319.

spear.[184] **16** exhibits a strong sense of forward movement with only the tips of the toes of the right foot touching the ground, while **17** stands in a relaxed, static pose. Despite these differences, the attitude of both statuettes depends on the development on types established for statues of rulers in the early Hellenistic period.

Artemis/Diana (**18, 19**)

Artemis is represented by two appliques found in Britain showing the bust of the goddess [**18**, **19**]. They are both derived from the same type, characterised by a *Melonenfrisur* hairstyle pulled tightly to the top of the head and ending in a topknot divided into four thick locks. In both examples, the goddess wears a sleeveless garment that hangs in a low U-shape around the neck. The busts are hollow at the back and most likely served as attachments for a piece of bronze or wood furniture.

Athena/Minerva (**20**–**24**)

Athena is represented five times. The statuettes are characterised by their emphatically frontal poses and the strong structuring role of the drapery. Most are of low to mediocre quality and vary from one to the next in the position of the arms, the attributes held and the arrangement of the drapery. The largest and highest quality example of the Athena representations [**20**] mixes the details of a number of large-scale statue types. The drapery is similar to that seen on the Dresden-Bologna statue type.[185] The figure wears a peplos with a large overfold underneath an aegis slung diagonally across the breast from the right shoulder to the left hip. Both peplos and aegis are bound with a cord tied around the waist. The helmet is dominated by a large plume mounted on the figure of a sphinx, a motif borrowed from the Parthenos.[186] The remains of a shield strap on the left forearm

[184] Cf. Simon and Bauchhenss 1984, 518–519 (Type P).
[185] See Raeder 2011 on the Dresden statue and the history of interpretation of this type.
[186] Described by Pausanias (1.24.5), Pliny (*HN* 36.18) and Plutarch (*Per.* 31). See Demargne 1984, 1031.

show that the figure once held a shield aloft, a feature associated with the Athena Promachos type from the Archaic period.[187] The statuette also wears a gold torque around the neck and a gold bracelet on the right wrist, adding a local touch to a figure combining several well-known classical types.[188]

Three of the statuettes adopt similar poses, standing frontally with the left arm raised to about head height to hold now missing spears and with the right arm extended forward. **22** holds a patera in the in the extended hand, while **23** and **24** each hold an owl in the palm.

Another small figure of about 10 centimetres [**21**] shows the goddess in the guise close to that of the Athena Parthenos but with a variation in the left arm, which is raised to hold the spear rather than extended forward. The detail and execution is poor, but the goddess clearly rests her shield on the ground and supports it with her left hand. She wears a triple crested helmet and peplos with the aegis draped over both shoulders. The execution of the drapery is too crude to for any indication of the placement of the legs and gives the lower body a columnar appearance, but the overall format of the piece conveys, at a glance, that the statuette falls within a tradition of adaptations of the Pheidian masterpiece. It is unlikely that the ancient owner or viewer understood the fullness of that tradition or viewed the statuette as a descendant of Pheidias' Athena, but rather understood the specific form and iconography as an appropriate visual format for a depiction of the goddess.

[187] Demargne 1984, 1020.
[188] See Adler 2003, 100–101 for representations of female deities wearing torques. See Kaufmann-Heinimann 1991, 94–97 for discussion of torques executed in precious metals on bronze statuettes in the Roman western provinces.

Dionysos/Bacchus (**25**–**27**)

The wine god is shown in three instances, each quite different from each other. A bust applique found at Verulamium [**27**] is of a type known from other British finds and can be assigned stylistically to a group of busts identified by I. Manfrini-Aragno as possibly belonging to the same workshop circle.[189] **26** depicts an infant Dionysos seated astride a barrel. The iconography of the figure, who holds a jar in his right hand and what is probably the lid in the left, does not have a precise parallel among bronzes of the seated infant Dionysos, but the seated types are generally quite variable.[190] The same can be said for the seated figure of adult Dionysos [**25**], which was most likely applied to a bronze vessel or other piece of bronze furniture, although the mounting of the figure atop a leopard or other animal is also a possibility.

Hephaistos/Vulcan (**28**)

The sole representation of Hephaistos [**28**] is a very fine statuette that was found in Britain (Richborough). It is almost certainly an import from a Mediterranean workshop.[191] Seated Hephaistos figures are found much more rarely in bronze than are figures of the highly standardised standing type common throughout Gaul and Germany. This example depicts the smith god wearing the conical *pilos* and the *exomis*, a short tunic associated with craftsmen and artisans.[192] These latter may be based on a fifth century statue of Hephaistos known to have been completed by Alkamenes that Cicero tells us was a draped, standing figure.[193] Although the statuette itself probably dates to the second half of the first century AD, the type with its thick and curly (but still ordered and symmetrical) locks and the active movement implied through the musculature finds its

[189] Manfrini-Aragno 1987, 104, Figs 163–166.
[190] Manfrini-Aragno 1987, 131–132.
[191] Henig and Wilkins 1982, 123.
[192] See Duval 1952, 46–47 for representations from Gaul.
[193] Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.30. Generally thought to be the cult statue of the Hephaisteion in Athens. See Brommer 1978, 75–90.

best parallels in the chaotic and crowded Prometheus reliefs on third and fourth century Roman sarcophagi, such as an example in the Louvre shown in fig. 2.5.[194]

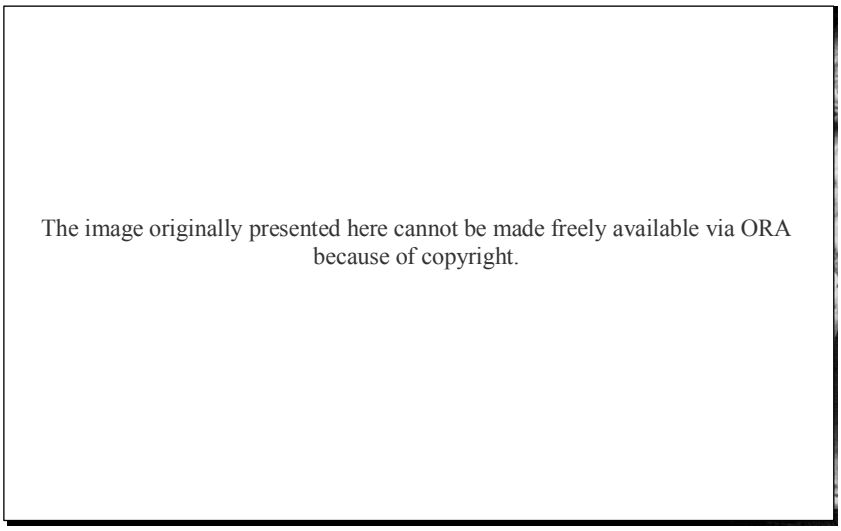

Fig. 2.5. Detail of a marble *lenos* sarcophagus relief showing Hephaistos at his forge. Roman. c. AD 220. Louvre inv. Ma 355.

Hera/Juno (**29, 30**)

The iconography of Hera differs little from other female draped goddess such as Demeter/Ceres and from idealised images of mortal women, making her sometimes difficult to recognise. The most common representations in the Roman period are those depicting Juno Regina, showing the goddess in her role as queen of heaven.[195] She is depicted as a mature woman, fully clothed, often in elaborate drapery. She frequently wears a tall tiara on her veiled head and is usually depicted with one arm raised to hold a sceptre and the other holding a patera. These figures of Hera can also be recognised when they are associated with those of Zeus and/or Athena. In this aspect she is a member of the Capitoline Triad and an important part of Roman state cult.[196]

[194] Inv. Ma 355. Ex Borghese collection. Baratte and Metzger 1985, 112–115, no. 46.
[195] La Rocca 1990, 854.
[196] See for example, a seated figure found with a seated Zeus and seated Minerva in a *lararium* in the House of the Golden Cupids in Pompeii (Adamo-Muscettola 1984, 12–13, figs. 3, 4), or the veiled female figure from Muri (Switzerland) with no other attributes but found with statuettes of Zeus and Minerva (Leibundgut 1980, 46–47, no. 42, pls. 54–56).

'Likely' representations of Hera appear twice among the Ashmolean bronzes [**29, 30**], identified primarily on the basis of the combination of a high tiara and full drapery. **29** is a full-length statuette of high quality showing an intricately draped female figure. **30** is an applique bust that probably served as a fulcrum attachment. The subject wears a sleeveless chiton pinned over both shoulders. A nearly identical version of this bust is in the British Museum collection.[197] As E. La Rocca notes, certain recognition of an image of Hera is only possible through inscriptions, by an association with Zeus and Athena or by the presence of a peacock, Hera's only unique attribute.[198] While these two figures are here identified as Hera, without additional attributes or context it is impossible to be certain.

Hermes/Mercury (**31**–**46**)

With the exception of Herakles, Hermes is the most frequently depicted deity among the bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean collection. Few of the figures are of more than middling quality and most are quite small with preserved heights measuring between 4.8 and 13 centimetres.[199] All but three of the figures are standing types. The sole example of a seated Hermes [**32**] is probably the finest. Like most of the seated types, it emphasises the rustic aspects of the deity.

Most of these are standing nudes that carry a purse or moneybag (*marsupium*) in the right hand. This makes them of Roman date since this iconography cannot be definitively traced back earlier than the first century AD, although at least one scholar has implied that the model may be the Hermes Agoraios mentioned by Lucian as black from

[197] Inv. 1756, 0101.471. Walters 1899, no. 1700.
[198] La Rocca 1990, 855.
[199] Excluding **45**, which is a bust.

pitch as the result of so many casts being taken of it.[200] A caduceus can be usually be conjectured to appear in the left hand when this attribute is missing. The figures are characterised by a strong hipshot pose with a Polykleitan tradition evident in the better executed.[201] The type has been found in all regions of the Roman Empire, including the Bay of Naples, but their distribution is especially high in the northwest provinces where the cult of Hermes was particularly popular and well established.[202]

Poseidon/Neptune (**47**)

Like Hera, statuettes of Poseidon can be difficult to recognise without attributes. It is usually the presence of marine themes, such as dolphins, fish, crustacean claws and ships, or the god's unique symbol, the trident, which distinguishes him from other mature bearded deities. There is only one 'tentative' representation of Poseidon among the Ashmolean bronzes. **47** is missing both hands and so carries no attributes such as a trident that could positively identify the god. The pose of the statuette is nearly identical to that of a common type of Zeus statuette discussed below [**49**]. The figure is identified as a possible Poseidon based on the incised decoration of the chlamys slung over his shoulders, which is reminiscent of fish scales. Also favouring an interpretation as Poseidon are the length and 'damp' appearance of the hair.[203] A small nub on the right forearm might be the remains of a dolphin tail, a motif known from a number of other small bronzes of the god.[204]

[200] Mattusch 1990, 140–141 illustrates Agora Museum B 248 as an example in connection with a passage on the Hermes statue in the Athenian agora from Lucian, *Jup. Trag.* 33.
[201] See Leibundgut 1990 for Polykleitan elements in small bronzes of Hermes.
[202] Boucher 1976, 100–127; Oggiano-Bitar 1994, 312–315; Menzel 1970, 228–230.
[203] Simon and Bauchhenss 1994, 477.
[204] Cf. Simon and Bauchhenss 1994, 486, nos. 19, 21, 22.

Zeus/Jupiter (**48**–**52**)

The image of Zeus is represented by two statuettes and likely depicted in three appliques. Both full-figure statuettes show the god standing with left arm raised and draped in a mantle. **48** is a type found commonly throughout the Roman Empire and is well represented in French regional collections.[205] The god stands relaxed, thunderbolt in the right hand, resting by the hip. The left hand is raised no higher than the shoulder, which is draped with a long garment that falls along the left side of the body. Similar examples come from *lararia* from the House of the Opus Craticium in Herculaneum and the House of the Epigrams in Pompeii,[206] attesting to the presence of the type in Campania in the first century AD. Kaufmann-Heinimann attributes several instances of this type occurring in closed-context *lararia* and deposits as being first century Campanian or Italian works.[207]

Another Zeus statuette [**49**] is very poorly preserved. Large areas of the bronze are missing, especially in the head, and the facial features are impossible to discern. It was purchased in southern France and supposedly from Camp de César, near Nîmes. The damage to the bronze shows that the figure has been cast hollow, unusually for a figure of only 8 centimetres in height. It belongs to a series of Zeus statuettes with three other examples in France, two in Verona, two in and Berlin and one in Copenhagen.[208] Another statuette at Lyon measuring 7.9 centimetres can also be added to this series.[209] The antiquity of the pieces in Verona and Berlin has been questioned and M. C. Galestin has

[205] Boucher 1976, 85 and n. 38 lists twelve examples of the type with known provenance found in Gaul, but examples have also come from the east, as far as Baalbek (Burlington Fine Arts Club 1904, no. B 52, pl. LV).
[206] House of the Opus Craticium (III, 13/15): found in wooden armoire in *biclinium* with other *lararia* statuettes; Maiuri 1958, 417, House of the Epigrams (V I, 18 and 11): found in the *tablinium* with an ivory statuette of Aphrodite; Boyce 1937, no. 75 n. 2.
[207] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, nos. GF18; GF63; GF87.
[208] France: Galestin 1981, 103 and n. 118. Verona: Franzoni 1973, 28–30, nos. 10 and 11. Berlin: Leibundgut 1980, 146–147, and n. 13. Copenhagen: Poulsen 1977, 23.
[209] Boucher 1973a, 73 (inv. A 1883).

identified the pieces in the entire series as falsifications.[210] The Ashmolean statuette is too poorly preserved to make an informed judgment on its authenticity.

Minor deities, heroes and other mythological figures

Fig. 2.6 shows the numbers of non-Olympian deities and heroes in the collection. The

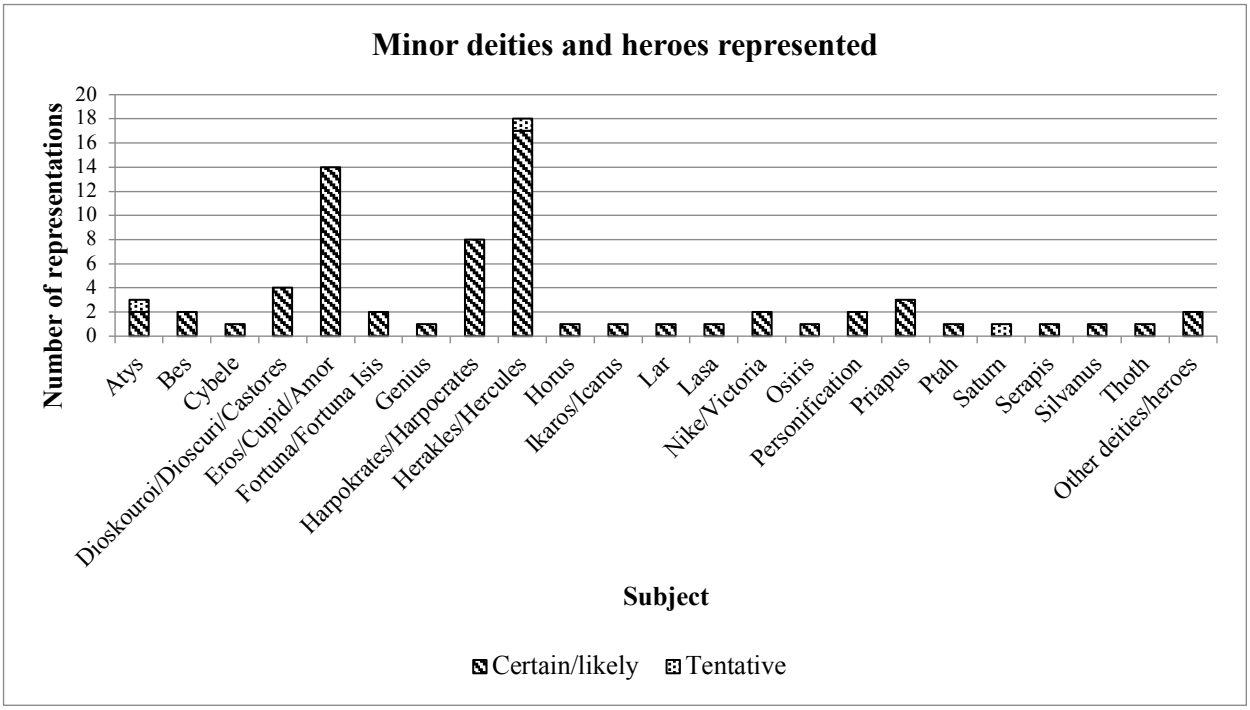

Fig. 2.6. Minor deities and heroes represented in the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman small bronzes.

following discussion is arranged alphabetically for subjects that are represented by three or more statuettes. Subjects for which there are only one or two statuettes are treated together under the heading 'other deities and heroes'.

Dioskouroi (**59**–**62**)

The Dioskouroi are represented in four statuettes. A standing figure wearing a *pilos* and missing the left arm [**61**] is one of the few bronzes listed in Duncan's 1836 catalogue of

[210] Franzoni 1973, 28–30; Leibundgut 1980, 146–147; Galestin 1981,103.

the collection.[211] The *pilos* forms part of the iconography of the Dioskouroi and a hole at the top of the head may have held another separately cast star, an attribute of the twin hero-gods.[212] This would give the figure a similar iconography to the other two standing Dioskouroi from the Ashmolean group who have stars atop their heads [**59, 60**]. The missing left arm appears to have been cast separately and may have been attached by soldering to the hollow-cast figure. This technique, particularly common in Egypt, permitted left arms with different attributes or drapery to be attached to stock body types depending on which god was to be depicted.[213]

A rider figure is also probably a depiction of one of the Dioskouroi [**62**]. The high, thick locks of hair surrounding the face and flowing down the back of the neck adopts the iconography of Alexander portraits and is especially characteristic of images originating in Egypt. For examples, a statuette in Cairo depicting Alexander dressed in an aegis wears a similar hairstyle.[214] The *pilos* worn by the figure is usually reserved for depictions of the Dioskouroi, Odysseus and the smith god Hephaistos. It would be unusual for a depiction of Alexander. Given that the figure is a rider, identification as Castor the horse-tamer is the most likely.

Eros/Cupid/Amor (**63**–**76**)

Eros is well represented in the collection of Ashmolean bronzes, as he is in many collections of bronzes from the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The statuettes are, for the most part, small and a number may have come from larger group compositions or acted as decorative elements. **70**, for example, stretches his right arm forward and looks up at a

[211] Duncan 1836, 123. Above, p. 33.
[212] Geppert 1996, 120–122.
[213] See Hill 1982.
[214] Bieber 1964, fig. 69.

point well above him. He is holding a folding mirror that is meant to reflect the now missing figure of his mother Aphrodite, a well-known genre composition of the goddess that finds its origins in the Hellenistic period.[215]

A Roman statuette of Eros [**63**] is the largest in the collection. Reportedly found near Cirencester in 1732, the bronze is one of the earliest recorded bronzes in the collection. The 40 centimetre high statuette is well cast and depicts the god as a young child with attention drawn to the fleshy corpulence of the stomach, limbs and face. This type of Eros is known from several other examples[216] and appears to have been commonly employed as a lamp stand, as evidenced from other statuettes where the lamp is preserved held in the upraised hand.[217] The decorative context for this finely cast bronze finds parallels in the *lychnophoroi* figures found in Pompeii and Herculaneum and although the Cirencester bronze probably dates from the mid-first to mid-second century AD, it closely follows Hellenistic conventions for decorative bronzes depicting Eros.

Harpokrates (**80**–**87**)

An interesting study in the syncretism of Egyptian deities with the Greek pantheon can be seen in the development of the iconography of Harpokrates. In Egyptian form, the child Horus adheres to the conventional frontality of Egyptian sculpture. Recognisable by a single long sidelock of hair [**85**] and the placement of a finger to the lips [**83, 84**]—both used as iconographic signs to indicate youth—the god was venerated as a protective deity. When Egypt came within the sphere of Greek influence under the Macedonians, the cult of Harpokrates was exported around the Mediterranean along with that of his mother Isis.

[215] Cf. Perdrizet 1911, no. 6, pl. V (Fouquet collection).
[216] Reinach, *Rép* II, 435, 7; 435, 8; 440, 6; 440,9; 446, 9.
[217] Toynbee 1964, 76.

Usually depicted seated, standing frontally or on the lap of Isis in earlier Egyptian art, Hellenised images of Harpokrates maintain the identifying gesture as well as an Egyptian headdress (usually the double crown [**80**]; less often, a *hemhem* crown [**82**]), but otherwise present the god through purely Greek formulae. He is often seen leaning against a support [**80**], or sits with one leg folded underneath the other as is usual for depiction of children or Eros [**86, 87**]. The Ashmolean collection has eight small bronzes depicting Harpokrates, including a figure of slightly less than 7 centimetres that conflates the iconography of the Egyptian deity with that of Eros and Dionysos to create a purely Hellenistic syncretised deity likely belonging to the Ptolemaic period in Egypt [**81**].

The popularity and spread of the cult of Isis, especially in southern Italy, guaranteed the dissemination of images of Harpokrates. Along with Serapis, he was intimately associated with the goddess and her worship. What remains consistent about bronzes of Harpokrates throughout the Roman period is his depiction in Hellenised form with his Egyptian origins usually relegated to the crown worn on his head. A Harpokrates figure found in the House of M. Memmius Auctus in Pompeii is depicted with such Hellenic features even though it was part of a group of Egyptian deities which otherwise displays strong Egyptianising features, including a jackal-headed Anubis.[218]

Herakles/Hercules (**88–105**)

Statuettes of Herakles are the most numerous in the Ashmolean collection. It is notable, however, that the majority of Herakles statuettes are of the Italic type, belonging to the cultural sphere and votive practice of pre-Roman Italy.[219] Among these, the most

[218] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 219, fig. 164.
[219] Below, section 6.4.

numerous show Herakles in an attacking posture [**88**–**94**]. This type has a long tradition in pre-Roman Italy, dating back to the Archaic period.[220] Although they differ from one another in significant details and quality, the figures exhibit an interesting consistency in scale. Of the seven examples, six range in height between 9.5 and 14.1 centimetres, with four measuring between 11 and 12 centimetres. The remaining statuette is a diminutive figure measuring 5.6 centimetres [**89**]. These belong to a well-known type of votive that developed in the fourth century BC and are found in large quantities in Abruzzo, Molise and Apulia during the third and second centuries BC.[221]

Accompanying the Italic Herakles statuettes are four figures reportedly from Bactria and Gandhara [**100**–**103**, **105**]. Depictions of Herakles are well attested in the Hellenistic east and these small but impressive figures are important examples for the influence of Hellenistic style and the persistence of classical statue types in the far reaches of the Greek world.[222] Two of the statuettes adopt the familiar pose of an unbearded Herakles balancing the club against the ground with his right hand and holding the lion skin draped over the left arm, often with the apples of the Hesperides in his left hand [**100**, **101**]. This stance is known from a vast number of depictions of the hero.[223] A third depicts Herakles crowning himself [**103**], a motif also seen in a statuette excavated at Ai Khanoum and used on coin reverses of the Bactrian rulers Demetrios I and Euthydemos II.[224] A sensitively executed, though much corroded, seated Herakles may derive from the Herakles Epitrapezios [**102**], but adapts the scheme into a languid pose that lacks the stateliness of Lysippos' hero. The final Herakles figure [**105**] is a hip herm

[220] Galestin 1987, 104.
[221] Galestin 1987, 44–45.
[222] Bernard 1974, 302. See also Wood 2012, 209–215.
[223] Boardman 1988, 733–751, nos. 271–427 (O. Palagia).
[224] Statuette: Bernard 1974, fig. 13. Coins: Bopearachchi 1991, pls. 4–6.

of a type developed in the Hellenistic period and is similar to a small bronze Herakles herm found at Delos.[225]

Priapos/Priapus (**115**–**117**)

The rustic fertility deity Priapos is the subject of three statuettes. The god is depicted more frequently in Roman art than in Greek and regularly appears in the form of an ithyphallic hermaic pillar in sacro-idyllic landscape paintings and reliefs.[226] Two of the Ashmolean statuettes [**116, 117**] take the form of a herm; the third [**115**] is a full figure but also has a distinctly pillar-like appearance, standing atop a tall circular base and wearing an elongated *modius* on the head. All thee figures likely served as terminals or otherwise decorated a larger object.

Other minor deities, heroes and mythological creatures (Fig. 2.7)

Mythological and semi-mythological beings that were part of the retinue of Dionysos make up a small but distinct group among the Ashmolean bronzes. Silenos is depicted in two high quality decorative busts of a well-known type [**133**, **134**].[227] These would have served as attachments for the *fulcra* of luxury bronze couches in a wealthy house or villa. A further Silenos, probably from Egypt, served as a decorative foot for a brazier, krater, small altar or base [**135**].[228] Dionysian imagery also includes two seated satyr figures [**131**, **132**] and two or three maenads [**127**–**129**]. One of the maenads [**128**] is a fulcrum bust attachment that I. Manfrini-Aragno has identified as Bacchus, but which contains a swell at the breast that suggests a female figure.[229] **129** is a relatively large statuette that probably dates to the fourth century BC. It shows a woman in the act of dancing, head

[225] Kreeb 1988, 50, no. S.3.3.
[226] Megow 1997, 1043.
[227] See Barr-Sharrar 1987, 84–91 for a typology of the decorative bust attachments.
[228] Franken 1996, 106.
[229] See catalogue entry.

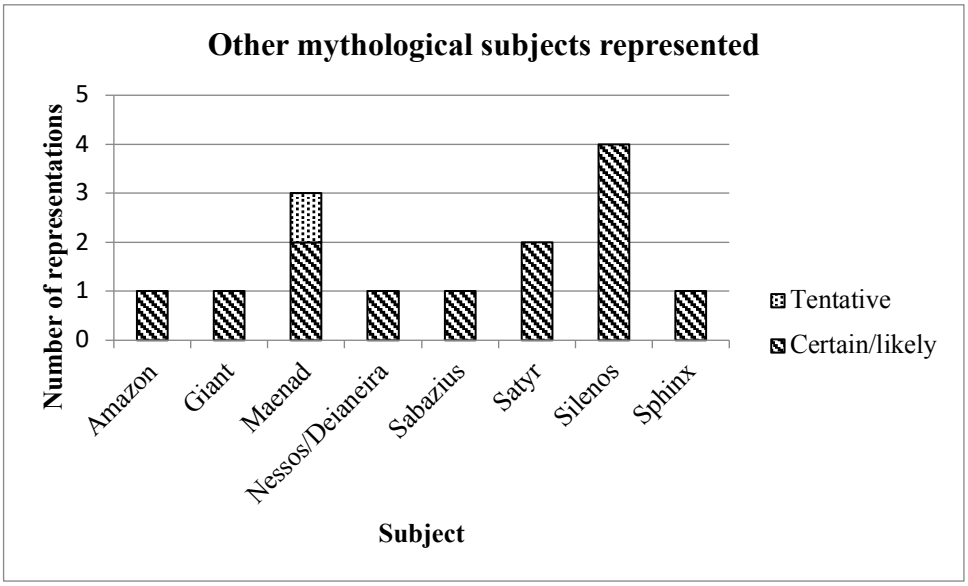

Fig. 2.7. Other mythological subjects represented in the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman small bronzes.

thrown back and garments swirling in a lunge. This is a posture developed in Classical art to depict vigorous or ecstatic dancing and used often for satyrs and maenads.[230] However, the figure does not have any attributes of a maenad and may simply be a dancing woman. Two further statuettes of satyrs are likely Renaissance bronzes [**193**, **194**], though they are both based on ancient motifs.[231]

Apart from Harpokrates, other Greek and Roman representations of Egyptian deities are not especially numerous. Bes is represented twice [**56**, **57**], Osiris [**112**] and Ptah [**118**], once each. A baboon-headed deity wearing a *hemhem* crown may be a representation of Thoth [**122**].[232] A fragment of a relatively large statuette depicting a falcon-headed Horus dressed as a Roman soldier [**106**] is notable for reportedly having been found in Britain and retaining much of its clay core, though it may be a modern

[230] Cf., for example the fifth century dancing maenad reliefs from Athens. Touchette 1995, 5–17.
[231] See catalogue entries.
[232] See Dasen 1993, 96.

import to the island.[233] One finely made statuette appears to be a syncretism of Serapis and Asklepios or Zeus [**120**]. The figure wears a *modius* on his head, an attribute of Serapis, but the way in which his himation is worn is much more commonly found on sculptures of the healing god.[234] Isis-Fortuna, another syncretic deity found frequently in other bronze statuettes collections and in Roman *lararia*, is represented only once at the Ashmolean [**78**].

The eastern goddess Cybele is depicted in a well-known seated pose that adapts the form of a statue of the goddess known to have stood in the central barrier (*euripus*) of the Circus Maximus in Rome [**58**].[235] The Ashmolean collection contains two, possibly three, depictions of Cybele's consort Atys [**53**–**55**]. The two more certain depictions are both heads from statuettes (or busts) and are recognisable primarily by their Phrygian caps. The third example [**55**] also wears a Phrygian cap but is otherwise nude. The nudity is unusual for seated depictions of Atys and the figure's rocky seat suggests a rural setting appropriate for a shepherd, iconographical clues that point to a possible alternative identification as Ganymede.[236]

A few other representations are culturally specific. An Etruscan Lasa [**109**] that served as a patera handle betrays the influence of Hellenic forms in the rendering of the head. One of the best-preserved and finest statuettes in the collection is the statuette of a Lar [**108**]. This dancing figure is typical of the higher levels of bronze statuette production in the late Republic and early Augustan periods, employing a Hellenistic style for composing the drapery and the figure's sense of movement while maintaining

[233] See below, p. 85.
[234] See catalogue entry.
[235] Humphrey 1986, 273–275.
[236] See catalogue entry.

classical features for the head of this purely Roman subject.[237] Another typically Roman deity is the much later figure of a Genius [**79**]. This iconography of this figure is most commonly associated with the Genius Populi Romani (GPR), but this identification is usually only secure when the figure is accompanied by an inscription or appears alongside the Genius Senatus. As H. Kunckel argues in her study on the Roman Genius, at this late date the GPR had lost much of its political significance and this figure may instead represent the genius of the household or locality.[238] Without knowing the original context for the statuette, it is not possible to be more specific. The rustic Roman deity Silvanus is represented by a single statuette [**121**] with some attributes of Herakles (club and horn), with whom the deity was sometime connected in Roman inscriptions and art.[239] Although the Roman goddess Fortuna is often assimilated with the Greek goddess Tyche, the two statuettes in Ashmolean collection adhere to a highly standardised Roman iconography [**77**, **78**]. Both are shown as a draped woman holding a ship's rudder with the right hand and a cornucopia in the crook of the left arm. The latter [**78**], in addition, wears a tall crown consisting of bovine horns, a sun disc and two plumes, an attribute of Isis denoting the syncretisation of Fortuna with the Egyptian goddess.

An assortment of other subjects is represented in the collection. These include two representations of Nike/Victoria [**110**, **111**] and two different personifications [**113**, **114**]. Other subjects found only once in the collection are figures of Icarus [**107**], a Giant [**126**], a Sphinx [**138**], a group depicting Nessus and Deianeira [**130**] and a votive hand of Sabazius [**137**]. Tentatively identified statuettes include a male figure wearing a head

[237] Wissowa argues that the iconography of the Lares derives from southern Italian representations of Dionysos (1912, 172). Waites (1920, 255–256) prefers to see the 'dancing Lar' as derived from the Kabiri-Dioskouroi.
[238] Kunckel 1974, 72.
[239] Dorcey 1992, 51.

covering as Saturn [**119**] and female figure wearing a short chiton that exposes one breast as Atalanta or an Amazon [**125**]. Two further male statuettes depict the Syrian syncretised hero Adonis-Tammuz and an unidentified deity or hero [**123**, **124**].

Human figures (Fig. 2.8)

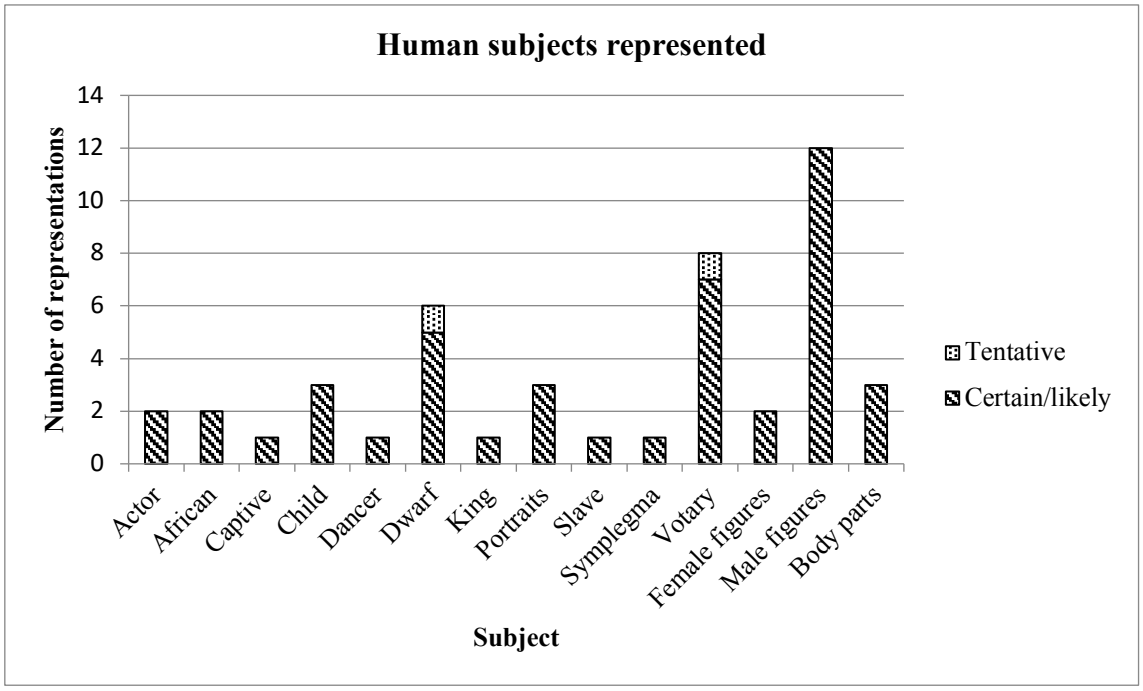

Fig. 2.8. Human subjects represented in the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman small bronzes.

Genre and Grotesques

Actors, genre figures and grotesques are well represented by several small but fine bronzes. Within this group are depicted two New Comedy actors [**142**, **143**], two Africans [**144**, **145**], a captive [**146**], five or six dwarves [**151–156**] and a crouching slave [**158**]. There are also several figures engaging in exhibitionist activity. One shows a bearded kroatalist, dancing with his very large phallus tucked between his legs so that the tip points behind him [**150**]. The appearance of the figure may have been intended to amuse, but this type of dance also had an apotropaic function.[240] The statuette of a hunchbacked

[240] See Masséglia 2015, 289–291.

boy exposing his penis [**149**] may also occupy the space between being an object of amusement and providing protection.[241] One small bronze with clearer erotic intention appears to have been attached to some larger object and shows two couples engaged in sexual intercourse on a boat [**159**], a theme also found in Egyptianising Roman paintings and mosaics dating from the first to the third centuries AD.[242]

Votaries

The standing figures include a number of male and females in the act of making an offering [**160**–**167**]. These are Hellenistic bronzes of Italic manufacture and are characterised by the presence of a patera, usually in the right hand, and a small round incense box (*accera*) in the left. They are generally small (less than 10 centimetres) and show a figure dressed in a himation leaving one shoulder bare in the case of male figures and donning a chiton underneath the himation when a female is represented. Statuettes of both sexes wear leafy crowns atop the head.



Fig. 2.9. Front, right side and back views of an Etruscan votary figure [**163**]. H: 4.9 cm.

[241] See catalogue entry.
[242] See catalogue entry.

Like the Italic Herakles figures, Etruscan votaries are especially numerous in both local Italian and international collections. The majority are small, unexceptional figures that exhibit a pervasive two-dimensionality in their manufacture, to the point that many are actually concave when viewed from the back (Fig. 2.9). Several of the Ashmolean examples [**162**, **163**, **165**, **166**] display these characteristics, a sign of having been 'mass produced' using two-piece moulds for quickly producing wax models to be invested and then cast in bronze. These small, lower quality statuettes are particularly numerous as votive offerings at sanctuary sites in northern and central Etruria and Umbria.[243]

Portraits

A number of statuettes exhibit portrait-like features, but only a few are identifiable with any degree of certainty. Aside from statuettes depicting one of the Dioskouroi, which often wear the long hairstyle with central *anastole* associated with portraits of Alexander, two other statuettes exhibit similar hairstyles [**179**, **180**]. **179** is a reclining figure of a suitable shape to have been attached as a decoration to the fulcrum of a couch. The youth wears a headband that may be intended to represent a diadem. **180** is a youth crowning himself, a well-known motif used in large and small-scale sculpture for victorious athletes and the hero Herakles.[244] Without further identifying attributes or context, it is impossible to discern whether these figures were intended to depict Alexander himself, or if the features used for images of the king are being redeployed to produce more generic figures.

[243] See Bentz 1992, 167–178 for a discussion of the cultic associations of male and female votary figures.
[244] Cf. **103**. The best known large-scale example of an athlete is probably the so-called Getty Bronze in Malibu (JPGM inv. 77.AB.30). See Daehner and Lapatin 2015, 210–211, no. 12, with bibliography.

Identifiable portraits are infrequent among the Ashmolean statuettes, though there are some examples of deities that exhibit portrait-like features. One Hermes statuette [**36**] displays a short, straight hairstyle similar to that seen on portraits of Trajan.[245] Across collections, depictions of Hermes-Thoth (such as **32**–**34**) often exhibit portrait-like facial features associated with Ptolemaic rulers.[246] An extended study of the possible survival of generalised Ptolemaic portrait features in Roman statuettes representing Hermes-Thoth is presented in Chapter 6.

Dubitanda and modern imitations

Statuettes that are most likely post-antique creations comprise approximately 8% of the catalogue (sixteen statuettes). These consist of subjects that are frequently represented, such as Aphrodite [**185**–**187**, **200**], Eros [**191**, **198, 200**] and Herakles [**192**, **197**, **198**], as well as some that otherwise appear only once or twice such as Apollon [**190**], satyrs [**193**, **194**], Orpheus [**199**], other female figures [**188**, **189**, **196**], and the Lupa Romana nursing Romulus and Remus [**195**].

Identical or nearly identical parallels can be found in other bronze statuette collections for the majority of these figures. Such is the case for one of the larger statuettes in the collection [**190**]. The figure holds a thick ring in the left hand against the leg, while raising the right arm to shoulder height as it clutches a cylindrical object. The head is small and the hair gathered at the back of the head. This is not a very common type and is known from only four other examples.[247] Identification as Apollon is

[245] Cf. the so-called Trajan of Ottenhusen, a seated figure shown with a tortoise and a late first century or Trajanic hairstyle. This figure is most likely the portrait of a private late first century individual as Hermes. Dahmen 2001, 85 and 197, no. 200.
[246] Below, section 6.5.
[247] See catalogue record.

suggested by a statuette in Trieste, which is identical in almost every aspect except that the hair is gathered into a bow at the top of the head in a hairstyle characteristic of the deity.[248] Another bronze in the Netherlands so closely resembles the Ashmolean figure in details and proportions that they must have been made from the same model.[249] A third statuette once in the Badrutt collection in St. Moritz, Switzerland also bears a resemblance.[250]

Other statuettes have identical or nearly identical parallels that have been identified as forgeries and imitations. Exact modern copies of **188** and **189** can be found in Trieste and were likely inspired by Bronze Age finds coming from Crete.[251] A type of Herakles figure [**192**] has entered numerous collections, but has been identified as the creation of a nineteenth-century north Italian workshop specialising in *all' antica* statuettes.[252] A north Italian school is probably also responsible for the model on which **196** is based.[253] Examples of the satyr **193** are also present in many collections and have long been recognised as sixteenth-century products.[254] More recently, the satyr type **194** has been recognised as a modern creation.[255] **186** and **187** each have unusual iconography and are types found in other collections. The hairstyle and rendering of the face on **186** are unclassical and its elongated style can be found in other statuettes of doubtful authenticity.[256] **187** does not find any parallels in known ancient statue types, but is nearly

[248] Civici Musei Trieste inv. 3466. Càssola Guida 1979, no. 66. p 82.
[249] Heerlen Thermenmuseum inv. 2845; Zadoks-Josephus Jitta, Peters and Es 1967, v.1 no. 3.
[250] Badrutt: Reinach, *Rép.* II 5, 9 (as 'Zeus').
[251] Civici museo di storia ed arte Inv. 5362, 5363. Càssola Guida 1979, nos.107, 108.
[252] Franzoni 1966, 50–51.
[253] Cf. a late sixteenth or early seventeenth-century statuette of Artemis in Ravenna (Mus. Nat. inv. 1390). Martini, L. 1985 95, no. 33.
[254] See Bode 1930, 23, no. 105, pl. 35.
[255] See Rolland 1965, 189, no. 455.
[256] Cf. a male statuette in Lausanne: Musée Cantonal d'Archéologie, inv. 76. Leibundgut 1976, no. 173, pl. 91.

identical to statuettes in other collections, including one in the National Museum of Ireland.[257]

Some other statuettes are labelled as modern based on both iconographical and technical grounds. The hairstyle of Eros **191** is very unusual. Combined with the colour and excellent preservation of the artificial patina, the statuette is more characteristic of a seventeenth-century bronze. A similarly well-preserved artificial patina can be seen on a figure of Aphrodite [**185**]. This statuette appears to have been purposefully cast without arms, ostensibly to give it the appearance of an incomplete ancient artefact. Finally, a very small figure of the Lupa Romana nursing the twins Romulus and Remus [**195**] adheres to the iconography seen in the famous Capitoline Wolf, but which is absent in known Roman representations of the group. In these, the wolf almost invariably turns its head back to look toward the infants. The children were not added to the Capitoline group until the late fifteenth century. This well-known statuary group was one of the most visited in Rome. The Ashmolean statuette is most likely a miniaturised version intended as an inexpensive souvenir from a trip to Rome. This phenomenon can also be seen in the prevalence of small-scale copies of the equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, another very famous Roman bronze statue.

The evidence for the post-antique origins of **197**–**200** is treated extensively in the next chapter.[258]

[257] Nat. Mus. of Ireland inv. 1894.598. Mulvin 2006, 61, no. 33.
[258] Below, section 3.3.

Provenance

The range and ambiguity of the data that can fall under the label 'provenance' is problematic and often obfuscates the high degree of uncertainty and speculation involved in determining the original findspots for antiquities and their subsequent movements. E. Marlowe has recently outlined the methodological problems inherent in lumping together different types of information under the general term 'provenance' and has called for greater effort on the part of museums and scholars in making transparent the sources of information used to assign findspots and the object histories of antiquities.[259] In the context of this thesis, the term 'provenance' is used to encompass all information regarding how statuettes entered the Ashmolean collection (e. g. means of acquisition), previous ownership history and the location where statuettes were found or otherwise entered the historical record. An attempt has been made, however, to convey the high degree of uncertainty under which a discussion of the Ashmolean material must labour.

The bulk of the collection was formed at a time when scientific archaeology and systematic excavations began to be practiced in Britain and elsewhere. However, the number of bronze statuettes coming from such sources was (and still is) strongly outnumbered by the number of isolated or unrecorded finds. This has resulted in a situation where the associated contexts for many bronze statuettes remain unknown. As discussed above, the primary architects of the Ashmolean collection of bronzes were not excavators, nor even archaeologists, but collectors, who, while demonstrably supportive of the aims and advancement of the discipline of archaeology, still obtained the majority of artefacts in their collections from sources outside of well-recorded excavations. John

[259] Marlowe 2013, 44-46; 128-29.

Evans was somewhat exceptional in this regard, taking care to discover as much as possible about the location of discoveries, if not their exact archaeological contexts. However, he still relied heavily on the testimony of the sources from which he purchased his antiquities.[260]

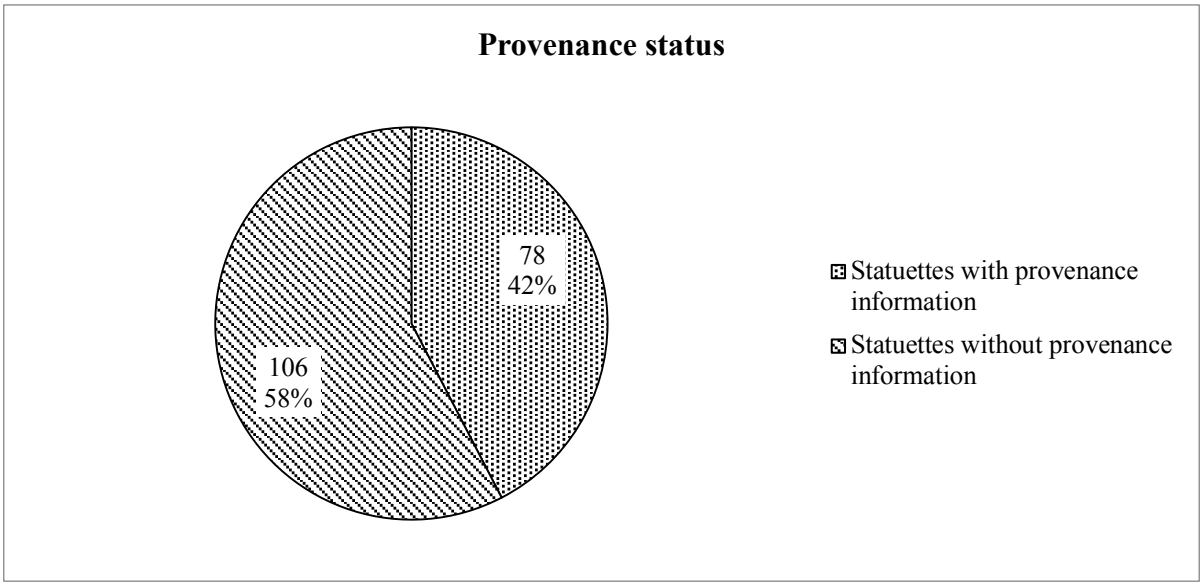

Fig. 2.10. Proportion of statuettes in the Ashmolean collection with some provenance information.

As a result, provenance information for most of the collection is lacking. Where it is provided, it consists primarily of reported find spots or information on the place of purchase (Fig. 2.10). This kind of information can sometimes be useful for developing a broad picture of the kinds of bronze statuettes being found on a regional level, but the highly portable nature of the material frustrates any firm conclusions. Basing the interpretation of bronzes on places of purchase is even more tenuous, especially since a large number of the purchases were made at well-known centres for the trade in antiquities and may have originally come from another part of the ancient world entirely, changing hands several times before entering a collection. For most of the Ashmolean

[260] MacGregor 2008a, 27–28.

bronzes a discussion of provenance tells us more about the collectors who built the collection than it does about the Greeks and Romans who made and used the statuettes.

Ancient peoples are not the only ones who buried or lost their bronze statuettes. Further complicating analysis based on provenance are those statuettes which may have been abandoned or lost sometime in the post-antique period (*aliena*). A particularly illustrative example is a figure of Horus in Roman military dress [**106**] ploughed up in a field near Kingham in Gloucestershire. This unusual statuette has been used as evidence for the presence of Egyptian cults in Roman Britain.[261] A *shawabti* of the 26th–27th Dynasty was later found about a half mile away. An investigation by D. Brown discovered that the founder of a nearby school used to winter in Egypt and maintained a small museum.[262] There are no records of what happened to the objects in the museum after his death in 1929, nor whether they were even Egyptian, but the account raises the strong possibility that the bronze Horus and the *shawabti* were brought to England from Egypt sometime in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century and subsequently lost or discarded. No other Roman remains were found in the vicinity, so despite the precise find location, a British provenance must remain in doubt.

[261] Harris and Harris 1965, 133.
[262] Letter from D. Brown dated 20 January 1970 in the object history file.

Fig. 2.11 shows the broad regions where 78 of the statuettes are reported to have been found or purchased; no information on provenance is recorded for the other 106 bronzes in the catalogue. The chart reveals that where a find the spot or place of purchase is known, the highest number of examples have come from Italy (twenty-seven statuettes). The dominance of Italy in this respect is not particularly surprising given the extremely active antiquities trade occurring there in the late nineteenth century, especially in Rome.

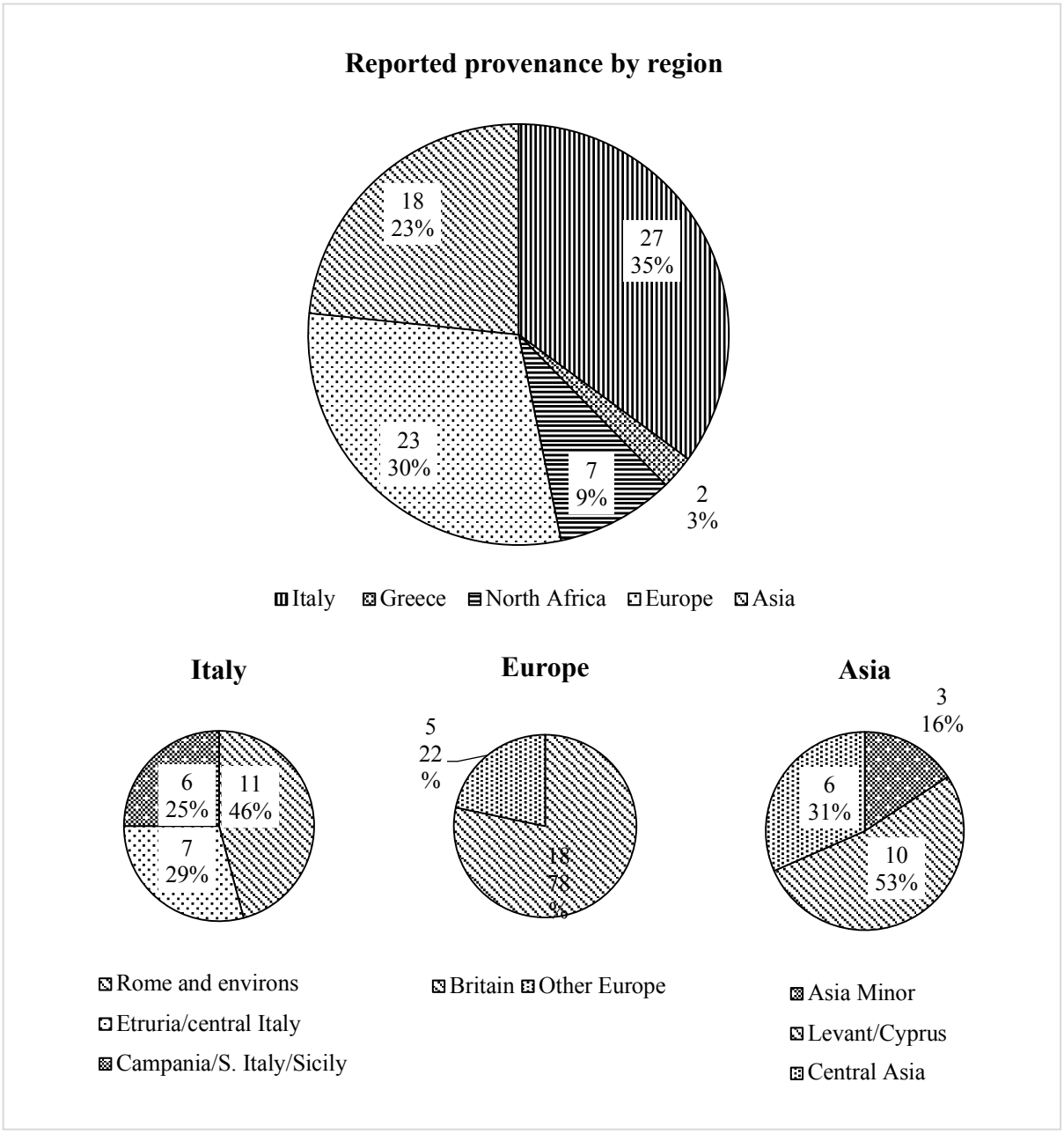

Fig 2.11. Reported provenances of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean collection.

In this particular case, the activities of Fortnum account for the majority of bronzes that have come from Italy. Fortnum did most of his collecting during his annual winter sojourns in Italy. In addition, records are better for the Fortnum bronzes than for most other acquisitions thanks to the manuscript catalogue compiled by the collector.[263] This likely has the effect of inflating the number of provenances from Italy relative to other regions. Approximately 63% (17 statuettes) of the bronzes that are reported as being found or purchased in Italy were once part of the Fortnum collection. There is a high probability that other statuettes in the catalogue from the Fortnum collection with no recorded provenance information were also purchased (and found) in Italy. This is especially the case for the distinctly Italic style of three Herakles figures [**90**, **94**, **95**] and a male head [**182**].

With twenty-three examples, statuettes with a reported European provenance comprise the second largest group. In this context, the term Europe describes the territories that made up the provinces of the Roman Empire on the continent (excluding Italy and Greece) along with Britain. Romano-British statuettes make up 78% of the European examples (eighteen statuettes). The figures from Britain have the most precise information about find spots and circumstances. As a rule, however, the examples in the Ashmolean have not come to light as the result of excavation. Most were found near the surface via metal detectors or ploughed up in agricultural fields. A number can be associated with sanctuary or settlement sites. Several bronze figures of animals, jewellery, model weapons and armour and other votive objects associated with the remains of a Romano-Celtic temple have been found at Woodeaton, Oxfordshire, where **11** and **12**

[263] Fortnum 1889.

were also discovered.[264] A second or third century AD figure of a bound captive [**146**] was found near the Roman fort site of Vindolanda close to Hadrian's Wall and has been associated with the slave trade.[265]

The largest statuette in the catalogue, a 40 centimetre high Eros [**63**], was reportedly ploughed up near Cirencester, ancient Corinium Dubinnorum, in 1732. The associated contexts were not recorded and Thomas Hearne later expressed doubts about the authenticity of the findspot as it was being shown around.[266] S. Rudder speculates that the area where it was found may have been an administrative building, a 'Praetorium', based on the observations of a Dr Stuckley. A mosaic pavement, coins, several vaults and a hypocaust were found in the vicinity.[267] The statuette entered the University Collection sometime before 1767 and formed part of the Bodleian Library collection. It is specifically singled out by Arthur Evans in his 1884 report to the Visitors as a vital candidate for transfer to the Ashmolean collection.[268]

The impact of John Evans' collecting and subsequent donation of most of his collection to the Ashmolean in 1927 by Arthur Evans is evident in makeup of the Romano-British bronzes. Although John Evans did not collect objects from the Roman period to the extent that he did the prehistoric and Iron Age material with which he made his name, his collection did contain a significant number of Roman and post-antique objects. Of the figures from Britain, seven were at one time in the collection of John

[264]See Kirk 1949 on the bronzes discovered in early excavations. See Bagnall Smith 1998 for subsequent votive finds and previous bibliography.
[265] Jackson 2005, 147.
[266] Hearnes' assessment: Hearne 1921, 41 (reproduced in Henig 1993, 62).
[267] Rudder 1779, 346.
[268] Evans 1884, 9. On date of donation: Stuart Jones 1917/18, 202.

Evans.[269] All were reported found at known Roman sites in Hertfordshire or Suffolk. A small male figure [**181**] was found in at Boxmoor Station in 1849 and acquired by Evans who later conducted some limited excavations in 1852 and 1853.[270] Another figure, a bust attachment depicting Dionysos [**27**], was found at St. Albans (ancient Verulamium). It was once in the possession R. Grove Lowe, who discovered and excavated the Roman theatre there.[271] Another bust of Hermes from Cowlinge [**45**], Suffolk was once in the possession of Henry Prigg, from whom Evans purchased many antiquities.[272]

Eighteen of the statuettes in the catalogue have a reported provenance from Asia. The designation 'Asia' is used to incorporate the areas east of the Aegean and includes Asia Minor, Cyprus, the Levant and the central Asian territories ruled by the Macedonians during the Hellenistic period. 'Asia' is also implied to cover the Black Sea region, though there are no bronzes in this collection purported to come from any Black Sea localities. Of these eighteen, over half (ten statuettes) were found or purchased in the Levant or Cyprus.[273] All but two of these [**62**, **64**] were donated to the Ashmolean by Greville Chester. Chester's extensive travels in the region can be traced through his articles, correspondence and catalogues.[274] He collected thousands of Near Eastern and Graeco-Roman objects that he donated to the Ashmolean. Many hundreds more came into the collection after his death in 1892.

[269] Cat. **18, 27, 43, 45, 53, 54, 181**.
[270] Evans 1852. See also MacGregor 2008b, 133–34.
[271] Grove Lowe 1848.
[272] MacGregor 2008a, 28.
[273] Cat. **38**, **62**, **64**, **66**, **69**, **70**, **77**, **104**, **110**, **183**.
[274] Seidmann, n.d., 20.

Although it cannot be confirmed, one further statuette of Athena [**20**] is also likely from Syria. It was formerly in the collection of Louis de Clercq, who collected almost exclusively in the Levant.

Another group of six statuettes are Hellenistic works said to come from Bactria or Gandhara (modern Afghanistan and Pakistan). The Ashmolean's Department of Eastern Art purchased five of the six in the 1990s. All are representations of Herakles and were purchased from the private art market: **100** and **101** from the auction house Spink & Son; **102** and **105** from J. Knowles of London; and **103** from R. C. Senior, a major collector of Indo-Scythian coins.[275] A sixth figure from this region depicts the draped lower half of a young god or hero [**123**] and was once in the University of Oxford India Institute. The drapery is consistent with that seen on statuettes produced in Syria thought to represent Adonis-Tammuz.[276]

Of the three bronzes from Asia Minor, two come from the Fortnum collection. **141** is a diminutive figure of a Roman emperor, perhaps Commodus on horseback, purchased by Fortnum in Smyrna. The other is the 32.5 centimetre statuette of Aphrodite [**1**] that was one of the most prized of Fortnum's ancient bronzes. Also known as the Hertz Venus, it was reportedly found near the ancient site city of Stratonikeia (modern Muğla) in southwest Turkey by a local and sold to a Capt. E. O'Meilly in 1841. The statuette was subsequently sold to Hertz in 1846. Fortnum saw the Aphrodite in Hertz's window and attempted to buy it from him. In 1856 Hertz sold his collection to Joseph Mayer, and in 1859 Mayer was forced to put the collection up for auction when the City

[275] The Ashmolean acquired Senior's coin collection in 1998. My thanks to S. Glenn for discussing Senior's collection with me.
[276] Boardman 1992, 106.

of Liverpool could not raise a subscription to purchase it. At that point Fortnum was finally able to acquire the statuette.[277]

With only two examples, bronzes with reported provenance from Greece are rare in the collection, at least for the Hellenistic and Roman periods. **174** is a male torso of with a preserved height of 26 centimetres that belonged to a finely modelled figure purportedly found on the island of Crete. The other figure from Greece [**14**] is a crudely made nude female figure in a *pudica* posture surmounted on an open-worked disk, perhaps representing the goddess Aphrodite. The pose suggests that the figure is intended to recall the Capitoline or Medici Aphrodite type and so must postdate Praxiteles' Cnidian statue, but little other information is available except that it was purchased in Athens and supposedly came from the Athenian Acropolis.

The lack of material from Greece is somewhat deceptive as the Ashmolean does contain many more examples Greek bronzes from the Geometric, Archaic and Classical periods, but these are beyond the scope of this study. Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes from Greece are found much more rarely than those of earlier periods in most collections outside of Greece.

Chester's 1881 catalogue of the Egyptian collections at the Ashmolean lists very few Greek or Roman bronze figures from Egypt.[278] Of these, six are of interest to this study and only three are figures in the round, two depicting Eros and the third a female deity. R. G. Gayer-Anderson collected prolifically in Egypt, so it is likely that several of

[277] Warren 1999a, 59.
[278] Chester 1881b, 67, nos. 1090, 1094–1097.

the statuettes given by Beazley were formerly in his collection and thus found or purchased in Egypt, but this cannot be confirmed.

Chapter 3: The Corpus of Bronze Statuettes

3.1. Introduction

This chapter considers the Ashmolean's collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes against the larger corpus of classical bronze statuettes surviving from antiquity and within the wider historical context of bronze statuette collecting. By examining the contents of museum collections containing a significant number of bronze statuettes, the chapter seeks to determine a baseline against which the Ashmolean figures can be analysed as representative products of Greek, Roman and Italian visual culture during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. In so doing, the chapter also examines how the historical circumstances, collectors' motivations, institutional priorities, the antiquities markets and, crucially, the receptions and reaction to classical sculpture has shaped the composition of bronzes statuette collections. How far have the means and mechanisms by which bronze statuettes were collected and entered museum collections dictated their current appearance? Moreover, to what degree do bronze statuette collections owe their compositions to the *demand* for specific subjects and figure types on the part of collectors and other agents and what do their appearances owe to the *supply* of available subjects and types—both genuine antiquities and the vast number of imitations, falsifications and forgeries?

As the previous chapter addressed the question of how the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes came to look the way it does, this chapter, likewise, applies the inquiry to several other European and North American museum collections. The first part of the chapter examines the historical development of several collections and quantifies the representations of a select number of subjects within those collections that are also present in the Ashmolean Museum. Only a small sample of the

collections with a substantial number of classical bronzes can be considered within the scope of this thesis. Dozens of such collections exist, not only in the major national and regional archaeological museums, but also throughout smaller university collections and local museums, to say nothing of the large number of private collections that remain unpublished.[279] In choosing specific collections for closer examination I have sought a balance between those formed through the processes of export and expropriation and those that are substantially composed of local and regional archaeological finds. The intent behind this methodology is to ensure that the sample under analysis is as representative as possible—both in subject matter and provenance—of the diverse regions of the Hellenistic *oikoumene* and the Roman Empire. Major northern European and American national collections acquired a disproportionate number of their statuettes from the traditional classical lands: first and foremost Italy, and later Greece, Asia Minor, Egypt and the Levant. On the other hand, many smaller regional museums have accumulated archaeological material from the immediate vicinity, though it quickly becomes apparent that these collections also contain a significant number of statuettes that were acquired with no secure knowledge of provenance or findspot. The examination of regional collections presents an opportunity to determine the types of statuettes found in other parts of the classical world, where international collectors and the antiquities market were less focused. In other words, such bronze collections as were amalgamated through the offices of collectors on the Grand Tour or through the wave of nationalistic museum building in Europe and the United States during the nineteenth century will be compared alongside those collections developed, at least in part, as a

[279] For examples of published private collections with a substantial number of classical bronzes, see J. Paul Getty Museum 1994 (Fleischman collection, now at the Getty) and Bothmer 1990 (Shelby White and Leon Levy collection, now at the Metropolitan Museum).

means of collecting, preserving and interpreting the archaeological and historical heritage of a specific region.[280]

The first part of this chapter, then, examines the *results* of historical collecting processes as they relate to classical bronze statuettes, building a picture of the iconographic landscape against which the subjects and types present in the Ashmolean collection can be evaluated. The second part examines aspects of those *processes* themselves, framed as the historical interaction between demand and supply for ancient bronze statuettes. As was seen in the previous chapter, a small number of collectors played a disproportionately large role in building the Ashmolean collection of bronzes, particularly the specialist collector C. D. E. Fortnum. The influence of individual and specialist collectors can also be seen in the composition of other significant collections of bronzes. For example, the bronzes donated to the British Museum by Richard Payne Knight, who, like Fortnum, specialised in collecting bronze statuettes, formed the foundation upon which upon which the museum would build.[281] Since the beginnings of modern collecting, bronze statuettes have been coveted antiquities, and although competition for genuine Roman, Etruscan and Greek statuettes often remained fierce, the *all'antica* creations that began to be produced in the fifteenth century and the skill with which bronze casters in Rome, Naples and elsewhere could reproduce famous large-scale statues in bronze and imitate ancient styles on a small scale put bronze statuettes with a veneer of antiquity within reach of collectors with even modest means.[282] As a result of this reception of statuary forms from the classical word, the supply of bronze statuettes depicting classical subjects was greatly expanded and has subsequently affected the composition of museum bronze statuette

[280] See Dyson 2006, 133–171 on the nationalist museum movement.
[281] On the collecting of Richard Payne Knight, see Penny 1982.
[282] Haskell and Penny 1981, 93 and 124.

collection, where there can be a sometimes alarmingly high number of statuettes of doubtful authenticity. An extended case study examines how this reception has affected the Ashmolean collection specifically.

3.2. Collections of bronze statuettes

The contents of European and North American bronze statuette collections

The following discussion represents an attempt to construct an accurate picture of the types and subjects of bronze statuettes existing in museum collections. The purpose of this investigation is to establish the characteristics of the corpus of bronze statuettes to permit a comparison with the Ashmolean collection.

The level of detail with which each collection can be constructed is quite variable. The print catalogues for most of the 'imperial' collections were published over a century ago and one hundred years of history has altered the contents of these collections. Where possible, this work supplements published catalogues with digital databases and more recently published reports to build a more accurate picture of the contents of the collections. However, the fact remains that the comparisons made in this chapter will inevitably reflect the state of the various collections at different moments in time. A further caveat: for the larger collections, images have rarely been available for all the statuettes recorded in catalogues and online databases. It was not practical to obtain images for all of these; as a result, I have not seen an image of every statuette used in this comparison between collections, and therefore acknowledge the possibility that the identity of some figures may be incorrect and that others may not be genuine antiquities.

This analysis is intended to provide a broad picture of the corpus of ancient bronze statuettes within which the Ashmolean bronzes can be placed. The subjects selected for comparison were chosen because they are well-represented in the Ashmolean collection. As was discussed in the previous chapter, two grouping can be distinguished amongst subject represented in the Ashmolean collection: statuettes depicting Aphrodite, Eros, Hermes and Herakles dominate while statuettes of Athena, the Dioskouroi, Harpokrates and Zeus form a secondary, less heavily represented group. Among non-divine representations at the Ashmolean, statuettes of dwarfs form a clearly defined group with numerous representations. These are compared along with the representations of the divinities. The examination of how often and in what proportion these subject occur in other collections provides a useful gauge for determining the degree to which the Ashmolean collection of bronzes is broadly typical of museum bronze collections generally. For each museum only full, freestanding figures in the round or substantially in the round were counted. Fragments, heads, busts, appliques and other furniture fittings were omitted.[283] For each collection, the number of statuettes for each subject has been recorded and represented as a bar graph.

'Imperial' collections

The bronzes from 'imperial' collections are considered first, followed by the collections in regional museums. The term 'imperial' is used here to describe those museums, primarily in northern Europe and the United States, that actively acquired bronze statuettes as part of the 'encyclopaedic' and nationalistic museum projects of the nineteenth century; that is to say, museums where collections are not principally

[283] The reader will thus notice a difference between the numbers of representations for each deity presented in the last chapter and those that serve as the basis for the following analysis.

comprised of archaeological material found within the national borders of the institution. Rather, these contain objects from a wide variety of classical provenances. Six collections are discussed: the British Museum, the Musée du Louvre, the Cabinet des Médailles at the Bibliothèque National de France, the Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Walters Art Gallery.

British Museum (Fig. 3.1)

The collection of ancient bronze statuettes at the British Museum is one of the largest and finest in the world. Bronze statuettes have formed an integral class of ancient artefact from an earlier point and to a greater extent at the British Museum than at most of the other museums investigated in this chapter. The primary source of information for the collection is H. B. Walters' 1899 catalogue.[284] Although dated, the catalogue covers

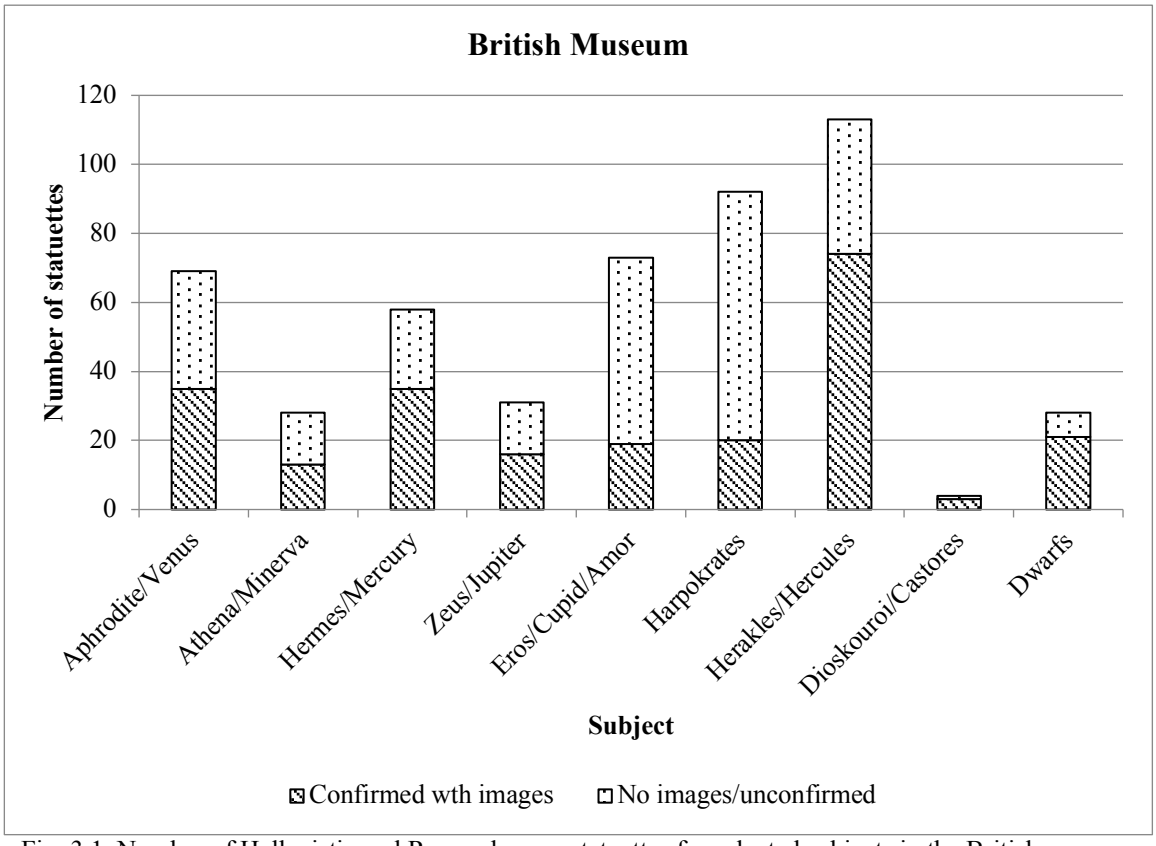

Fig. 3.1. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the British Museum.

[284] Walters 1899.

significant acquisitions from collectors and many of the important bronze treasures and archaeological finds acquired by the museum in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Many other important acquisitions were also made over the course of the twentieth century, for which the museum's online collections database helps to fill out the overall picture of the collection's contents.

The founding collection of Hans Sloane contained very few classical bronzes; in fact it contained a limited number of antiquities overall.[285] The purchase of William Hamilton's collection represents the first significant influx of small classical bronzes into the collection. Serving as British Envoy Extraordinary to the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies from 1764 to 1800, Hamilton's collecting efforts centred on Greek painted vases.[286] However he also amassed a sizeable number of ancient bronze objects.[287] The acquisition of the Townley collection brought in a further number of bronze statuettes in 1805 and 1814.[288] But the most important figure for the development of the classical bronze collection at the British Museum was the collector and scholar Richard Payne Knight. The addition of his more than 800 bronze objects to the British Museum collection after his death in 1824 made it one of the largest and most comprehensive in Europe. In E. Edwards' estimation, the museum's acquisition of Payne Knight's bronzes 'raised it above the famous Museum of Naples'.[289]

[285] On the foundation of the British Museum see Edwards 1996. For Sloane as a collector see the contributions in MacGregor 1994b and the recently published conference papers in Hunter, Walker and MacGregor (eds.) 2012.
[286] The influence that Hamilton's collection of Greek vases and its publication by the Baron d'Hancarville (Pierre-François Hugues) had on British antiquarian and collectors' tastes for the next several decades is well known. See Jenkins 1996.
[287] There were 627 bronze objects in Hamilton's collection when the British Museum purchased it. Approximately half were arms and armour and many more were implements. Edwards 1996, 351.
[288] On Townley's collecting see Vaughan 1988.
[289] Edwards 1996, 412. Edwards is referring to the Real Museo Borbonico at Portici, which held the bronzes found in the royal excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Musée du Louvre (Fig. 3.2)

The Louvre made its first major acquisition of bronze statuettes with the purchase of the Durand collection in 1825. The collection consisted of over 2,000 antiquities. Most of the bronzes had been acquired in Italy although a number were from Gaul. The acquisition vastly expanded the museum's holdings of bronze statuettes, which up to that point had only numbered around 100 objects mainly deriving from the acquisition of the Braschi collection in 1801. Throughout the latter half of the century the collection was augmented by further purchases, including some from the Campana collection in 1862 and the Pourtales collection in 1865. The Louvre collection continued to grow, with many bronzes coming from Syria, Egypt, north Africa, Greece and Asia Minor. Additional purchases were made from the Hoffman and Greau collections.[290]

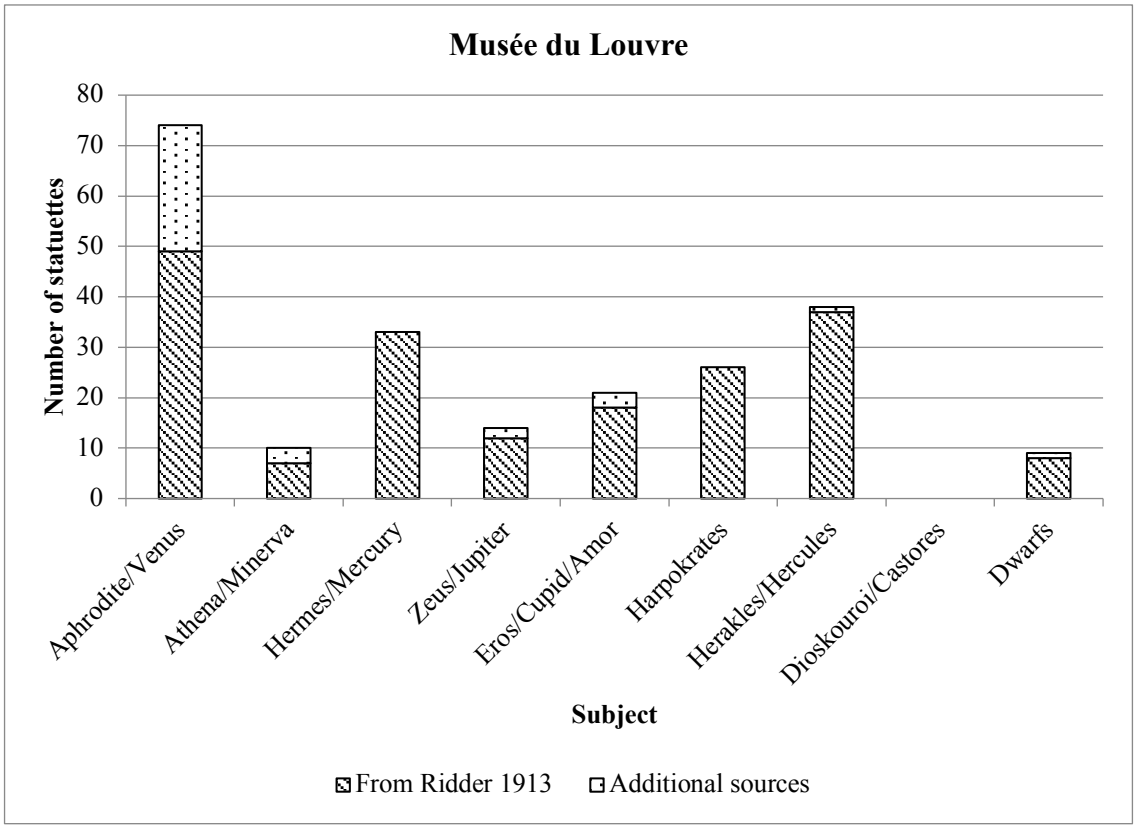

Fig. 3.2. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Musée du Louvre.

[290] Ridder 1913, 3.

A large number of important bronzes from the Levant arrived at the Louvre with the 1967 donation of part of the Louis de Clercq collection by his nephew and heir Henri de Boisgelin. De Clercq had amassed his collection over forty years, mostly in Syria where he had been sent on a scientific mission at the age of twenty-two. He stayed in Beirut in 1862, 1863 and again in 1893. While there, he became friends with Aimé Péretié, chancellor of the French consulate in Beirut and another collector of antiquities. De Clercq received much of Péretié's collection after his death.

De Clercq's approach to collecting provides an illustrative example of how the concept of the 'excavated artefact' had influenced the market for antiquities.[291] Rather than depending on dealers and sourcing his antiquities from various regions of the Mediterranean, de Clercq sought to build his collection from artefacts discovered in the Levant. From Paris he maintained strong ties with Péretié and other antiquaries who supplied him with material from excavations carried out on his behalf.[292] De Clercq's collection was dominated by statuettes of Aphrodite and Eros. Over 40% of the statuettes in the 1905 catalogue compiled by A. de Ridder are representations of these two deities.[293] Although de Clercq's personal taste certainly played an important role in determining the composition of his collection, here we can also detect the role of geography in determining the content of bronze statuette collections. Aphrodite (and by extension, Eros) enjoyed immense popularity in Syria and the Levant. Images of the goddess in bronze and other media appear frequently in the visual repertoire.[294] The

[291] See above, p. 39-40.
[292] Louvre: Atlas database of exhibitions. http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=9311&langue=en, Accessed 4 April 2016.
[293] Ridder 1905, 3–95.
[294] See Jentel 1984; see also MacDonald and Karageorghis 2011 on the near eastern origins of Aphrodite.

abundance of images of Aphrodite and de Clercq's method of collecting from excavations was likely a strong factor in determining the composition of the collection. De Clercq's collection contained 140 statuettes of Aphrodite, of which the Louvre acquired twenty-four.[295] Representations of Athena and of Tyche or Isis-Tyche were also numerous.[296]

Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque nationale de France (Fig. 3.3)

Like many European collections, the Cabinet des médailles at the Bibliothèque nationale de France began its life as a princely cabinet, in this case the Cabinet du Roi. Often traced back to Charles V (r. 1364–1380),[297] this royal collection of objects and curiosities was moved to Versailles in 1684 under Louis XIV (r. 1643–1715). The cabinet returned to

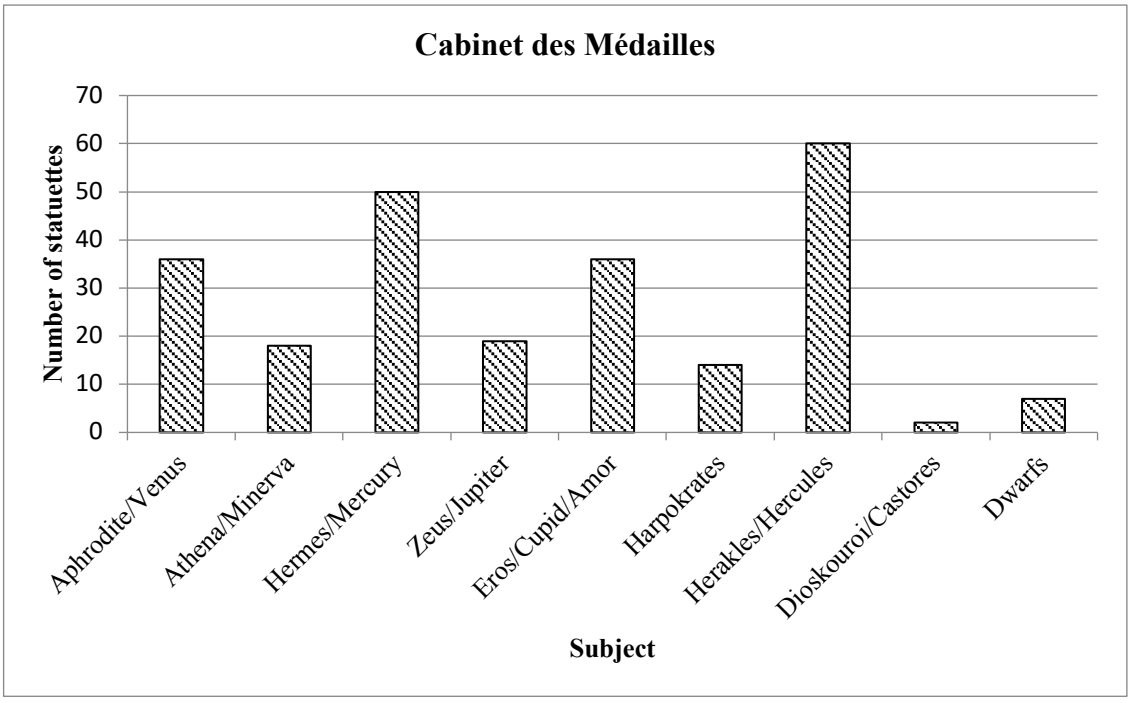

Fig. 3.3. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Cabinet des Médailles, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Paris and the Bibliothèque du Roi in 1740.

[295] Parrot 1968, 323.
[296] One Athena statuette is now in the Ashmolean collection [**20**]. See above, p 53.
[297] Avisseau-Broustet and Colonna 2014, 149. See Sarmant (1994, 5–6), who argues that the cabinet as a continuous collection originated in the sixteenth century.

A focus on collecting classical antiquities characterised the 1719 to 1753 tenure of cabinet Custodian Pierre Gros de Boze, and continued under his successor Abbé Barthélemy from 1753 to 1795. The collection of bronze statuettes grew enormously during this period. The first major influx of bronzes entered the collection in 1727 with the purchase of the cabinet of Nicolas Mahudel (1673–1747). This significant collection of around a thousand antiquities included the former collection of Nicolas-Joseph Foucault (1643–1721), the Intendant du Roi under Louis XIV. Foucault conducted a number of excavations in France and amassed a notable collection.[298] The other major acquisition by the Cabinet was made between 1755 and 1762, over which period Anne Claude, comte de Caylus (1692–1765) donated the majority of his 2,900 antiquities to it.

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Fig. 3.4)

The foundation of an important antiquities collection in Berlin can be traced to the activities of the 'Great' Elector of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm (1620–1688). A skilled politician and military strategist, the Elector laid much of the groundwork for the rise of the Kingdom of Prussia as a major European power. He had already acquired several important collections by 1649 when the earliest surviving inventory of his collection was drawn up. The inventory consists primarily of coins but also offers a summary of other object types, including twenty-three statuettes and heads in bronze.[299] Another inventory dates to 1672 and reveals that the Elector had remained an active collector over the intervening years, nearly tripling the number of bronze statuettes in his collection to sixty-two.[300] The cabinet became one of international importance with the

[298] For Foucault's bronzes see Babelon and Blanchet 1895, XIV–XXV. On Foucault, see Foucault and Baudry 1862.
[299] Heres 1977a, 95.
[300] Heres 1977a, 96.

acquisition of the collection of the well-known Roman antiquarian Giovanni Pietro Bellori (1619–1696) in 1698. This included a number of Etruscan mirrors, Roman lamps in bronze and high quality Roman bronze statuettes.[301] These objects were catalogued by Lorenz Beger in the third volume of the *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus Selectus*, published

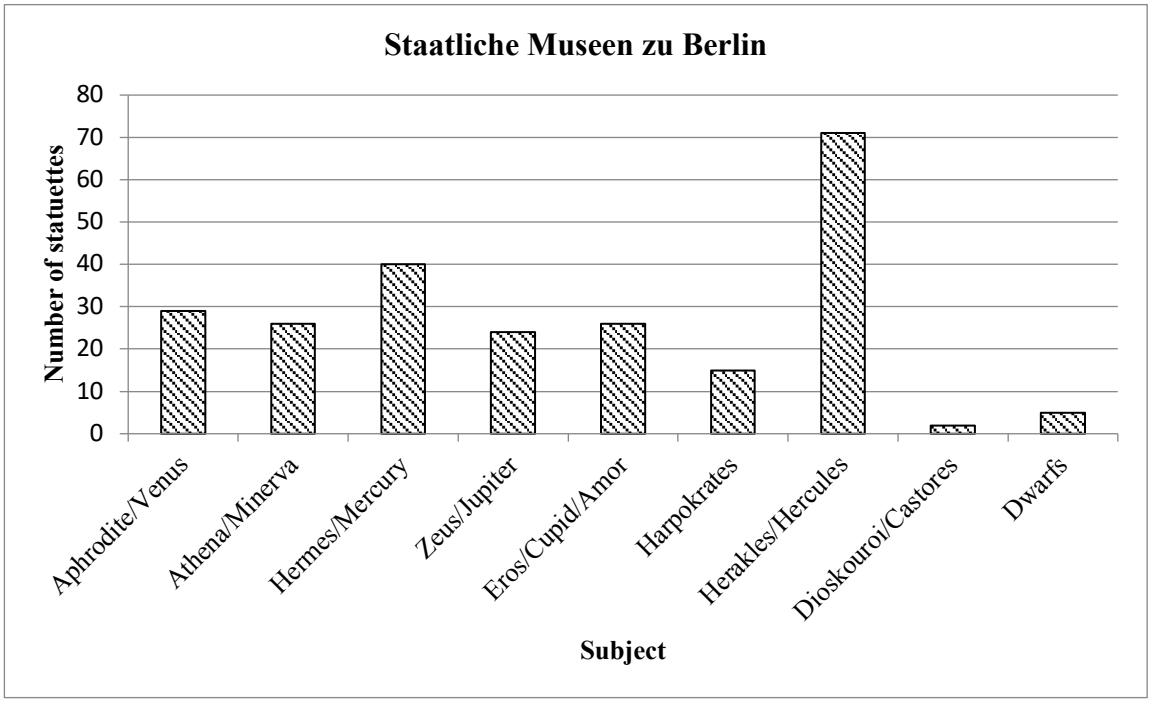

Fig. 3.4. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

in 1704. The Bellori collection is notable not only for the quality of its contents, but also for remaining largely intact to the present day.[302]

Substantial growth occurred in the 1820s with the donation of three major collections. In 1823, a large number of Greco-Roman statuettes were included amongst the Egyptian objects in the collection of Heinrich von Minutoli (1772–1846). Another large acquisition came in 1827 via the collection of Jacob Salomon Bartholdy (1779–

[301] See Heres 1979.
[302] Franken 2007, 10.

1825), the Prussian Consul General in Rome. A year later, most of the collection of Franz von Koller (1767–1826), military leader of the Austrian occupation of Naples, arrived in Berlin.[303] The Koller collection made its first official appearance when the new Antiquarium (now the Altes Museum) opened to the public in 1830.

The collection of bronze objects in the Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin is among the most accessible in the world due to the online publication of a specialised database by Norbert Franken under the leadership of Wolf-Dieter Heilmeyer and Andreas Scholl.[304] The database identifies bronzes in the collection listed in Carl Friederichs' 1871 catalogue along with acquisitions made up to 1945.

Like the rest of Berlin's antiquities, this collection of bronzes suffered significant damage during the Allied invasion in 1945. Many bronzes were severely damaged, destroyed, lost or plundered. The current database contains nearly 8,300 bronze objects. Figural bronze statuettes in the round make up approximately 10% of the collection (838 statuettes).[305]

Metropolitan Museum (Fig. 3.5)

Soon after its founding in 1870, the Metropolitan Museum of Art dedicated itself to establishing a fine collection of classical antiquities. In 1896, the museum began to expand its collection of bronze statuettes though purchases of the collections of S. J. Baxter and A. L. Frothingham and received a further influx of high-quality statuettes

[303] Heres 1977b, 107.
[304] Die Bilddatenbank Antike Bronzen in Berlin www.smb.museum/antikebronzenberlin. Franken 2006; Franken 2007.
[305] This number is obtained by selecting 'Rundplastik' in the 'Gattung' search field. The results also contain pre-Hellenistic statuettes, so the number of Hellenistic and Roman statuettes is lower.

from the gift of Henry Marquand.[306] Under the leadership of Edward Robinson, who oversaw classical antiquities from 1906 as the Museum's assistant director and from 1910 as its director, the Metropolitan purchased a number of important Greek and Roman

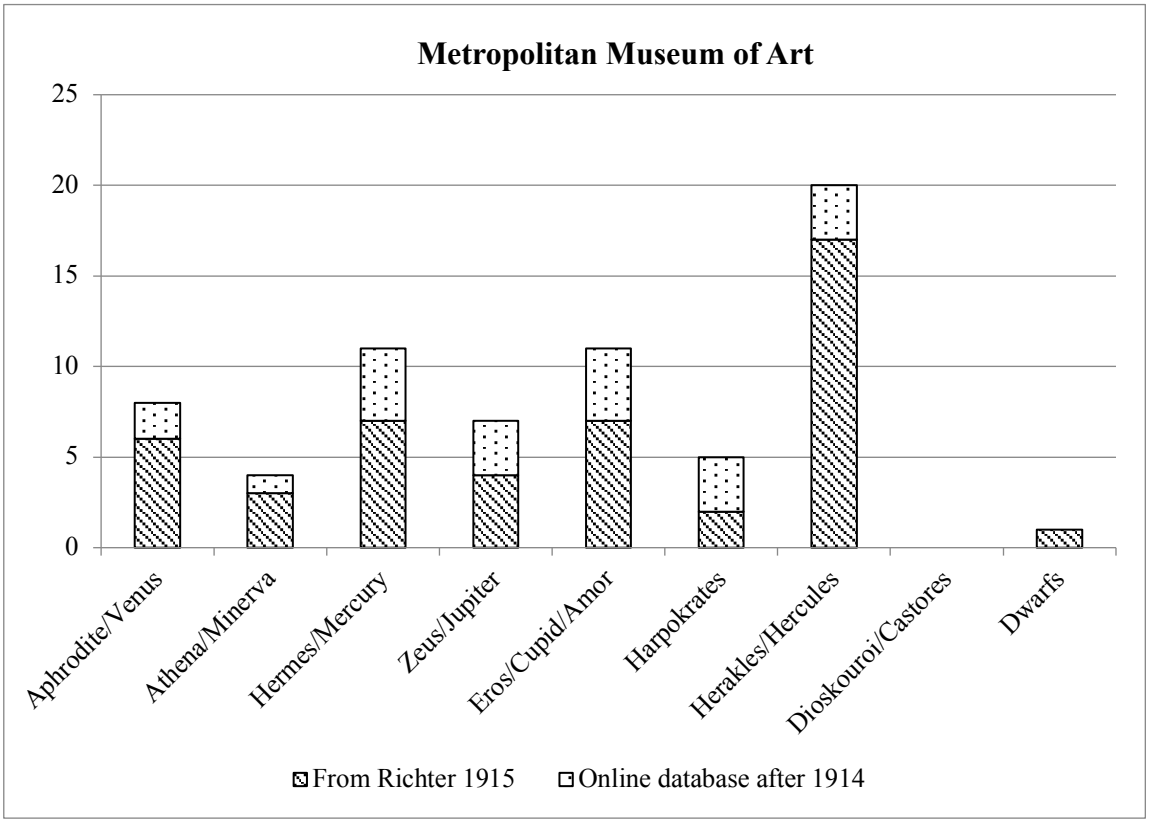

Fig. 3.5. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

bronzes. Gisela Richter began her long tenure at the museum in 1906, succeeding Robinson as the head of the Department of Greek and Roman Art in 1925 and serving in that capacity until her retirement in 1948. Richter oversaw several important acquisitions of bronze statuettes and quickly published them, including a catalogue of the entire collection of bronze objects released in 1915.[307]

[306] Richter 1915, v.
[307] Richter 1915.

Over the course of the twentieth century the Metropolitan's collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes grew through a robust purchasing program and some important individual donations and bequests. One of the world's best-known Hellenistic bronzes entered the collection in 1972 with the bequest of Walter C. Baker (1893–1971). The so-called 'Baker Dancer' depicts a veiled dancing woman in dynamic motion with drapery fluttering, modelled in a highly realistic fashion. Other Greek, Roman and Etruscan bronzes formed the core of Baker's antiquities collection, which numbered about fifty in 1950. Most dated to between the seventh and fourth centuries BC and were purchased on the New York and Paris art markets.[308]

Walters Art Museum (Fig.3.6)

The majority of the antiquities now at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore were collected by Henry Walters (1848–1931) between 1899 and his death in 1931. Henry followed in his father's footsteps as a collector. William Thompson Walters (1819–1894) mainly collected paintings by Baltimore-area artists, Hudson River School painters and contemporary European painters.[309] It was left to Henry to branch into antiquities, beginning with several bronze statuettes purchased from the sale of the W. W. Forman collection at Sotheby's on 9 June 1899. Walters made an important acquisition in 1906 when he purchased seven bronze statuettes found with many bronze vessels and utensils at a rustic villa near Boscoreale. The statuettes, consisting of two statuettes of Zeus, two of Isis-Fortuna, two male deities—perhaps the Dioskouroi—and a Genius, represents a rare *lararium* ensemble from Boscoreale.[310]

[308] Bothmer and D'Harnoncourt 1950.
[309] Johnston 1999, 11ff.
[310] Hill 1974, 356. See Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 210, GFV1, fig. 145.

Throughout his collecting life, Walters would continue to make purchases of significant Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek and Roman small bronzes. D. K. Hill, the first curator of antiquities at the Walters Art Museum, described Walters as 'ever an admirer of small, exquisite, sculpture'.[311] Indeed, the Walters Art Museum contains a high proportion of very high-quality statuettes, especially original statuettes of the Hellenistic period. Nearly all the ancient bronze statuettes in the collection were selected by Walters himself and thus the assemblage offers unusual insight into the taste of a single collector at the beginning of the twentieth century.

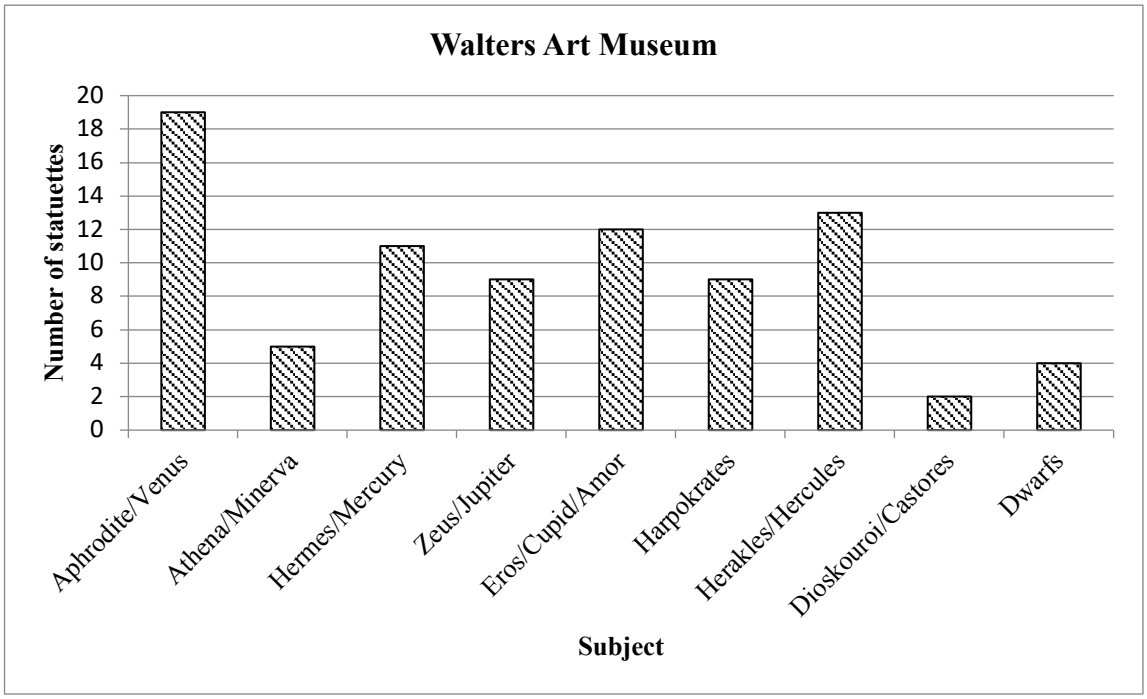

Fig. 3.6. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Walters Art Museum.

'Regional' collections

'Regional' collections are defined as those for which the provenances for a substantial portion of the bronze statuettes can be reasonably attributed to the countries or regions in

[311] Hill 1974, 353.

which the collection is located. Although such collections may act as a small corrective to the largely unprovenanced 'imperial' collections, they too exhibit similar patterns of acquisition. Gifts and legacies from prominent local collectors of statuettes purchased on the art market or otherwise lacking provenance information make up significant portions of even regional collections. Nevertheless, the examination of those subjects and types found in these collections allow us to see some additional nuance in the corpus in terms of regional variation. The six collections analysed here are: the Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Cologne, the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia, the museums of Haute Provence and the Bouches du Rhône, the Museo Nazionale in Palermo and the Museo Civico di Storia ed Arte Trieste.

Römisch-Germanisches Museum (Fig. 3.7)

Fig. 3.7 has been compiled based on the information in a series of articles by S. Ritter, R. Thomas and N. Franken in the *Kölner Jahrbuch* between 1993 and 1996 cataloguing the

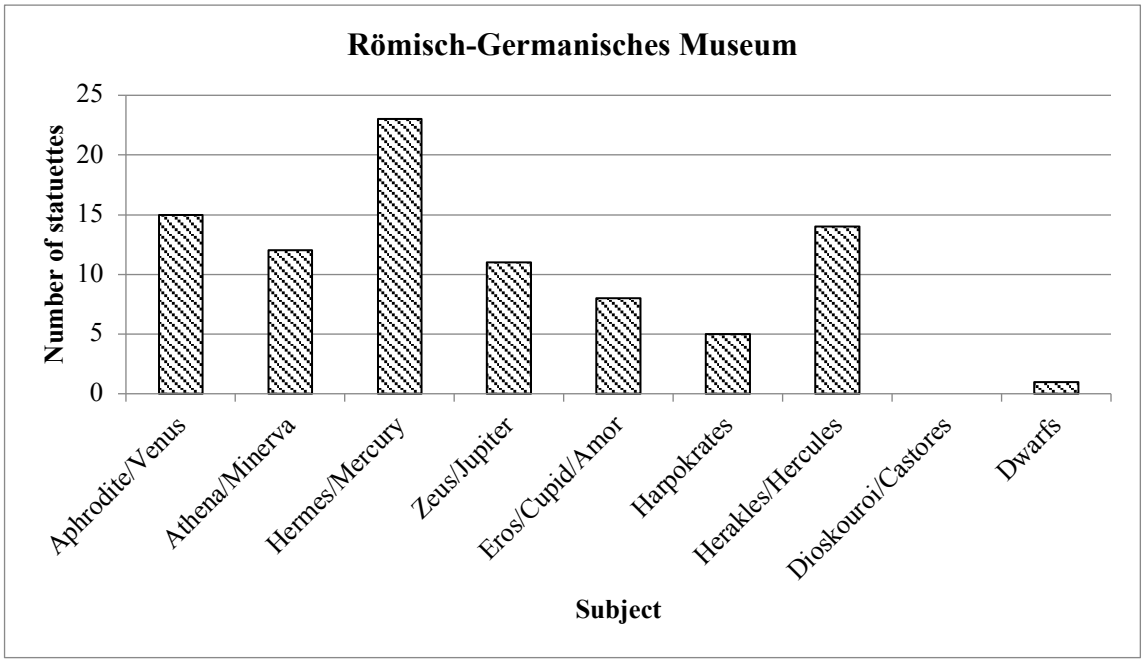

Fig. 3.7. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum.

Roman figural bronzes in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Köln.[312] Ritter catalogues the statuettes found in the vicinity of Cologne and identifies those that are very likely originally from the area. Thomas determines that most of the Zeus statuettes are from the region. The Herakles statuettes are seen by Ritter as having come primarily from Italy and Gaul, while Franken notes that the majority of the bronzes without a find spot are probably from the Rhineland, though he also sees many as coming from Italy and Egypt.

National Archaeological Museum, Sofia (Fig. 3.8)

The information presented in Fig. 3.8 was taken from L. Ognenova-Marinova's 1975 catalogue of the bronzes in the Bulgarian National Archaeological Museum.

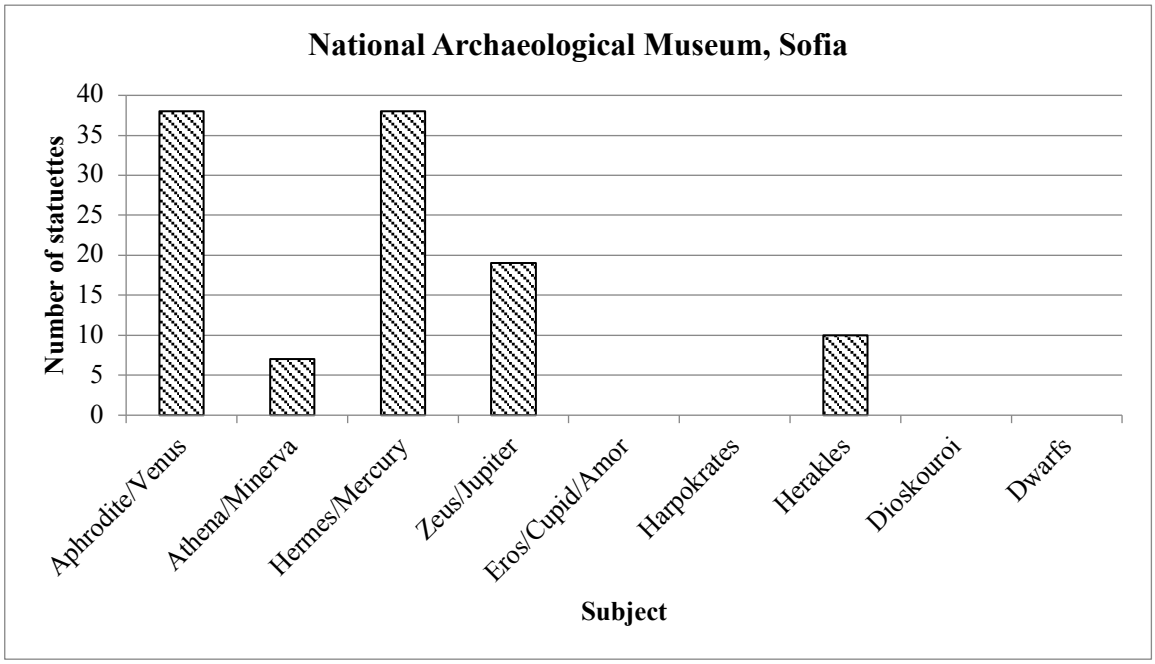

Fig. 3.8. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia.

[312] Ritter 1993; Ritter 1994; Franken 1994; Franken 1996; Thomas 1995.

Haute Provence (Fig. 3.9)

The catalogue produced by H. Rolland in 1965 is the source of the information presented in Fig. 3.9. This covers several museums, chief among them the Musée Calvet in Avignon and the Musée de Carpentras.[313] The catalogue also accounts for statuettes in other collections found in the region.

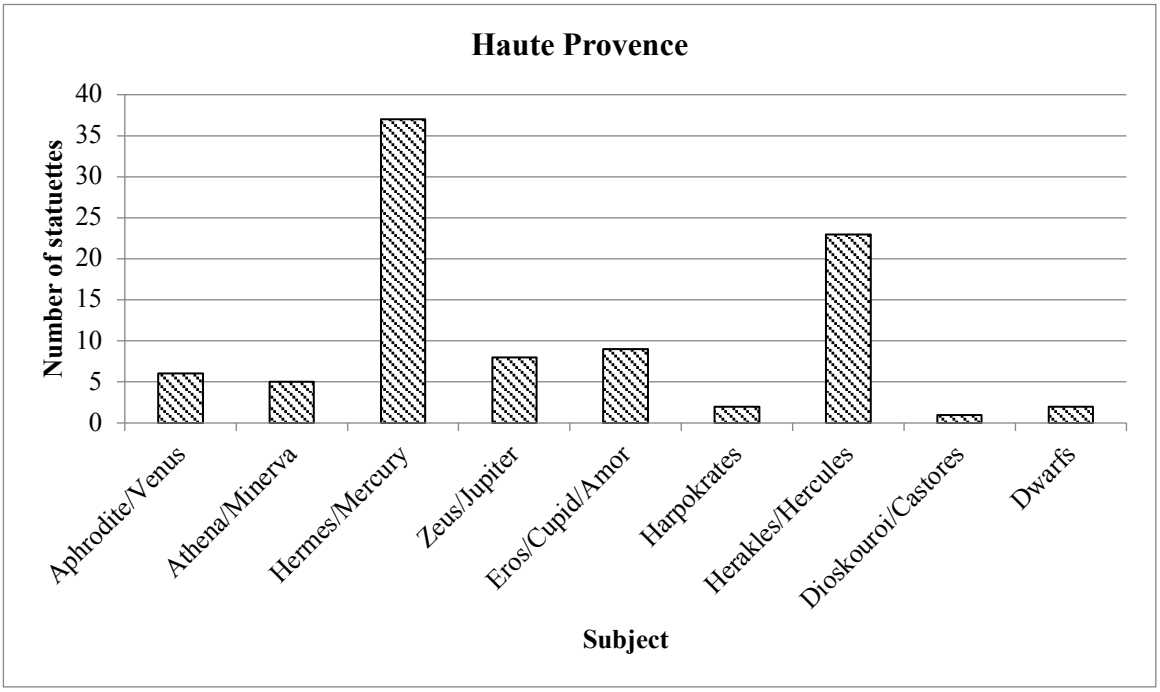

Fig. 3.9. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the museums of Haute Provence.

[313] Rolland 1965.

Bouches du Rhône (Fig. 3.10)

Fig. 3.10 shows information for statuettes in museum collection in the Bouches de Rhône region of France. The information is gathered from H. Oggiano-Bitar's 1984 catalogue.[314] The principal collections it represents are those of the Musée Borély in Marseille, the Musée Granet in Aix-en-Provence and the Musée d'Arles.

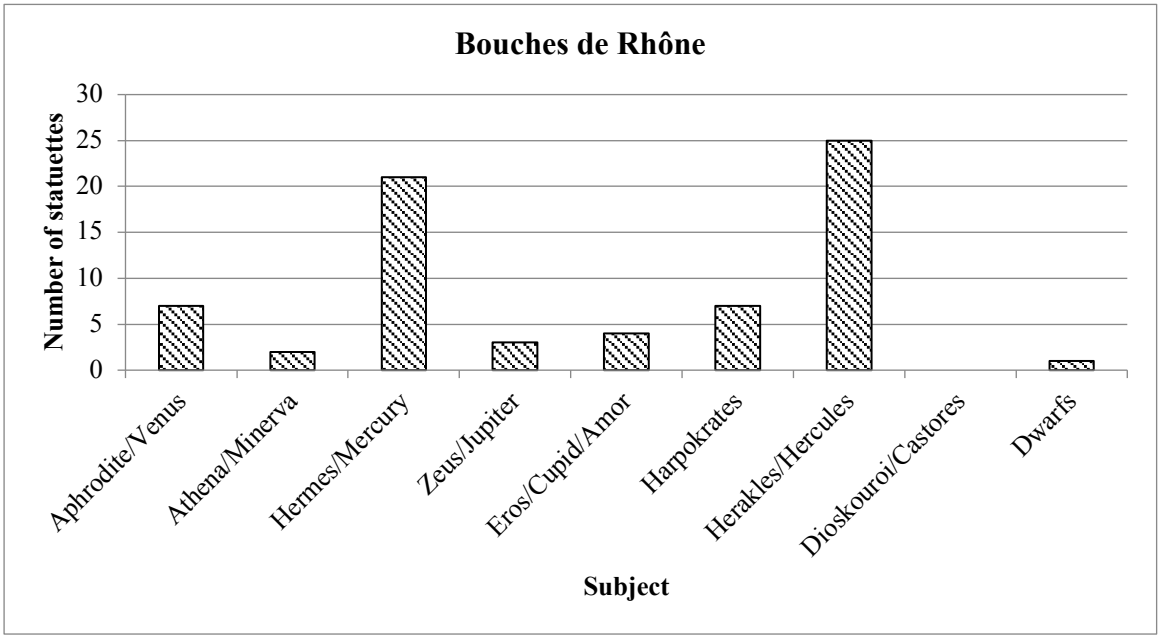

Fig. 3.10. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the museums of the Bouches de Rhône.

[314] Oggiano-Bitar 1984.

Museo Nazionale, Palermo (Fig. 3.11)

The contents of the collection of bronze statuettes in the Museo Nazionale di Palermo (Museo Archeologico Regionale Antonio Salinas) are represented in Fig. 3.11. The source is C. A. di Stefano's 1975 catalogue.[315]

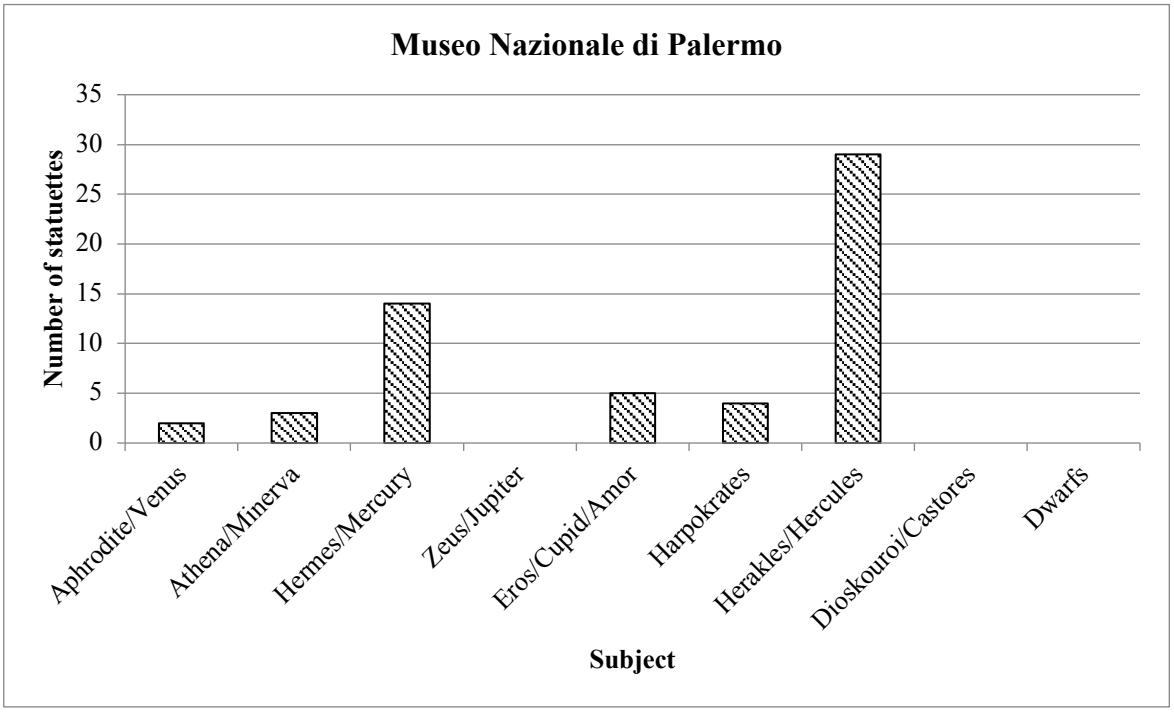

Fig. 3.11. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Museo Nazionale di Palermo (Museo Archeologico Regionale Antonio Salinas).

[315] Di Stefano 1975.

Museo Civico di Storia ed Arte, Trieste (Fig. 3.12)

Fig. 3.12 shows the contents of the collection of bronze statuettes at the Museo Civico di Storia ed Arte in Trieste. It is based on the information found in P. Càssola Guida's 1979 catalogue.[316]

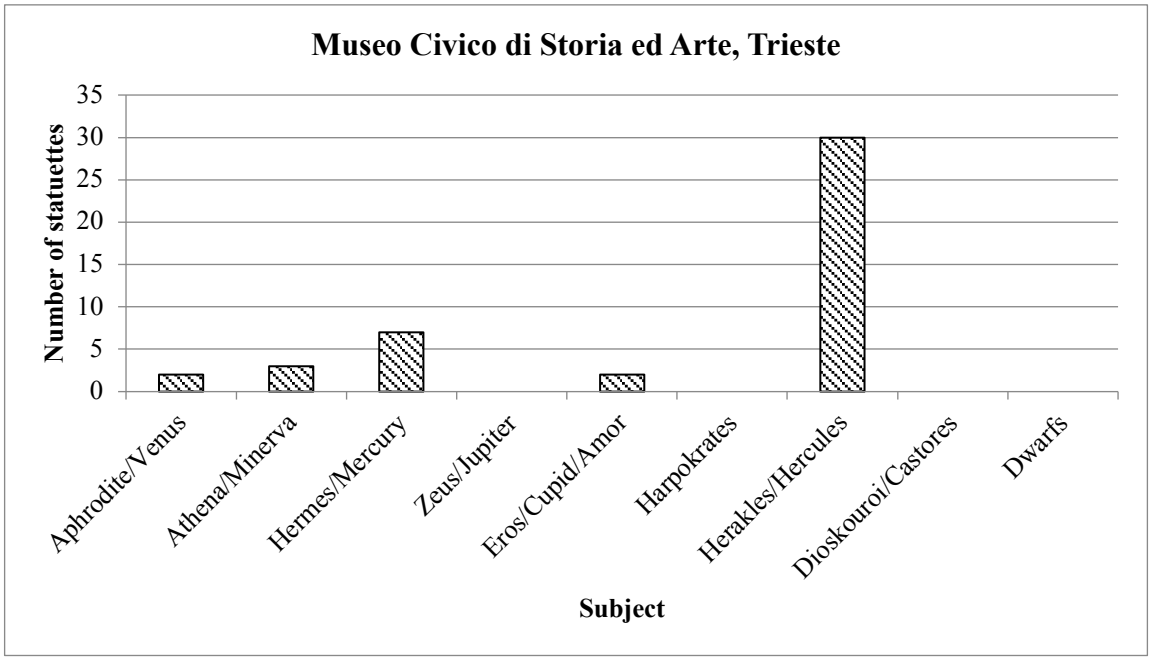

Fig. 3.12. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Museo Civico di Storia ed Arte in Trieste.

In many respects the patterns of accumulation for the regional collections discussed above are very similar to those of the 'imperial' museums. The end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century saw a sharp rise in interest in regional archaeology. Throughout Europe, collections of large, 'imperial' museums were augmented with local finds and smaller, 'regional' museums began to collect and build collections of local antiquities supplied in no small part by the work of local amateur antiquarian and archaeological societies.[317] The examination of the histories of the 'regional' museums, however, has revealed a broadly similar pattern of accumulation to

[316] Càssola Guida 1979.
[317] See Dyson 2006, chapter 4, esp. 92ff.

their larger, 'imperial' brethren. A high proportion of statuettes sill lack detailed provenance information, having been acquired through the offices of a few individual donors and often made up of material from older collections, as well as statuettes from unknown or unreported findspots and from the art market. The actual deposition of statuettes from are known only in rare cases. Although a regional provenance is often cited, specific localities are mentioned much less and find circumstances often cannot be substantiated.

Some collections are stronger than others. In Ognenova-Marinova's publication of the statuettes in the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia, all but thirteen are recorded as having been found within the national borders of Bulgaria. At the other end of the spectrum, for the French regional museums of Haute Provence and the Bouches de Rhône, fewer than half of the statuettes are from known locations within the regions (178 out of 480 for Haute Provence and 160 out of 374 for Bouches de Rhône).[318] Similarly, more than half of the Römisch-Germanisches Museum collection of bronze statuettes are of unknown provenance or originate from outside of the region.[319]

[318] Rolland 1965, 224; Oggiano-Bitar 1984, 160.
[319] See Franken 1994 for statuettes without known findspots in the RGM.

Synthesis: how the Ashmolean collection compares

The information presented above provides a broad overview of the makeup of

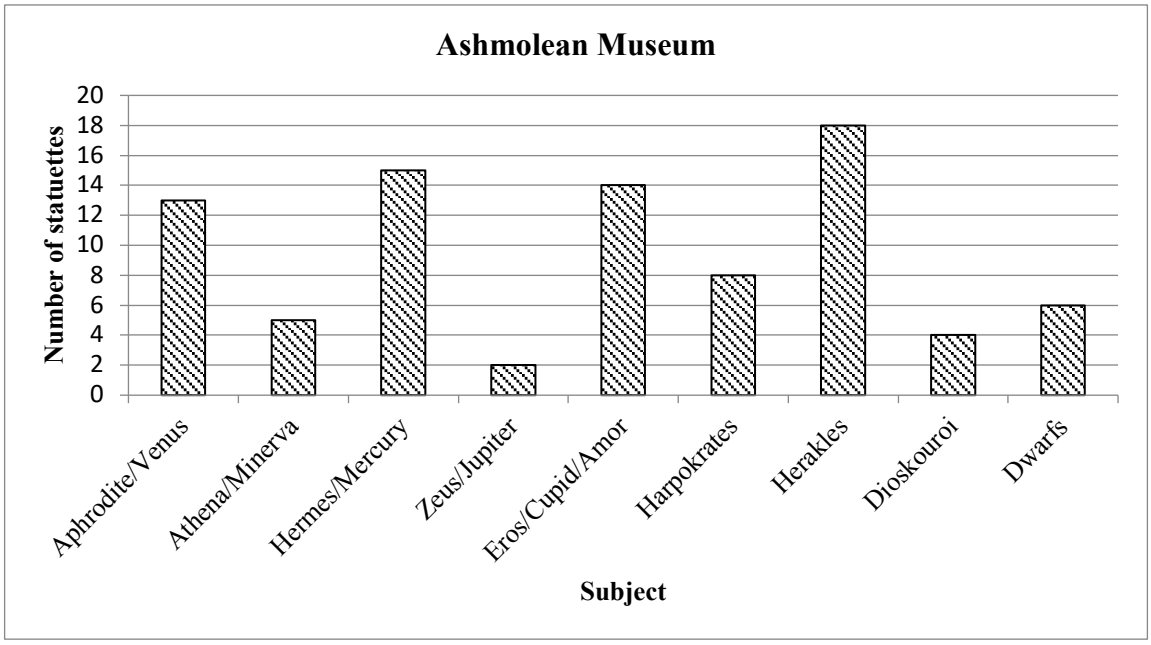

Fig. 3.13. Number of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes for selected subjects in the Ashmolean Museum.

some major collections of bronze statuettes by using select subjects that are represented in the Ashmolean collection as comparative points. Fig. 3.13 presents the numbers of statuettes for these same subjects present in the Ashmolean collection. It should be reiterated here that the collections that have been analysed above are but a sample of the many collections that could have been included, but which would have expanded the scope of this project much beyond what time and space limitations could accommodate. The 'imperial' collections were selected due to the quantity and depth of their holdings and the accessibility of information about individual objects, usually in the form of a printed catalogue. Similarly, the 'regional' collections were selected because their statuettes are presented in publications that offer a comprehensive view of the collection contents.

Several similarities among the collections analysed and the Ashmolean are clear for the subjects under examination:

As at the Ashmolean, Herakles is the most represented subject in most of the collections. This is true for four of the six 'imperial' collections examined and for three of the regional collections. Aphrodite is most numerous at the Louvre, the Walters Art Museum and the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia (along with Hermes). At the Romische-Germanisches Museum and the museums of Haute Provence, Hermes is the most represented deity. Both Aphrodite and Hermes are among the most frequently represented subjects at the Ashmolean as well.

The apparent preference for Herakles among these collections requires some further picking apart, however. Thus far, this analysis has considered all representations of Herakles together without differentiating between depictions of the hero likely executed by the Italic populations of the peninsula in a recognisable Italic style and those that are done in a Hellenic style, influenced by Greek models. This permits a better comparison of like with like, allowing better (though in no way certain) identification of the Herakles representations are likely products of the Greek and Roman visual tradition so as to compare these numbers with those of other subjects depicted in small bronze statuettes. [320] Isolating the representations that likely formed part of the Italic visual tradition also serves to highlight the astonishing numbers in which these Herakles figures were collected and disseminated throughout European and North American collections.

[320] It should be noted here that, while Italic statuettes are often distinguished from Hellenic on the basis of style, the intensive cultural exchange between Italic, Greek and Roman populations makes using style alone as a distinguishing characteristic a tricky proposition. Defining what exactly is Italic, what is Greek and what is Roman in the sculptural production of Italy continues to be a matter of substantial debate. See de Angelis 2016 for a recent, anthropological discussion on Etruscan conceptions of the body.

In the Ashmolean collection eleven of eighteen statuettes of Herakles are Italic or likely to be Italic, or somewhat over 60%. Elsewhere, Herakles statuettes made in the Italic tradition are what swell the numbers in many collections (fig. 3.14). In the 1895 catalogue of the collection at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, the Italic type account for nearly half of the Herakles figures.[321] A slightly smaller proportion of Italic statuettes comprise the collection of the Walters Art Museum; six of fourteen statuettes are Italic, or about 46%. The database of bronzes for the Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin contains seventy-one examples of freestanding small bronzes representing Herakles. Of these, forty-two are of the Italic type, just under 60%.[322] In Richter's 1915 catalogue of the Greek, Roman and Etruscan bronzes in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, Italic types also make up the majority of freestanding small-scale representations of the hero, approximately 85%[323]

In several of the regional collections, representations of Herakles are also dominated by Italic types. In the museums in the Bouches-de-Rhône region of France, 78% of Herakles figures are of the Italic type.[324] In the Haute Provence region, Italic types make up 65% of the total.[325] In the case of the Bouches-de-Rhône, at least five of the Italic Herakles statuettes in the collection are said to have been found in the region, prompting some scholars to posit the movement of Italic and Etruscan statuettes to Gaul.[326] As might be expected, the Italic types comprise the majority of Herakles figures

[321] Babelon and Blanchet 1895.
[322] Die Bilddatenbank Antike Bronzen in Berlin www.smb.museum/antikebronzenberlin.
[323] Richter 1915. However, acquisitions made since the catalogue's publication bring the percentage down to just over 70%
[324] Oggiano-Bitar 1984.
[325] Rolland 1965.
[326] Oggiano-Bitar 1984, 13. See also Boucher 1973b; Boucher 1974; Boucher 1976, 23–31; Boucher 1982, 150–155. But see Leibundgut 1978 arguing for the Italic Herakles statuettes in Swiss collections as modern imports by collectors.

in smaller regional museums in Italy. The collections in Trieste, Palermo and Trento, for example, contain only one to three Herakles figures that are *not* of an Italic type.[327]

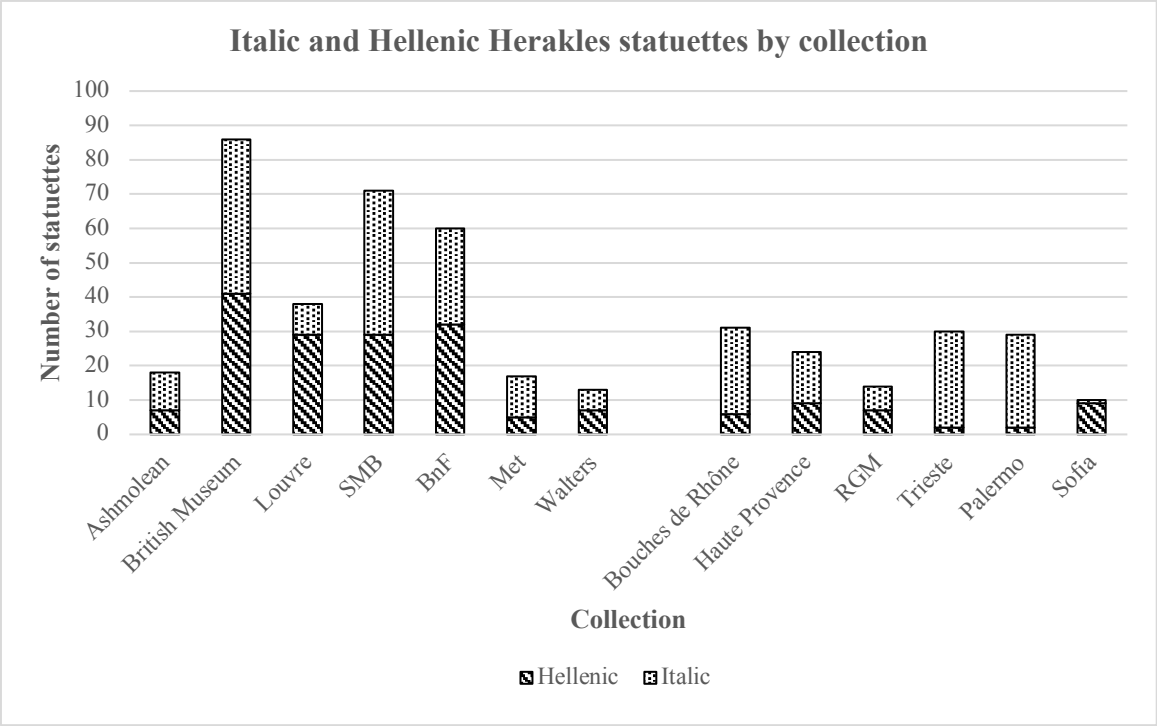

Fig. 3.14. Number of Hellenic and Italic Herakles statuette by collection.

The centrality of Italy to the Grand Tour in the eighteenth century and the booming antiquities market in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries accounts for the wide dispersal of Italic Herakles statuettes to museums in Northern Europe and North America. The agency of both serious and amateur collectors played a primary role. Italic Herakles statuettes have been discovered all over Italy in great numbers. Their small size and often poor to mediocre artistic quality meant that they could often be acquired cheaply in Italian antiquities markets and later donated or bequeathed to both 'imperial' and 'regional' museum collections. In this regard, the Ashmolean collection is typical of many collections of bronzes in Europe and North America. Of the museums examined

[327] Trieste: Càssola Guida 1979; Palermo: Di Stefano 1975; Trento: Walde-Psenner 1983.

here, only the National Archaeological Museum in Sofia shows a low proportion of Italic Herakles figures in its collection.

When a comparison is made using only representations of Herakles in a Hellenic style, the overall proportion of Herakles representations to that of other subject changes, sometimes rather drastically. In the case of the Ashmolean collection, the number drops to seven statuettes [**96**, **100-105**]. This would make the hero still one of the more frequently represented subjects in the collection, but one no longer anywhere near as often as subjects like Aphrodite, Eros or Hermes. For the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the number of Hellenic style Herakles statuettes is still on par with Aphrodite, Eros and Hermes figures and the hero remains among the most frequently depicted figure in the Berlin Antikensammlung, the Metropolitan Museum and the Walters Art Museum. Among the regional collections where, for the most part, Herakles and Hermes representations dominated, this reduction leaves a disproportionately large number of Hermes statuettes, while Herakles representations are diminished to similar numbers as the other subjects. The National Museum of Archaeology in Sofia is again an exception where the count for Herakles statuettes was already among the lowest of the subjects considered.

In considering the Italic Herakles statuettes separately from the other subjects, not only does the large number of these types of Herakles figures across collections come into focus, but it also shows more clearly the consistently high number of Hermes statuettes in proportion to other subjects. This can be seen most clearly across the 'regional' collections. In the Italian collections of Trieste and Palermo which each only contained two non-Italic representations of Herakles, the number of Hermes statuettes stands well

above that of the other subjects. Similarly, in the collection of the Bouches du Rhône region, without the swell of Italic Herakles representations, there are more than three times as many statuettes depicting Hermes than any other single subject. In Cologne and Sofia, Hermes was already the most represented figure.

This phenomenon is tempered somewhat in the 'imperial' museums. As is the case for the Ashmolean, using only Hellenic representations of Herakles causes Hermes to be the frequent subject represented in the collections of the Bibliothèque National de France, the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

One characteristic in which the Ashmolean differs from other museum collections is in its higher than average number of statuettes depicting dwarfs. The iconography of Greek and Roman images of dwarfs presents an added difficulty when attempting to compare across collections. Because of the frequently overt sexual and erotic nature, dwarf statuettes have historically been subject to a greater degree of censorship. The Real Museo Borbonico famously maintained a 'secret cabinet', a room containing erotic and obscene artefacts that required special permission to view. Many bronze dwarf statuettes from the excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum remained virtually inaccessible until the objects were fully illustrated and published by Giuseppe Fiorelli in 1866.[328] A similar 'Secretum' was established at the British Museum in 1865 for those artefacts deemed too obscene and vulgar for Victorian sensibilities.[329] Thus, most of the museum's holdings of bronze dwarf statuettes are not included in Walter's 1899 catalogue. However, when

[328] Fiorelli 1866.
[329] See Gaimster 2000.

records of dwarf statuettes from the museum's online catalogue are taken into account, the proportion of dwarf statuettes to other subject approximates that of the Ashmolean.

Bronze dwarf statuettes have appeared in the archaeological record in numerous places throughout the Hellenistic and Roman worlds, including examples from Greece found on the Mahdia wreck and from Augst, which formed part of a *lararium* ensemble.[330] The highest concentration of bronze dwarf representations, however, come from Egypt where the subject was most fully developed during the Hellenistic period and from Italy, where finds from Pompeii give an idea of the popularity of these figures in Roman houses in the first century BC to first century AD.[331]

The humour and eroticism of the statuettes held a special appeal for many collectors. A concentration of dwarf statuettes in collections such as the Ashmolean, the British Museum and Walters Art Museum can be largely attributed to specific collectors. For the Ashmolean collection, two dwarf statuettes were donated by the Beazleys, who had acquired them from the collection of R. G. Gayer-Anderson [**154**, **156**]. Since Gayer-Anderson collected extensively in Egypt, an Egyptian proveanance is likely for these figures, though this cannot be known for certain. Another two statuettes originate from the Bomford collection [**152**, **153**]. Bomford collection of classical bronzes was built mainly through purchases on the international art market, so little can be said about the origins of his acquisitions. Other humorous and explicitly erotic statuettes in the collection also owe their presence in the Ashmolean to these collectors; statuettes of a boy exposing his penis [**149]** and a phallic dancer [**150**] come from the Bomford collection

[330] Mahdia: Pfistere-Haas 1994; Augst: Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 85, no. 84.
[331] Garmaise 1996, 148ff.

and a statuette of an ithyphallic satyr [**132**] and an elaborate *symplegma* [**159**] were both from the Beazley donation.

At the British Museum, approximately one-third of the dwarf statuettes came from the collection of Richard Payne Knight. Perhaps the best example of how an individual collector's taste shaped a museum collection of bronze statuettes is that of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. The early museum's antiquities collection was built largely through the offices of E. P. Warren, who was one of the dominant buyers in the highly competitive art and antiquities market in late nineteenth century Rome.[332] Warren's attitude toward collecting was strongly influenced by his personal ideology. A prominent member of a small movement of men seeking to glorify and revive ancient ideals of homoerotic love, including pederasty, Warren's collection included a large number of objects depicting overtly homoerotic subjects.[333] The results of Warren's proclivity toward erotic subjects is reflected in the museum's collection of bronze statuettes. According to the catalogue of the collection compiled by M. Comstock and C. C. Vermeule, representations of dwarfs outnumber all other subjects among bronze statuettes in the round.[334]

In the case of statuettes depicting Aphrodite, the content of the Ashmolean collection shows a combination of collectors' taste and the wide availability of ancient statuettes of the goddess. Five of the fourteen Aphrodite figures in the catalogue, five originate from the Fortnum collection [**1**, **4**, **6**, **10**, 1**3**], while the other nine each have a

[332] Kondolean 2011, 14-15. See also Murley 2012, 100-103.
[333] The most well-known of these is the so-called Warren Cup at the British Museum, a silver cup with relief scenes that seem to depict homosexual penetrative intercourse. The cup's authenticity has been the subject of intense debate. See Williams 2006 for the cup and its history.
[334] Comstock and Vermeule 1971, nos. 132, 142-146.

different source. Similarly, nearly a third of the Aphrodite statuettes in the Louvre collection originated in the de Clercq collection. As mentioned above, this high number of statuettes is likely the result both of where de Clercq was obtaining his statuettes (the Levant) and his personal taste for images of the goddess. The high proportion of Aphrodite statuettes in the Walters Art Museum also reflect the taste of a single collector, Henry Walter, who, unlike de Clercq, made most of his purchases from the art market.

It is also notable that Aphrodite is the possible subject for the most statuettes classified as *dubitanda* in the Ashmolean collection [**185**, **186**, **187**, **200**]. Not only were famous statues like the Medici Venus popular images for miniaturised reproductions in bronze, but the goddess was also a popular subject for new creations *all' antica* and for bronze casters seeking to pass off forgeries.[335]

This examination has demonstrated some of the various ways in which the contents of museum bronze statuette collections are the result of visual culture reception processes at work both in antiquity and in the modern period. Framed as an interaction between the supply of material available to modern collectors as the result of the statuettes being created in antiquity and the demand of those same collectors for ancient objects and imagery to satisfy their own collecting priorities or preferences. The analysis of the characteristics of various European and North American collections and how these compare to the collection at the Ashmolean has shown that with some exceptions, such as the high proportion of dwarf statuettes, the Ashmolean collection is broadly similar to that of other collections of classical bronze statuettes.

[335] See Thornton 2001, 34-38 and n. 11, for the popularity of *all' antica* Aphrodite statuettes during the Renaissance.

It is probably the discussion of Aphrodite statuettes that touches on the dynamics between supply and demand in the collecting of bronze statuettes. The number of Aphrodite or nude female figures of doubtful authenticity in the Ashmolean and other collections speaks to collector's desires for owning and obtaining objects depicting this subject as well as the practice of forging and imitating classical imagery to meet such demand. The following case study illustrates this dynamic using four statuettes in the Ashmolean collection.

3.3. Classical imagery and bronze statuette collections: a case study

The issue of fakes and forgeries of classical bronze statuettes occupies a small but significant portion of the literature on the topic. Any study that uses material from outside a known archaeological context must acknowledge the potential of fakes, forgeries, reproductions and imitations to affect findings. Nearly every catalogue of a museum bronze collection contains a section of *dubitanda* and post-antique statuettes. From the perspective of collectors, fakes and forgeries, especially among the 'minor arts', have always represented a source of anxiety. Many treatises have been written for the benefit of connoisseurs, collectors and antiquaries, relaying strategies for detecting false antiquities; the ability to detect fakes became intimately wrapped up in the identity of collectors by the nineteenth century.[336] John Evans wrote in the literary periodical *Longman's Magazine* that:

> The knowledge that forgeries must and do exist tends to sharpen the eyesight of antiquaries, few, if any, of whom can honestly say they have never been duped. As dogs must pass through their distemper, so an

[336] Briefel 2006, 12–17.

> antiquary must have bought his forgeries before he can be regarded as fully seasoned.[337]

Evans applied his defence of the accidental acquisition of forgeries to all categories of ancient objects, but his words ring especially true for the collectors of small bronzes. Even among the most respected connoisseurs, there are few active collectors who have managed to avoid purchasing a forgery.

Although fakes and forgeries are numerous in museum collections, many statuettes were never intended to deceive. Occasionally fifteenth to nineteenth-century sculptures made their way into collections as antiquities due to poor documentation or ignorant donors. Miniaturised versions in bronze of famous marble statues in Rome and Naples were highly valued among collectors, but these were not the only source of inspiration for modern imitations and forgeries. Ancient iconography was also scaled-up in order to create new bronze statuette types. Such is the case with four mythological groups in bronze from the Ashmolean collection.[338]

The groups [**197–200**] have been catalogued and displayed as Roman works of the second century AD. The statuettes were transferred from the Bodleian Library to the Ashmolean in 1887. When the Bodleian acquired the statuettes is uncertain. They are not described in the Library's donation records, nor can specific mention of them be found in the Library Archives.

[337] Evans 1893, 142–143. On art forgery in the nineteenth century see Briefel 2006.
[338] Much of the following discussion can be found in adapted form in a recently published conference proceedings. See West 2015.

The statuettes were all cast by the lost wax method. The figures are small enough to have been cast solid, but a casting flaw in the rock underneath Orpheus' foot in **199** reveals that this element was hollow cast. Below Herakles' left hand in **198**, a round pin indicates that the figures of this group were likely also hollow cast. Another casting flaw on one of the Erotes in **200** that has caused him to miss the upper half of his head shows that these small figures were cast solid, as is likely also the case for the small Cerberus figure in **199**.

The castings are not of a high quality for any of the figures. In addition to the casting flaws mentioned above, the bronzes have heavy pitting likely caused by gaseous bubbling during the casting process. This is especially noticeable on **198**. The finish on the statuettes is poor and they retain a very rough surface. A white encrustation covers large areas of each group. Based on visual inspections, it appears to be gypsum or plaster left by the investment mould, though the material has not been tested scientifically.[339]

Several features provide evidence for a separate casting of the figures and their plinths. On **200**, the welding where the thyrsus attaches to the base is visible. Welding can also be seen near Herakles' left foot in **198**. A small droplet of bronze adhering to the surface of the plinth in front of the Aphrodite figure may have been accidentally dropped during the welding process. **197** also exhibits a droplet on its plinth, which appears to have been cast in two parts; an octagonal plinth was created through a secondary casting

[339] I thank Mr Mark Norman, Head of Conservation at the Ashmolean Museum, for allowing me the use of a microscope and discussing the composition of the encrustation with me.

that surrounds an original, roughly elliptical plinth. The droplet of bronze on the surface may have been the result of an accidental drip during this process.

The shared stylistic features between the statuettes and the similarities in the way they appear to have been fabricated suggest the groups originated from the same workshop. The statuettes contain very little evidence of cold-working aside from some rough chiselling evident on the right side of Herakles in **198** and the right arm of the Aphrodite in **200**. The figures were left unpolished. Disharmonious proportions and impressionistic modelling characterise each of the figures and little effort has been expended on the part of the bronze caster toward defining the finer features of the face, hair, hands and feet. The attributes carried by the figures in **198–200** are also crudely modelled with a preference for two-dimensional relief castings for smaller details. This is especially visible in the strings of the lyre in **199** and the arrows and grapevine-entwined thyrsus held by Aphrodite in **200**.

The narrative nature of the bronze groups is unusual for surviving small-scale Roman bronzes. Single figures survive in much greater numbers from Roman workshops than bronze groups. Despite this, the production of narrative groups was likely more frequent than the evidence suggests. Many groups were originally composed of more than one separate figure attached to the same base and thus combined in an ensemble to create a narrative. It is impossible to tell how many groups were separated after their discovery, when greater profit could be made selling figures separately.[340] It is certainly the case that many small statuettes of Eros originally accompanied statuettes of Aphrodite or other

[340] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977, 69.

deities.[341] One Eros in the Ashmolean collection [**70**], for example, holds a folding mirror high in one upraised hand, an attribute associated with his mother Aphrodite and suggesting he was originally paired with a figure of the goddess.[342] An Aphrodite and Eros statuette in Malibu exemplifies how the Ashmolean figure may have interacted with a larger, separately cast figure of the goddess (Fig. 3.15).[343] Similarly, the Hertz Venus [**1**] is of the same type as the Getty example and holds her lowered left hand as if engaging with something, perhaps a figure of Eros.

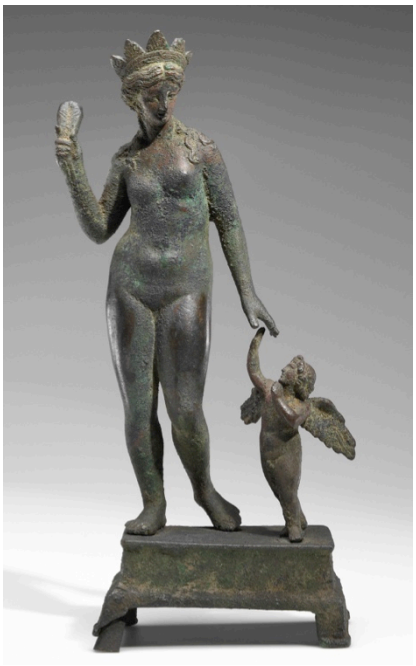

Fig. 3.15. Bronze statuette of Aphrodite and Eros. Second to first century BC. JPGM inv. 57.AB.7

Each of these types has parallels in bronze statuettes, but none can be securely confirmed as an ancient bronze and most have already been recognised as early modern creations. For **197**, the type can be found in Palermo and Berlin. The Berlin statuette has been identified by W. Bode as a Florentine work of the sixteenth century.[344] Following Bode's identification, C. A. di Stefano catalogues the Palermo statuette as post-antique.[345] The only other bronze example like **199** is attributed to the circle of the Italian-born sculptor Francesco Fanelli (c. 1590–1653), who worked in England for the court of Charles I.[346] Likewise, only one other bronze statuette of the same type as**198** is known to me. It was reportedly

[341] Cf. several bronzes formerly in the De Clercq collection. Ridder 1905, nos. 61, 64, 66, 80, 113, 124, 127–130.
[342] On mirrors in Greek and Roman art, see Hales 2012.
[343] Getty Museum Inv. 57.AB.7.
[344] SMB. inv. 1781; Bode 1930, 43, no. 206, pl. 35.
[345] Mus. Naz. inv. 8276; Di Stefano 1975, no. 388, pl. LVII.
[346] V&A Mus. inv. A 120-1910.

found in a pit near Bressingham, England.[347] The circumstances of this find are unknown and it was not found with other archaeological material. Whether it should be dated to the Roman period remains an open question.[348] Finally, versions of **200** can be found in two other collections. An unpublished statuette in St. Petersburg, once part of the Stroganoff collection, preserves the entire group.[349] Another statuette in Palermo of Aphrodite only is approximately the same height as the Ashmolean example and likely derives from the same model.[350]

The identification of most of the parallels as modern casts a heavy suspicion on the authenticity of the Ashmolean statuettes. Compounding this doubt is the lack of good parallels within the repertoire of Greek and Roman art. The image of Herakles pressing Cerberus between his legs while tightening a lead is replicated with some frequency in ancient glyptics, starting in the first century BC. Among the best-known and finest examples is a sardonyx cameo in Berlin signed by Dioskourides, gem carver to the court of Augustus (Fig 3.16).[351] It shows a two-headed, struggling Cerberus caught between the legs of Herakles, who has thrown a leash around the hound and twists his upper body to pull it taut. The lion skin has been discarded, draped over a rock outcrop behind Herakles, and the club lies unused under

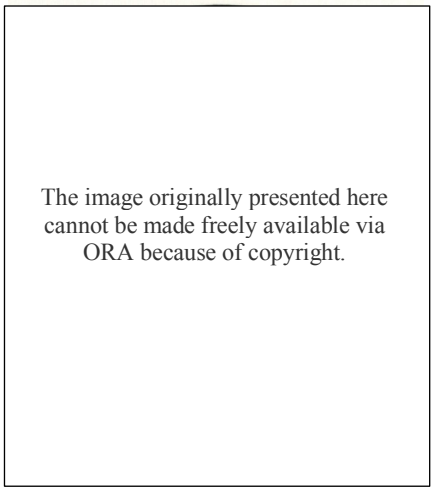

Fig. 3.16. Sardonyx cameo depicting Herakles and Cerberus, signed by Dioskourides. Mid-first century BC. SMB inv. 11062.

[347] Durham 2012, no. 94; Pitts 1979, no. 76, pl. 15. At the British Museum; no inv. number.
[348] E. Durham (personal communication).
[349] I am grateful to Dr N. Gulyaeva of the Hermitage Museum for alerting me to this statuette and for providing photographs.
[350] Mus. Naz. inv. 8143 (B217; Cb 3); Di Stefano 1975, no. 2, pl. 1 (as Roman).
[351] SMB inv.11062; Smallwood 1990, no. 2628; Platz-Horster 2012, no. 25 for bibliography.

Cerberus' paws. Lower quality examples with some archaeological context include a small glass paste intaglio in the Dorchester Museum (Britain) found near a sword of the mid-first century AD.[352] From Drobeta in Romania, a cameo mounted as a pendant on a gold necklace of the third century AD was found in a woman's grave. It is now in the National Museum of Romanian History.[353] The Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna also holds a cameo of the first century BC allegedly from Varhély, the ancient Dacian capital of Sarmizegethusa.[354]

Orpheus depicted alone with Cerberus without the presence of the chthonic gods or Eurydice is quite unusual in ancient representations. The Apulian red-figure vases from the fourth century BC that comprise our primary visual evidence for the circulation of this myth invariably show Orpheus as one among a large number of Underworld figures, usually in the act of playing for Hades and Persephone who are often accompanied by Cerberus.[355] Fewer figures can be found on a fresco fragment of dubious authenticity but reputedly from the first century BC. It shows Cerberus at its centre separating Orpheus and Eurydice and is now in the Louvre, purchased from the art market.[356] A further example comes from a stone relief from a tomb at El Amrouni in Tunisia, and shows Orpheus and Eurydice at the gate of Hades behind Cerberus, Charon and Ixion.[357]

[352] Henig 1972, 183, fig. 1; Henig 1974, no. 436, pl. XIV.
[353] Inv. C.491/3; Arbunescu et al. 1994, no. 72.
[354] Inv. IX B880; Zwierlein-Diehl 1979, no. 1026.
[355] Garezou 1994, 102; Panyagua 1967, 204–205; Panyagua 1972, 122–128.
[356] Schoeller 1969, 43; Garezou 1994, no. 86.
[357] Schoeller 1969, 43, pl. 11, 2.

Orpheus was depicted alone with Cerberus in a fresco found near Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli and no longer extant.[358] It showed Orpheus dressed in Phrygian style, seated in a rocky landscape and playing his lyre to subdue a three-headed Cerberus who stands in front of a large cave. Several important differences prevent a close comparison with **199**, however; Orpheus is seated rather than standing and depicted elaborately dressed instead of shown in a heroically nude Greek manner. Indeed, we have only a drawing from which to judge the composition of the missing scene, but it appears to be the closest (possibly) ancient parallel to the Ashmolean statuette.



Fig. 3.17. Impression of a chalcedony intaglio in Florence depicting Herakles and Eros. First century BC–first century AD.

A chalcedony intaglio of the first century BC to first century AD in Florence bears a close resemblance to the composition of **198** (Fig. 3.17).[359] Herakles walks upright, head bowed. He carries the lion skin, club and what Zwierlein-Diehl rightly identifies as a quiver in the crook of his left arm.[360] Eros rides upon his right shoulder. The age of Eros in this depiction appears to be that of a young boy rather than the much more common infant. The Ashmolean bronze lacks some of the details seen in the Florentine gem—no club or quiver are present, Eros' wings are truncated and Herakles looks straight ahead rather than downward—but other details, such as the age of Eros and the comportment of his right leg, which swings out in a wide arc, are very similar and suggest a common prototype.

[358] Gusman 1904, 217, fig. 312.
[359] Mus. Arch. inv. 14757; Woodford 1990, no. 3438.
[360] Zwierlein-Diehl 1986, 167.

As with **197**, the image of Herakles with Eros upon his back appears primarily in glyptic form. Usually the hero is shown crouching on one knee with Eros climbing on his shoulder. This scene begins to appear on gems in the late third century BC, as seen on a glass intaglio in the Ashmolean Museum.[361] Variations of the motif have Herakles brandishing his club or raising his arm in a gesture of submission.[362] Other depictions show the hero reclining, seated or standing with hands bound behind his back.[363]

The precise iconography and composition of **200** does not find exact parallels in the repertoire of Greek and Roman art. Many Roman bronzes show two or more Erotes flanking a frontally depicted Aphrodite as on a group from the third century AD found at Augst (Fig 3.18).[364] Erotes assisting the goddess at her toilette and carrying objects such as mirrors or cosmetics boxes are also frequently found in terracotta statuettes from the Eastern Mediterranean.[365]

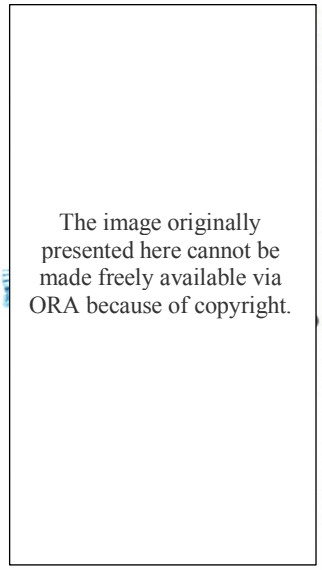

Fig. 3.18. Aphrodite with two erotes, from Augst. Third century AD. Römermuseum, inv. 1963.5828.

Statuettes of Aphrodite showing the goddess standing next to single or double pillars and including two or more Erotes bear some similarities to the grapevine-entwined thyrsus held by the figure in **200**. A silver statuette in the British Museum shows the goddess

[361] Inv. Fortnum FR.78; Boardman and Vollenweider 1978, no. 382, pl. 64.
[362] Woodford 1990, nos. 3432–3434.
[363] Woodford 1990, nos. 3435–3438.
[364] Römermuseum Inv. 1963.5828; Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 88, fig. 46.
[365] Kiraz 2007.

fastening her sandal with two erotes holding toilette accessories and standing atop double pillars filled with cultic emblems.[366] Erotes are also often associated with wine and winemaking in later Roman art and can be found on sarcophagi of the late third and fourth centuries as vintners populating a mythical world of happiness and plenty, perhaps explaining the presence of the grape-entwined *thyrsus.*[367]

The picture that emerges from this brief survey is that the types represented by the Ashmolean statuettes lie outside mainstream Greek and Roman iconography, particularly that used for sculpture. This in itself is not a sufficient premise for doubting their authenticity as Roman works, but due to a shortage of ancient parallels they should at least be considered suspicious. It is notable that the existing close parallels occur on ancient engraved gems. J. Boardman has written about the potential role of gems in spreading classical motifs and types in the ancient world and imagery on gems may have been translated into small bronze groups by bronze casters and sculptors.[368] Gems depicting the struggle between Herakles and Cerberus of the type seen in **197** have reportedly been found in a number of disparate locations throughout the Roman Empire. The Dorchester intaglio and cameo from Drobeta show that such imagery reached the edges of the empire, very likely in part due to the popularity of Herakles among soldiers and his role as a protector against danger.[369] The fact remains that no archaeologically secure examples of this type in small bronze are known. The difficulty in identifying ancient parallels for the statuettes, combined with the technical and stylistic

[366] Inv. 1841,0710.1; Walters 1899, no. 829.
[367] Zanker & Ewald 2012, 151.
[368] Boardman 1997, 17–18.
[369] Henig 1972, 183–184.

characteristics discussed earlier, suggests that their models should not be sought in antiquity but might instead be found in the classicising art of early modern Europe.



Fig. 3.19. Copperplate engravings by G. B. Galestruzzi in Leonardo Agostini's *Le Gemme Antiche Figurate* (2nd edition, 1686). Clockwise from upper left: pl. 40: Herakles and Cerberus; pl. 41: Herakles and Eros; pl. 50: Aphrodite and Erotes; pl. 9: Orpheus and Cerberus.

In 1669, Leonardo Agostini, the Commissioner of Antiquities for Rome and Lazio under Pope Alexander VII, published the second volume of *Le Gemme Antiche Figurate*, which illustrated and commented on antique gems in his own and other Roman collections. The Florentine artist Giovanni Battista Galestruzzi provided engravings for the gems and Agostini's fellow antiquarian Giovanni Pietro Bellori supplied observations about their iconographical content. The work followed a volume published twelve years earlier in 1657.

In four plates from *Le Gemme Antiche Figurate* we find the closest parallels to the Ashmolean statuettes (Fig. 3.19). In the second edition of the second volume, plate 40 shows Herakles/Cerberus on variegated agate and plate 41 depicts Herakles/Eros on a chalcedony.[370] Cameos of Orpheus/Cerberus and a Aphrodite/Erotes group are shown on plates 9 and 50 respectively. In the first edition, the plates are found in closer proximity: plates 5, 6, 8 and 15 respectively. The compositional correspondences between the statuettes and the engravings are striking.

The differences between the gems and the engravings depicting them are minor enough to be considered artistic choices made by Galestruzzi to better translate the scenes into the medium of copperplate engraving. He also made extensive use of shading to bring out details of Herakles' musculature and give volume to the figures. It is significant that this shading, especially of the groundlines, also has the effect of mimicking a thin plinth and gives the figures a sculptural quality. The treatment of the Herakles/Cerberus and Herakles/Eros engravings when compared to their prototypes show that Galestruzzi

[370] Agostini 1686.

was not adverse to changing small details of the composition. The same treatment can be assumed for the Orpheus/Cerberus and Aphrodite/Erotes gems.

It has been shown above that the composition of **197** is a variant of iconography found on ancient gems. The iconography of **199**, on the other hand, finds no very close parallel in ancient art, but is instead firmly rooted in the visual tradition of Renaissance Italy. Orpheus became an important mythological figure for Italian artists in the last decades of the fifteenth century, perhaps due to the influence of Andrea Mantegna's increasing interest in Orpheus late in life.[371] Orpheus' popularity as a symbol of artistic creativity continued throughout the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century; as a result, the motif of Orpheus charming Cerberus before the entrance to the Underworld took on a semi-canonical form in sixteenth-century Italy.

An early example of the composition comes from a spandrel of the Camera degli Sposi ceiling in the Ducal Palace of Mantua, painted by Mantegna around 1470.[372] The artist depicted a stooped Orpheus approaching a cave opening where a placated Cerberus lies on his belly in front of the head of a female figure, probably one of the Eumenides to judge from her dishevelled hair. The scene is accompanied by two others, one showing Orpheus playing his lyre to an audience of women and animals and another depicting his death. Another spandrel contains an image of Herakles standing astride Cerberus and may be a variation of the composition seen on the ancient gems and in **197**.

[371] Scavizzi 1982, 119.
[372] On the Camera degli Sposi, see Nicolò Salmazo 2004, 167–177.

Similar scenes of Orpheus appear on a series of bronze plaquettes usually attributed to the Florentine artist Bertoldo di Giovanni or to an unnamed Master of the Orpheus Legend. These were made around the same time as Mantegna's fresco, sometime between 1470 and 1490.[373] In the scene before the infernal gods, Orpheus rests his lyre upon his bent right knee in a fashion similar to that shown in Galestruzzi's engraving and the Ashmolean bronze. The gods are seated in the mouth of a cave with Cerberus at their feet.



Fig. 3.20. Agostino di Musis, called Veneziano, copperplate engraving depicting Orpheus and Cerberus. 1528. National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, inv. 1954.12.37.

The musician can be seen in the same pose in an engraving by Agostino Veneziano made in 1528 (Fig. 3.20).[374] Orpheus leans against a tree, rests the lyre on his upraised knee and plucks at the strings with a plectrum. A placated Cerberus sits in the mouth of his cave. Elements of Veneziano's engraving are also present in Galestruzzi's version, including the comportment of two of Cerberus' heads, the arch-like shape of the cave and the treatment of the top branch of the tree.

The antiquity of the gem depicting the Orpheus/Cerberus group shown in Galestruzzi's engraving is questionable.[375] As seen above, the imagery does not appear in ancient art, but is rather frequently depicted in the art of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in Italy. Galestruzzi's engraving shows an image that also fits

[373] Scavizzi 1982, 117; Pope-Hennessey 1965, no. 120–122, fig. 79–81.
[374] British Mus. Inv. 1951,0407.77; Bartsch 1813, 208. 259.
[375] Panyagua 1972, no. 105.

comfortably with the iconography of Orpheus' encounter with Cerberus in the art of the mid-seventeenth century.

The statuettes are technically and stylistically related to each other and likely came from the same workshop. They find their closest visual comparison in four engravings of gems by Galestruzzi and published in the same volume of Agostini's *Le Gemme Antiche Figurate.* When we consider the great popularity and value of engraved gems in early modern Europe, the practice of transmitting the images on these ancient gems by means of wax and gesso impressions, bronze plaquettes and printed engravings along with the subsequent translation of those impressions into other artistic media including painting and relief sculpture,[376] it is clear the Ashmolean statuettes fit best within the iconographic tradition of the mid- to late seventeenth century when the engravings were made. Consequently it is far more plausible that these statuettes were made sometime after the mid-seventeenth century than in the second century AD. Furthermore, the visual evidence suggests that Galestruzzi's engravings themselves were the models for the Ashmolean statuettes. Several correspondences between the statuettes and the engravings strengthen a case for a relationship between them.

Aside from the very close compositional similarities between the statuettes and the engravings, several smaller details are also shared between the depictions. **197** translates into bronze many of the unique iconographical elements seen in Galestruzzi's engraving that do not appear in other versions of this type. A tree replaces the rocky outcrop with the lion skin draped over it and Herakles stands more erect, so that his left

[376] Yuen 1997, 137.

forearm is not pressing against Cerberus' back. Cerberus is depicted with three heads rather than two and is missing all indication of his front legs, one of which is consistently seen wrapped around Herakles' leg in other representations. The shape of the rock upon which Orpheus rests his foot in **199** is also very similar to that seen in the engraving, a detail that would be unnecessary had it not been directly copied. **198** and **200** similarly correspond to the engravings in several of their details.

Unfortunately, it cannot be said with absolute certainty when and where the statuettes might have been made, since there are no records of their entry into the Bodleian collection. Agostini's book had a wide circulation over two editions, both of which were translated into Latin by Dutch scholar Jacobus Gronovius.[377] Agostini's work also formed the core of the four volumes of *Gemme Antique Figurate*, published in Rome between 1707 and 1709 by Domenico de' Rossi with observations by antiquarian Paolo Alessandro Maffei.[378] The engravings in the Rossi/Maffei volumes were later used by Dom Bernard de Montfaucon to inform the illustrations for his monumental multivolume *L'antiquité expliquée et representée en figures* in 1722.[379] Any of the many editions of Galestruzzi's engravings could have served as prototypes for the Ashmolean statuettes, but the strongest possibilities are those in which the relevant plates appear in close proximity to each other. In the first edition of the second volume, the engravings appear as plates 5, 6, 8 and 15. [380] The same numbering is used in Gronovius' 1685 translation.

[377] Agostini & Gronovius 1685; 1694.
[378] Rossi & Maffei 1707.
[379] Montfaucon 1722.
[380] Agostini 1669.

It is possible to speculate further on the origins of the statuettes, but such speculation is likely to prove unproductive. Further research on the transmission of classical imagery in bronze statuettes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries may change that and allow for greater precision in locating possible workshops and dates for the statuettes. For the purposes of this study, the evidence presented shows that we can at least be reasonably assured that the four mythological groups in the Ashmolean collection are not Roman works of the second century AD, but are classically-inspired modern statuettes derived from the iconography of both ancient and modern gems. This discovery raises other interesting questions about the subjects and contexts of small-scale mythological groups in bronze in the Greek and Roman worlds and how these may have been influenced by other art forms (including large-scale sculpture). This topic deserves further attention.

3.4 Conclusions

The contents of the collections analysed indicate a preference for the same subjects found with high frequency in the Ashmolean's collection. Although only the subjects with a significant presence at the Ashmolean were compared in this study, the relative numbers of statuettes exhibit a strong consistency across collections. Representations of Aphrodite, Hermes, Herakles and Eros are the most numerous for each collection, with the exception of the Louvre where representations of Harpokrates are more numerous than those of Eros. If unconfirmed statuettes are taken into account, Harpokrates is also the subject more represented at the British Museum.

The picture changes slightly when we examine the 'regional' collections. In the Italian museums, statuettes of Herakles dominate, but in Germany and Bulgaria, Hermes

and Aphrodite are represented in higher numbers. In these results we can recognise the primacy of Italy as a source for ancient bronzes and the large number of Italic Herakles statuettes that have found their way into both 'imperial' and 'regional' collections. Also notable among the 'regional' collections is a drop-off in the number of representations of Eros. Aphrodite is in addition mostly absent in the French and Italian museums. This uneven distribution may reflect a perennial demand for these subjects among collectors, who over centuries removed a majority of statuettes from Italian soil in particular. Aphrodite and Eros were also favourite subjects of early modern bronze casters working in *all'antica* style.

The collecting of ancient bronze statuettes was intimately bound up with the collecting of and admiration for *all'antica* bronze statuary. The value of both the statuette and the medium of bronze was dependent first on an association with large-scale sculpture and then with the names of 'old master' artists. The vast majority of bronze statuettes of the size and quality of those now found in the Ashmolean, with their limited iconographical range and often formulaic appearance, could not satisfy the needs of collectors as well as *all'antica* examples. The demands of *virtù* required the collectors and owners of bronze statuettes to be able to communicate their erudition and knowledge of ancient art through their small-scale statuary, as it was more publically expressed in large-scale sculptures. Contemporary small-scale versions of famous statues were for centuries desired above the imperfect authenticity of the majority of ancient bronze statuettes. This changed in the nineteenth century when more attention began to be paid to the technical qualities of bronze statuettes and their value as evidence for the reconstruction of Greek and Roman life. Toward the end of that century, the archaeological value of bronzes as evidence of Greek and Roman religious practice and

their art historical value for reconstructing the appearance of lost large-scale Greek bronzes also became more widely recognised.[381] The operation of foundries like the Chiurazzi and Righetti throughout the nineteenth century shows that despite a shift in emphasis toward the bronze statuette as archaeological artefact, collectors were still highly interested in acquiring small bronze replicas.[382]

The Ashmolean contains evidence of the practice of transferring classical imagery to bronze statuettes in a somewhat surprising way. The four mythological groups investigated in the case study above derive their form from the iconography of gems—and perhaps also from the copperplate engravings made of gems. These examples are illustrative of how the reception of classical imagery affected not only the kinds of bronze statuettes that have historically been collected, but also influenced new creations.

[381] Although more recent scholarship has found this method mostly unsatisfactory. See Marvin 2008.
[382] On the Chiurazzi and Righetti foundries, see Haskell and Penny 1981, 124; Mattusch 2005, 342-347.

PART II
Ancient Contexts

Chapter 4: Archaeological Contexts

4.1. Introduction

In Part I, the collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean Museum was introduced and situated historically, both within the institutional history of the museum and the University of Oxford, as well as within the broader scope of European antiquities collecting. Part II of the thesis addresses the archaeological evidence for the use and production of bronze statuettes in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The next chapter will focus on the production contexts for bronze statuettes by examining the evidence for their manufacture and movement. This chapter will examine the physical contexts in which bronze statuettes have been discovered and discusses how the statuettes may have functioned in these contexts. The chapter will start with a brief overview of the pre-Hellenistic evidence for bronze statuettes before examining Hellenistic contexts. Roman contexts will follow.

The nature of the archaeological evidence

Before addressing the archaeological evidence directly, a brief discussion about the nature of the evidence will permit more nuanced interpretation. As was seen in the previous chapters, the vast majority of the Ashmolean's statuettes and the larger corpus of surviving ancient bronzes entered collections and the antiquities market without much knowledge of associated archaeological contexts. Provenance documentation is poor. When a place is mentioned in association with a specific statuette, it is often only to record where the object was purchased. Self-reported findspots by donors and dealers can be trusted also impairs our ability to make strong claims about ancient contexts for these bronzes. The supposedly Pompeian provenance of **36,** for example, is probably fanciful. Although the style of the statuette does suggest an Italian origin, an association with the

famous buried city would have added to its allure and cannot be fully credited without corroboration. Many bronze statuettes are known to have such concocted provenance.[383] An entire industry of ancient bronze imitations developed in the eighteenth century and continued to supply reduced-scale copies throughout nineteenth century by mimicking the style of bronzes being discovered at Pompeii and Herculaneum.[384] A lack or loss of acquisition records exacerbates the problem of determining where statuettes originated. Among the Ashmolean statuettes, for example, four were found in the collection without any information regarding their acquisition.[385]

Reported provenance information without knowledge of the archaeological context is most useful in understanding the movements and motivations of modern collectors, but taken together with statuettes from the archaeological record, such decontextualized material can still provide information about the degree to which certain images and subjects prevailed in the visual culture of the ancient world.[386] We have also seen that the numerous fakes, forgeries and imitations of ancient bronze statuettes have the potential to skew the overall picture of the kinds of images produced in bronze in antiquity.[387] Thus we must depend on archaeologically secure statuettes to ground our comparisons. Although four nearly identical copies of **190** exist, because not one of them has an archaeological pedigree that can prove it was created before the nineteenth century and the iconography does not appear in other Greek or Roman artistic media, we should be sceptical and place it into the category of *dubitanda.*

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[383] Scott (2003, 254) tells of the Duke of Bedford who was permitted to 'excavate' the herm of a satyr that had been planted for him to find. M. Beard (2013, 221) identifies the 'staged excavation' as one of the best-known tricks presented to nineteenth century visitors.
[384] The most well-known of producers of imitation bronze in Naples were the Chiurazzi Foundry and the Righetti Foundry. See Haskell and Penny 1981, 93-4.
[385] 81, 140, 178, 179.
[386] See Anderson 2014,93-94 on the value and methods of studying unprovenanced bronzes in museum collections.
[387] Above, section 3.4.

The difficulty in dating bronze statuettes, particularly those from the lower levels of artistic production on stylistic or technical grounds means that the field is even more dependent on identifying closed archaeological contexts with bronze statuettes for determining how bronze statuettes functioned within Greek and Roman society. In E. Durham's study of more than 1,000 bronze figurines found in Britain, for example, only 76 are considered to have come from known, datable contexts.[388]

The lower rate of survival for metal objects, which had an intrinsic material value and were frequently melted down also accounts for a lack of evidence. The recycling of bronze statuary—large and small—was a common practice in antiquity. Ancient writers record cities and sanctuaries melting down bronze statuary to create space and scrap metal heaps are in evidence for several small-scale bronze casting workshops.[389] In Late Antiquity, Christian iconoclasm and the continuing value of bronze as scrap metal further reduced the evidence available to us for reconstructing their ancient contexts. To this day, the material value of the metal continues to be a cause of the destruction of bronze sculpture.[390]

Distinguishing between primary and secondary contexts also constitutes a challenge. Even in the best cases where statuettes are found *in situ*, rarely are contexts unambiguous regarding the display and use of a statuette, nor, usually, can the final deposition of a statuette give any information about the contexts in which it was first

[388] Durham 2012, §5.
[389] See the discussion in Chapter 5.
[390] The Guardian, 'Mystery of the stolen Moore solved' (17 May 2009), http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2009/may/17/henry-moore-sculpture-theft-reclining-figure, accessed 12 April 2016.

made and used. For statuettes that may have been created centuries before, we can only speculate on the original contexts and the subsequent history of the object. A particularly extreme example is the case of a statuette of an Egyptian priest found in Hanghaus 2 at Ephesos, one of eight bronzes all seemingly made at different times.[391] The statuette was found in the layer marking the final destruction of the house in the third quarter of the fourth century AD, but dates stylistically to the sixth century BC. How this statuette made its way, presumably from Egypt, to Ephesos over the course of a millennium can only be guessed.

The portability of small bronzes also contributes to this situation. In contrast to other bronze objects such as appliqués and figural decoration attached to furniture or other objects, free-standing statuettes were much more likely to be carried away from their original context and subsequently lost. Indeed, some statuettes may have been designed to be carried, particularly by soldiers. In some cases, however, this portability allows some insight into relationships to their statuettes. Such is the case with finds from Pompeii where bronze statuettes have been found along with other valuables being carried by victims fleeing from the eruption of Vesuvius.

As N. Franken recently pointed out, increasing our knowledge about the archaeological contexts for single statuette finds and adding these to the known corpus of bronze statuettes is of high methodological value for producing new research on the techniques, functions and display of small bronzes.[392] The isolation of most bronze statuette finds has resulted in a situation in which reports on individual statuettes are

[391] Krinzinger 2010 (N. Flessa).
[392] Franken 2015, 125-126.

scattered throughout hundreds of different publications, often in lesser known and less accessible regional archaeological journals and archaeological society proceedings. Although some studies have been able to compile and analyse the scattered data of bronze statuette production, appearance and use, obtaining a big-picture, supra-regional view has been more difficult. There has, however, been significant progress in this area. The review of old excavation reports and archaeological notices has permitted scholars to develop corpora of statuettes from defined regions, though these tend to be based on boundaries of modern nation states rather than any ancient political or geographic divisions. Stephanie Boucher's 1976 study stands as an early synthesis of finds from France and a considered analysis of the relationship of Gaulish statuette types and their relationships to the classical visual tradition.[393] H. Sharpe has compiled a comprehensive inventory of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes found in Greece.[394] A. Kaufmann-Heinimann's monograph contextualises bronzes found at Augst and Kaiseraugst (ancient Augusta Raurica) within a corpus of statuette ensembles from closed contexts across the Greek and Roman world.[395] The incredibly useful appendices in this volume offer a gazetteer of statuette groups from *lararia* and sacral deposits and represent a significant advancement in our ability to compare the contents of groups of bronze statuettes across the Roman Empire.

Increased reporting and documentation of finds has also resulted in new research on bronze statuettes. The Portable Antiquities Scheme, operating in England since 1997, offers an avenue for members of the public (especially metal detectorists) to report small archaeological finds, which are then documented and compiled into a database available

[393] Boucher 1976.
[394] Sharpe 2006. I do not, however, think that the evidence that Sharpe presents supports her conclusion about the character of Greek domestic religion in the imperial period.
[395] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998.

online.[396] Durham's recent study utilises this information extensively to reveal the subjects, distributions and contexts of metal figurines in Britain.[397] M. Bolla has been especially prolific in developing a detailed picture of bronze statuette production in northern Italy and has recently published a useful account of bronze statuettes from cult sites in the region.[398]

4.2. Bronze statuettes from Hellenistic contexts

Archaic and Classical precedents

The fashioning of bronze to create figural statuettes is nearly as old as the technology of bronze working itself. Statuettes created by Bronze Age civilizations have been found on Crete, Cyprus, Asia Minor and Egypt. Some of the earliest freestanding cast bronze figures made by Greeks date to the Geometric period and were found at Olympia.[399] The simple statuettes often took the form of animals, such as bulls, horses, goats and dogs. Anthropomorphic statuettes from this early period are usually male figures shown as warriors, charioteers, worshippers, or artisans. Many of these small figures found at Olympia and other early sanctuaries such as at Delphi and Samos were votive offerings. Other figures dating from the eighth century BC were decorative elements for the elaborate tripods and cauldrons dedicated at the sanctuary sites.[400] The panhellenic sanctuaries of Olympia, Delphi and Dodona have produced much of the evidence for bronze statuette dedications up to the Classical period, which were dedicated alongside bronze objects such as shields, weapons, armour, vessels and utensils, as well as

[396] https://finds.org.uk/database
[397] Durham 2012.
[398] Bolla 2015.
[399] See Heilmeyer 1979; Mattusch 1988, 32-33.
[400] See Maass 1978; Herrmann 1966; 1979 (OF 10, 6, 11)

terracotta figurines and vases. These finds are supplemented by bronzes from other sanctuaries, large and small, such as those in Athens, Sparta, Thebes and Corinth.

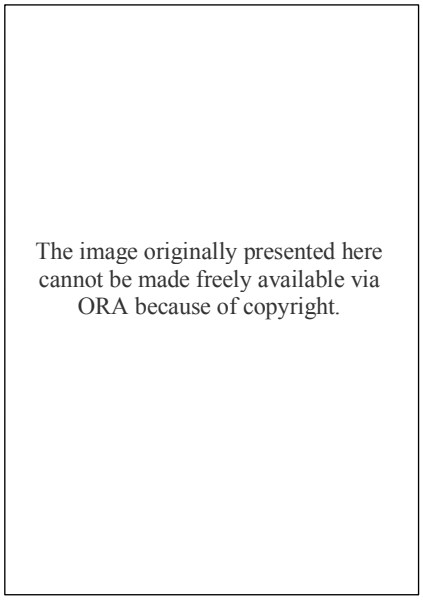

Fig. 4.1. Bronze dish-holder in the shape of a comic actor. From Olynthus, House ESH 6. c. 380-350 BC.

The archaeological record indicates a sharp decline in the number of bronze statuette dedications in Greek sanctuaries starting from about the mid-fifth century BC. Some of the major panhellenic sites continue to see dedications of bronze statuettes into the Imperial period, but on a seemingly greatly reduced scale. Delphi, for example, remains an important site for visitors into the second century AD, but the importance of Dodona waned by the middle of the Hellenistic period and activity there declined after the third century BC, showing a significant decrease in the number of votive dedications and a notable lack of dedications dating from the Roman Imperial period.[401] This scarcity of Hellenistic bronzes in Greek sanctuaries has been partially attributed to Roman sacks of sanctuary sites during the second and first centuries BC where these dedications would be exposed and vulnerable to pillaging and subsequent destruction or exportation.[402] As H. Sharpe points out, however, this explanation does not account for the lack of dedications at smaller, more remote shrines, which probably did not attract the kind of looting that the major sanctuaries did.[403] S. Alcock posits a decline in rural shrines due to selective patronage of larger, more prominent sites by elites in the cities who would have been responsible for

[401] Sharpe 2006, 144.
[402] Thomas 1992, 36-37.
[403] Sharpe 2006, 159.

the maintenance of such sanctuaries corresponding to a decrease in rural religious activity.[404]

However, the late fourth century is the earliest period for which there is archaeological evidence of freestanding bronze statuettes in domestic contexts. A comic actor from House ESH 6 at Olynthus, discovered in 1931, has been assigned a date in the first half of the fourth century BC (Fig. 4.1). D. M. Robinson based his assessment on the dress and the mask, though this date is also supported by the associated finds.[405] The figure has a narrow chest and limbs with a protruding belly and oversized phallus. The mask he wears is also overlarge and upon his head rests a Phrygian cap signifying that he represents a Phrygian slave. His two arms extend away from the body and he carries a dish in each hand, attached with rivets.

The function of early statuary in domestic contexts has been the subject of debate. V. Harward argued for a religious function for domestic sculpture well in to the Hellenistic period. The Olynthian comic actor, however, is absent from Harward's discussion.[406] The fact that our earliest example of a domestic bronze statuette is a comic actor suggests the small-scale statuettes in bronze served as decorative utilitarian objects from an early date. Although, an *andron* cannot be securely identified in House ESH. 6,[407] other decorated *androne*s have been found at Olynthus and the serving dishes attached to the figure speak to its function as an ornament for dining. Some actor figurines and comic masks in terracotta have been found in other houses at Olynthus and,

[404] Alcock 1994, 260.
[405] Robinson 1941 5. Associated finds: Robinson and Graham 1938, 346-352.
[406] Harward 1982, 34ff. Perhaps omitted because Harward follows Robinson in thinking the figure to be an attachment to a bronze bowl (Robinson 1932, 138). See also, Barr-Sharrar 1990, 35.
[407] The statuette was found in Room *b*, the largest of this small house. Robinson 1941, 2; Robinson and Graham 1938, 138.

though they cannot be associated by their find spots with *androne*s, they may have played a similar, albeit less expensive, function as decorative ornamentation for the *andron*.[408] The *androne*s in later Hellenistic houses, such as those found on Delos also draw from theatre and Dionysian imagery, but emphasise their connection with the food, drink and the symposium, rather than any religious affiliation.[409]

Hellenistic public contexts[410]

An overarching picture of the types of statuettes produced during the Hellenistic period is difficult to construct for several reasons. Good, closed contexts that can be securely dated to the Hellenistic period and containing bronzes are generally rare or occur as isolated examples. Statuettes dating to the Hellenistic period are also exceedingly difficult to differentiate on stylistic grounds from later, Roman statuettes. The bronze statuettes of Herakles and male and female votaries produced in Italy from the fourth to second century BC are notable exceptions. These often bear stylistic characteristics of the cultural sphere to which they belong, including elongated limbs and torsos, lack of depth, heads which are often large in proportion to the bodies and lingering archaisms in the treatment of drapery. Several studies on this material have resulted in detailed typologies.[411] Such typologies and chronologies are mostly unavailable for statuettes produced in a Hellenic idiom and accurate dating of statuettes can rarely be done convincingly on stylistic evidence alone.

[409] The *andron* of the House of the Comedians is decorated with comedic scenes. See Barr-Sharrar 1996, 108.
[409] The *andron* of the House of the Comedians is decorated with comedic scenes. See Barr-Sharrar 1996, 108.
[410] H. Sharpe (2006) has dealt in detail with Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes from Greece. Much of the following discussion on sanctuaries and domestic contexts in mainland Greece owes a great deal to her work. (See chs. 2 and 4).
[411] Colonna 1970; Galestin 1987; Bentz 1992.

Sanctuaries

The panhellenic sanctuaries

The most numerous finds come from the sanctuary of Zeus and Dione at Dodona. This site, which was first excavated in 1875 by C. Carapanos, but most systematically by D. Evangelides and then S. Dakaris since the 1920s, has yielded a number of bronze dedications. These are mostly pre-Hellenistic as is the case at the other panhellenic sanctuaries, but some notable later bronzes have survived. A group published early on by Carapanos, consists of two draped, bearded males, a Herakles figure that appears to be dancing and three draped females.[412] These figures probably date from the fourth century BC, and Carapanos interprets one of the males and all three females as a priest and priestesses, but of the male figure wielding a knife in his right hand—apparently in the act of sacrificing an animal—and of the dancing Herakles, he has nothing to say.[413] All the figures exhibit a similar style with thin, elongated proportions that perhaps point to a local manufacture, but which do find comparisons with fourth century visual representations.[414]

Somewhat later in date and of higher artistic quality are several bronzes that may be indicative of a shift of the kinds of subjects offered in bronze at the sanctuary. A statuette of a comic actor found by Carapanos, is unusual for a sanctuary as most images of this type come from domestic or funerary contexts.[415] This statuette is a departure from the images of divinities and dedicators found at the sanctuary. Another bronze is illustrative of changing attitudes towards dedications. A small statuette that has been identified as Ptolemy III in the guise of Hermes—somewhat doubtfully in my mind—was also found.[416] The statuette does appear to have portrait-like features, but the surface

[412] Carapanos 1890, 159-161, pls. 3-5.
[413] Carapanos 1890,160-161.
[414] Sharpe 2006, 138-140.
[415] Carapanos 1878, 32, no. 14, pl. 13,5.
[416] Svenson 1995, 64.

is too worn to discern the portrait of a specific Ptolemaic king. Even if the features are only generically portrait-like, the style and quality of the statuette is a marked contrast to the local style of Carapanos' statuettes. It reflects the Hellenistic practice of making dedications with the portrait-like features, which Bazant identifies as the successors of the kouroi and korai of the Archaic period and the libation bearing youths of the Classical.[417]

A further two bronzes from Dodona, both depicting young boys, also point to shifts in the subject matter of bronze dedications at the sanctuary. One of the bronzes, depicting a boy holding a dove, was studied by Thompson who sees it the product of an Attic workshop from around 330 BC.[418] The other statuette is of a boy throwing a ball, which exhibits an interest on the part of the artist in naturalistically depicting the fleshiness of very young children, rendering the belly with incised lines to indicate rolls of baby fat. The increased appearance of children as dedications during the late Classical period is remarked upon by Thompson who also notes that these types become more common in sanctuaries related to Kourotrophoi.[419]

The other panhellenic sanctuaries have produced very few bronze statuettes of Hellenistic date. Four statuettes have come from Delphi, with a fifth associated with the sanctuary, but of uncertain provenance.[420] The evidence for Hellenistic bronzes from Olympia and Nemea is scarce. Only one statuette from each of these major sanctuaries is known. From Olympia, a statuette of Zeus of an athlete preserves only the torso and the right leg and has very little other context.[421] A statuette of a child from Nemea may

[417] Bazant 1979, 65-66.
[418] Thompson 1982, 160.
[419] Thompson 1982, 158-159.
[420] Rolley 1969, pls XLIX-L.
[421] Bol 1984, 301.

represent Opheltes who was venerated at the site.[422] The figure is depicted in much the same way as Hellenistic and Roman seated Harpokrates statuettes, with one leg tucked under the other. Some of the features are also reminiscent of the iconography of Eros. The Nemean statuette was found in a Late Antique fill, but has been associated with the shrine to Opheltes discovered on the site.

Greek urban sanctuaries

City sanctuaries and smaller rural shrines have also produced a limited number of bronzes of probable Hellenistic date. Many of these have been found in disturbed layers and so their original placement and function can be difficult or impossible to reconstruct. As might be expected, the bronzes from sanctuary contexts within cities come primarily from Athens, Corinth and Sparta. From near the Athenian Acropolis comes a sandal-wielding Aphrodite who stands in a similar pose to her counterpart in the famous marble Aphrodite and Pan group from Delos. She has a large plate affixed to her upper back to which a figure of Eros may have once been attached. [423] A statuette of a warrior was found near the Glauke fountain in Corinth in a Late Imperial fill, but has been dated to the Hellenistic period by Mattusch.[424] Two Athena statuettes have come from Sparta. Artemis statuettes were found at Pistiana, Arcadia and Pagonda. Comic actors similar to the bronze from Olynthus and probably of around the same date were found, along with a probable Herakles statuette at a sanctuary to the hero at Oita, near Thebes.[425]

[422] *AR* 26 (1979-1980), 25.
[423] Marinatos, 1923, 175-181.
[424] Mattusch 1993, 300.
[425] *ArchDelt* 5 (1919) 25-33.

Eastern sanctuaries

One of the best examples of the votive use of a bronze statuette from the Hellenistic period comes from a small temple at Tahkt-i Sangin in southern Tajikistan. The 16 cm high statuette depicts a bald-headed and pot-bellied satyr playing the double aulos. The statuette is attached to a limestone base that bears a Greek inscription giving the Hellenized name of the Iranian dedicator as well as the name of the deity to whom the statuette was dedicated (and to whom the temple was consecrated).[426] The Temple of the Oxus was built only a few decades after the conquest of Bactria by Alexander the Great in the fourth century BC and remained in use as a cult site until the third century AD.[427]

A bronze statuette of Herakles was found in the *temple à redans*, the main sanctuary of the ancient Greco-Bactrian city of Ai Khanoum in eastern Afghanistan. The temple is further example of the figural art in Hellenistic visual idiom being dedicated in a structure that adheres to a Mesopotamian plan. The statuette measures 18.2 cm in height and depicts a beardless Herakles with the club resting in the crook of his left arm and raising his right arm to place a wreath on his head.

At Vani, in modern Georgia, seven statuettes, four of bronze and three of iron, ranging in height from 16 to 30 cm, have been discovered in association with graves and cult buildings on the upper terrace of the site. Five of the statuettes are heavily abstracted nude standing figures with outstretched arms. A sixth is rendered in a crude early Classical style. The final statuette depicts a satyr in Hellenistic style with the right arm raised and the left held at waist height, palm up. The first figure, found in 1947 had been placed in a rectangular pit between two cover tiles and buried between two graves.

[426] The base reads εὐχὴν ἀνέθηκεν Ἀτροςώκεης Ὄξωι. 'Atrosōkes dedicated [this] as vow to Oxus'.
[427] Lindström 2013, 300.

The ancient name of the site of Vani, in modern Georgia, is not known with certainty, but some scholars have linked it with the shrine of Leukothea,[428] which Strabo records as having suffered from raids by Pharnakes of Bosphorus in 49 BC and raids by Mithradates VII two years later.[429] Others have suggested the city of Surium mentioned by Pliny and Ptolemy.[430] The excavations at Vani have revealed two destructions within a short period of one another in the mid-first century BC, though the site continued to be occupied throughout antiquity and into the medieval period.[431] The excavations that have been carried out at Vani since 1947 have revealed a number of buildings that appear to have been used for cultic purposes within the Hellenistic battlements as well as several wealthy graves containing numerous items of gold jewellery and adornment, but no evidence of habitation.

Hellenistic private contexts

The body of contextual evidence for the domestic use and display of figural bronze statuettes in the Hellenistic period is disappointingly sparse, especially for the domestic sphere. The sites with well-preserved Hellenistic houses have yielded very few statuettes. Not a single bronze figure has been found among the houses of Priene. Delos, famed among the Romans for its bronze working industry, has given up only one small bronze herm, some appliqués and parts for *klinai*.[432]

[428] Lordkipanidze 1972, 106-25.
[429] Strabo 11.2.17.
[430] Plin. *HN* 6.11.13; Ptol. *Geog.* 5.9.6.
[431] Vickers 2008, 35. Kacharava and Kvirkveli͡a 2008, 75-76.
[432] See Siebert 1973 on the bronze finds from the Skardhana quarter.

Eretria

A figure from House II in Eretria shows that bronzes were also present in domestic contexts as part of household cult. The bronze is in the form of a youth making a libation. He is nude save for a chlamys hung over his left arm and shoulder and stands on a plain square base. The youth was found in 1971 as part of a group of bronzes in the southwest corner of room x2, which was constructed during the house's second building phase, sometime in the late fourth or early third century BC.[433] The group consists of 21 small figures; the youth, with the exception of a disembodied right leg and right arm, is the only human figure. Animal figures include a lion, two horses, three dogs—including one with two heads (Cerberus?)—and a serpent. The others are inanimate objects— caduceus, club, sword, double axe, broom or bellows, wheel, plough, key, sickle, bean pod and weight. The group has been dated to the second half of the third century BC, slightly before the destruction of the building.[434]

The disposition of the bronzes cannot be known and it is unclear how or if they were displayed in the room.[435] What does seem clear is that they served in some way as the focus of household cult. The grouping of these objects does not have any ready contemporaneous parallels, though individually they appear in contexts ranging from the early Bronze Age to the Roman Imperial period.[436] If the objects are read as attributes or symbols, dedication to a particular deity is difficult to justify. Some are overtly agricultural (plough, sickle, bean pod); others seem to be chthonic (serpent, two-headed dog—if representing Cerberus, perhaps the caduceus as a symbol for Hermes Psychopompos) and the arm and leg, which are finished pieces, are reminiscent of votives

[433] Reber 1998, 111-112.
[434] The bronzes were found in the destruction layer along with three heavily used coins from the early third century. Kassapoglou 1995, 159.
[435] Reber 1998, 110 raises the question of whether the group was buried as a deposit under the floor.
[436] Kassapoglou 1995, 160.

to Asclepius. Kassapoglou sees the possibility of a shrine to Isis, whose cult was introduced to Eretria around the time the bronzes were made and whose universal and syncretistic nature mean the symbols could be encompassed within the goddess' worship.[437] Sharpe rightly points out, however, that several of the objects have much stronger associations with other deities (caduceus-Hermes; club-Herakles; lion-Cybele; serpent-Zeus Ktesios) and that the presence of these deities in household worship should not be seen as unusual given that Hermes and Zeus already had a long history of private worship by the third century and the worship of Cybele and Herakles became widespread during the Hellenistic period.[438]

Despite the possible veneration of new household deities, the youth pouring a libation is rather conservative in his appearance, reminiscent of the nude offering youths in terracotta and bronze that were dedicated at sanctuaries in the Archaic and Classical periods. The youth would not seem out of place amongst the terracotta dedications from Corinth from the Classical and Early Hellenistic period.[439] The Eretria group might be understood in the context of the decline of bronze votives at the public sanctuaries and shrine as an example of the movement of cult worship into the private realm. The traditional household deities could be venerated alongside new cults and bronze dedications could be made within increasingly elaborate decorated rooms and household shrines.

[437] Kassapoglou 1995, 169-171. She also posits a shrine to Sabazios, whose private cult made use of miniature symbols, but is forced to concede that the Eretria bronzes predate any known examples of dedications to Sabazios by three centuries (171).
[438] Sharpe 2006, 51-52. Kassapoglou 1995, 173 also indicates that some important and expected Isis iconography is missing from the Eretria group.
[439] Merker 2000, 188-189.

Pella

The well-known figure of Poseidon from a house in Pella provides perhaps another example of the use of bronze statuettes for domestic cult. The statuette is the so-called Lateran type, which is believed by many scholars to be based on the Poseidon Isthmios statue created by Lysippos.[440] If indeed based on the large-scale fourth century original, the Pella Poseidon is an early example of the miniaturisation of larger sculpture and its diffusion within Greece. It was found in the northwest corner of the peristyle of a large house, outside of a room that contained two low platforms and circular table that may have been used to hold offerings.[441] The room has been interpreted as a domestic shrine and a similar room with a platform for displaying votives was found in House 22 at Priene and provides a good comparison.[442]

The statuette is dated primarily through historical means, thought to predate the Roman sack of Pella in 168 BC.[443] The original construction of the house appears to have been at the end of the fourth century or the early third.[444] Kunze argues that the statuette is probably contemporaneous with this construction since images of the god in the same pose appear on coins minted in Pella and Amphipolis under Demetrios Poliorketes and that the choice of deity was likely influenced by the ruler's adoption of Poseidon as a patron deity.[445] Additionally, as Sharpe indicates, it is unlikely the owners of the house were in a position after the Roman sack to purchase such an expensive statuette.[446] An early third century date for the statuette is convincing.

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[440] Lange 1879, 31 proposed the identification, though it is still debated. Bartman 1992, 102ff, presents the pertinent arguments.
[441] *ArchDelt* 16 (1960), 79-80, pls. 64b and 65b.
[442] Wiegand and Schrader 1904, 172-182. Perhaps the Alexandreion mentioned by an honorary inscription; Rumscheid 1998, 98.
[443] Heerman 1980, 119 suggests that the shrine might have been constructed after the Roman sack in 168 BC. There is evidence that the city was occupied afterward; Harward 1982, 106.
[444] Heerman 1980, 119.
[445] Kunze 1996, 125.
[446] Sharpe 2006, 59.

As the likely focus of domestic cult in the house of Pella, the statuette of Poseidon presents an intriguing glimpse into the continuing elaboration of private spaces for the practice of cult and to the role bronze statuettes might have played in that elaboration. At 46 cm, the figure is of a substantial size and the original limestone base on which is stands elevates the figure and provides contrast between materials that may recall the rocky ground on which the Poseidon Isthmios stood. This use of the bronze statuette as a focus of domestic cult may have been influenced by the emulation of cult rooms in Hellenistic palaces, one of which is found in Palace II at Pella located in a position similar to that of the house with the Poseidon.[447]

Delos

Delos contains the most extensive evidence for late Hellenistic housing in the eastern Mediterranean. It was also supposedly the site for a flourishing bronze working industry. The archaeological evidence, however, has yet to bear out Pliny the Elder's claims about the fame and quality of Delian bronze.[448] Direct evidence for bronze casting is mostly confined to discoveries in the Skardhana Quarter consisting of appliqués, parts for furniture and vessels and plaster moulds for bronze couch legs.[449].

[447] Sharpe 2006, 69. Kunze 1996, 122-124.
[448] Plin. *HN* 34.4.
[449] Siebert 1973

The only bronze statuette in the round to have been found associated with a domestic context on the island is a 21.5 cm high hip herm depicting Herakles (Fig. 4.2). It was discovered in the Maison des Sceaux and probably fell from an upper storey during the destruction of the house.[450] The small herm shows the hero as a rather older looking and bald man, draped in the lion skin.[451] The type appears frequently in large and small-scale marble sculpture on the island.[452]

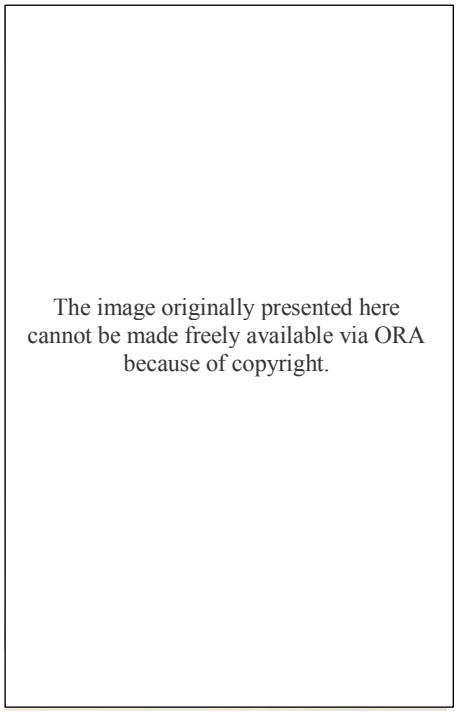

Fig. 4.2. Bronze Herakles herm from Delos, Maison des Sceaux.*TAQ* 69 BC. H. 21.5 cm. Delos Mus. inv E 1007.

Late Hellenistic Delos has produced a large number of small herms in terracotta and marble. Herakles joins other deities such as Eros, Athena and Dionysos. satyrs and silenoi begin appearing in herm format by the late Hellenistic period and according to H. Wrede, took on a more decorative than religious or apotropaic function.[453] R. Westgate has shown that the upper rooms of Delian houses were often luxuriously decorated.[454] The statuette is relatively large and finely made. It could have served a decorative function. However, there is also evidence that on Delos, at least, images of Herakles served an apotropaic function. The hero's club appears as a relief in the outside wall of the House of the Lake along with a phallus relief as apotropaic devices.[455] It may

[450] Kreeb 1988, 123. See Siebert 2001 for interpretation of the architecture the house.
[451] Identified by Harward 1982, 153, Rolley 1986, 213 as a satyr. Kreeb (1988, 123) lists the figure as a Herakles, followed by Sharpe 2006, 63. The lion skin supports the identification as the hero. The features are somewhat unusual but share similarities with **102** while the format is close to **105**, both reportedly from Bactria or Gandhara.
[452] See Marcadé 1969, 455-456, pl. XX.
[453] Wrede 1986, 58-62.
[454] Westgate 2000.
[455] Bruneau 1964, 165-168.

have originally been displayed in a niche or cupboard, or on a shelf on the upper story where two over life size marble portrait busts in 'veristic' style were also installed. These sculptures, along with the archive of 16,000 seals for which the house is named containing the names of many Italian families known to have been active on Delos have led some researchers to hypothesise that the owners were Italian bankers or traders.[456]

Two herm statuettes in the Ashmolean collection may have also originally served a decorative purpose in a late Hellenistic or Roman house. **105** is a hip herm that may also represent Herakles, though, lacking a lion skin and club, an interpretation as a Silenos or even Priapos is possible.[457] The figure is purported to be from southern Bactria or Gandhara, but this provenance cannot be corroborated. The statuette depicts a bearded male figure wrapped tightly in a mantle holding a cornucopia in the crook of the left arm. The second figure is an hermaic pillar with the head of an African boy [**144]**. This figure is approximately the same size as the Delian Herakles herm. While we do not know whether this latter served an apotropaic purpose, the genre subject of the Ashmolean figure likely relegates it to a decorative statuette. The golden colour and silver inlay for the eyes (and now missing in the mouth) help to convey its status as a luxury object. The subject of Africans and other outsider and low status groups were popular in the Hellenistic period. Both herms could have formed part of the decorative scheme of a Hellenistic home.

Other evidence for bronze statuettes in the domestic contexts of late Hellenistic Delos is indirect and consists only of marble bases. M. Kreeb identifies five such bases

[456] Rauh 1993, 217-218. But see Trümper 2005, 391-394 disputing this thesis.
[457] See catalogue entry.

based on their size, bronze remains or the presence of cavities for affixing a bronze statuette.[458] One of these is a large base found in a cistern near the Establishment of the Poseidoniasts bearing the inscription 'Dedicated to Poseidon by Zenon, son of Dionysios, for himself and [--] and his mother.'[459]

4.3. Bronze statuettes from Roman public contexts

Roman Sanctuaries and Shrines

Bronze statuettes continued to serve as votive offerings in Roman sanctuaries. Our direct evidence for such usage is somewhat limited. Many of the bronze statuettes from Roman sanctuary contexts have been interpreted as temple treasures, buried either as a ritual disposal to make space for new offering or as emergency deposits in a time of crisis. In situ statuettes serving as votive dedication are rarer.

One early example of the latter is a large bronze statuette discovered at the sanctuary of Hercules Curinus near Sulmona.[460] The 36-centimetre-high statuette depicts a weary Herakles in the manner of the 'Herakles Farnese' type attributed to Lysippos. The statuette was found in a small decorated room on terrace B, which Van Wonterghem has interpreted as a *sacellum* (room *n*). Inside the room, an inscribed altar and a marble statuette of a Herakles Cubans set on a pillar were also found. All three dedications were inscribed with the names of their donors. The bronze Herakles statuette was dedicated by M Attius Peticius Marsus, a first century AD wine exporter who is attested epigraphically

[458] Kreeb 1988, cat. S 1.14, S 24.28, S 49.1, S 52.2. See also Sanders 2001 cat. Bse 3, Bse 4, Bse 14
[459] Kreeb (1988, 110) reconstructs the base as having a width of 50-60 cm, about the right size for a large statuette. Inscription: *ID* 1788.

Ζήνων Διονυσ[ίου εὐεργέτης?]
ὑπὲρ αὑτοῦ κα[ὶ — — — — — —]
καὶ τῆς μητρὸς ϰ[— — — — —]
Ποσ[ειδῶνι]

[460] Mus. Arch. Naz. Chieti, inv. 4340. Daehner and Lapatin 2015 218-219, no. 18.

elsewhere in the Marsic territory of central Italy.[461] His name is also found on *dolium* from the Diano Marinum shipwreck off the Italian coast.[462] The Petricii were a wealthy trading family and Marsus' dedication was a prestigious one quite different from the mass produced figures that make up the votive assemblages for sanctuaries in the region. The dedication is dated to around the mid-first century AD. P. Moreno has assigned the statuette a third century BC date, closer to the date of Lysippos' original and retaining much of the technical virtuosity of the original bronze statue.[463] If this is the case, the statuette would have been an antiquity by the time Marsus dedicated it, perhaps originally acquired by him or one of his forbears as an expensive 'Corinthian' bronze and later dedicated to Herakles.[464] Only a short time after Marsus likely made his dedication, Pliny the Younger records in a letter to Annius Severus how he intends to dedicate to the Temple of Jupiter as a public benefaction, a fine antique-looking 'Corinthian' bronze statuette that he had just purchased.[465] Both Marsus' and Pliny's dedications allowed them to partake in elite status display through the acquisition of coveted statuettes that are made of expensive materials or replicate statues by famous Greek sculptors, while at the same time framing such display as public benefaction.[466]

4.4. Bronze statuettes from Roman private contexts

Houses and Villas

Bay of Naples

As one of the only fixed chronological pegs, Pompeii provides our best evidence for the use of bronze statuettes in domestic cult during the first century AD. The burial of the city

[461] For example, at Corfinium. See Van Wonterghem 1984, 251, n. 189
[462] McLaughlin 2010, 156
[463] Moreno 1987, 171-172.
[464] Moreno 1995, 106.
[465] *Ep.* 3.6.
[466] See Stewart 2003, 230-231. See Hallett 2015 on the market for bronze statuettes in retrospective style.

from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79 allows us to assign a *terminus ante quem* to much of the material remains retrieved from Pompeian houses. For those bronze statuettes discovered in household shrines or with equipment such as altars, lamps and braziers, we can sometimes narrow the chronological range for the manufacture of statuettes even further by assigning a *terminus post quem* after the religious reforms enacted by Augustus in 7 BC. These reforms revived the cult of the Lares and their appearance in Pompeian households in the form of painted images and statuettes, along with those of other deities is usually attributed to them.[467]

We must, however, be cautious about depending too heavily on the Campanian evidence for drawing wider conclusions about the use of statuettes in Roman household cult in the Imperial period. As Kaufmann-Heinimann pointed out, the earthquake of AD 62 left many houses uninhabited or under construction and out of over 800 known houses in the city, only about thirty statuette ensembles can be convincingly associated with a *lararium.*[468] The contents of such *lararia* may not, therefore, be as representative of the city as a whole as we might like, nor can the Campanian evidence be taken to stand in for the rest of the empire where such evidence of the household use of bronze statuettes is scarcer. With these caveats in mind, however, the evidence from Pompeii does provide some insight into the range of subjects available for bronze statuette and their potential uses in a Roman city of the first century AD.

Studies of the *lararia* at Pompeii have recognised two predominant locations within the house where the shrines were located. The primary shrines were often found in

[467] See Giacobello 2008, 79.
[468] Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 151.

the public part of the house, in the atrium or in the peristyle court. The more modest 'secondary' *lararia* were usually found in association with kitchens and food preparation areas.[469] The presence of bronze statuettes in kitchen *lararia* is extremely rare. T. Fröhlich records only one house in Pompeii containing a bronze statuette, a figure of Artemis in House I, 2, 6.[470] Another kitchen *lararium* with a full complement of bronze statuettes listed by Fröhlich was found at a rustic villa near Boscoreale, but this represents a special case. The remains of the villa indicate that it served as a semi-public rural *taberna* that served food and wine. The *lararium* was located in an anteroom to the kitchen. In the more typical and modest homes of Pompeii, kitchen *lararia* tended not to contain statuettes and were decorated with a much narrower range of subjects.[471] Statuettes of deities, whether in bronze or other materials such as terracotta, marble or ivory were almost always found in the *lararia* in the public parts of the house.

Ornamenta

The contents of *lararia* are usually identified by their association with a niche, often architecturally elaborated and painted with figures of Lares and/or other protectors of the household, such the Genius or a protective serpent. Absent these architectural markers, the presence of a Lar or Lares in a cache of statuettes usually serves as a good indication that all or part of the ensemble once served as the *Penates* in a *lararium*. A third means of identifying deities that were worshipped in household cult is if they are found in a domestic context in close association with cult equipment or other cultic imagery. At a rustic villa near Boscoreale, for example, statuettes of Artemis and Hermes-Thoth were

[469] See Orr 1972.
[470] Fröhlich 1991, 356.
[471] Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 155.

found with Egyptian deities in a context with a *sistrum* and a silvered votive plaque depicting Isis, Serapis and Harpokrates.[472]

But not all bronze statuettes found in Roman houses served a cultic purpose. Figural bronzes could also be found as decorative embellishments on all manner of ornamental and functional household objects. Although it is often difficult to understand precisely what sort of object many of these ornamental statuettes decorated, their decorative purpose can sometimes be determined by their shape.

However, even though we can recognise the original purpose for many decorative bronzes, we must still be cautious in assigning a purely decorative role. At Oberwinterthur, in Switzerland, a cupboard was uncovered in burn layer dated to the second half of the third century AD. In a similar manner to the well-known wooden cupboard preserved in the House of the Wooden Partition in Herculaneum, the Oberwinterthur cupboard contained statuettes that were part of a *lararium*, including two statuettes of Hermes found with their bases. Along with this group, which also contained statuette of Athena, an Eros emerging from a lion paw was also found. This figure once served as the foot for a folding stand, but was moved to the *lararium* with the household gods and may have taken on some cultic meaning.[473]

In other cases, we have examples of statuettes that are cast completely in the round and give little indication of whether they were used for cult or ornament. A figure of Aphrodite that serves as the handle to a bronze vase stands on a small oval base and is

[472] Stefani 1994, 33-36.
[473] Bürge 2013, 39, no. 7.

attached to a rim via a pair of stylised wings at her back. This vessel was found *in situ* in a house attached to a garum workshop (I, 12, 6) in Pompeii, so its function as decorative handle is clear.[474] Many figural statuettes that were designed as vessel handles display a distinctive curve in their modelling, but had she not been found attached to a vessel, this Aphrodite could have been mistaken for a statuette in the round.

Divinities represented in the Bay of Naples

The choice of deities that were worshipped in Pompeian *lararia* was made at the discretion of the inhabitants of the house, presumably led by the *paterfamilias*. The Pompeian evidence shows that some elements of the *lararium* are standard. At minimum, it depicted the Lares and the Genius, usually painted. These were at the centre of domestic cult. The other divinities that are depicted, either in paint or in sculpture were the household *Penates*. These were the deities collectively propitiated by inhabitants of the house to secure their protection over the household and its fortunes.

How do the subjects in Pompeian *lararia* compare to the those in the Ashmolean and other museums? How closely do the museum collections reflect the situation of a Roman town in the first century AD? Boyce, Fröhlich and Kaufmann-Heinimann, focussing on different aspects of private cult in Pompeii and its material traces, have compiled the evidence for statuettes in *lararia*.[475] The results of their research have shown that over three-quarters of the statuettes recovered from *lararia* are made of bronze.[476] Other materials include terracotta, marble, amber, alabaster silver and ivory. It

[474] Discovered in 1960 in a room north west of the atrium with five other bronze vessels. Tassinari 1993, 151 (inv. 12946), pl. CI
[475] Boyce 1937; Fröhlich 1991; Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998; Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007.
[476] Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 155, fig. 4.

is also possible that there were statuettes made of wood or other perishable materials located in *lararia*, but these have not survived.

The proportions in which specific subjects found in Pompeian statuettes is already familiar. Apart from the Lares themselves, the most commonly depicted deity is Hermes. He is followed by Aphrodite, Athena, Zeus and Herakles.[477] Aphrodite appears alone in the Pompeian *lararia*; statuettes of her son Eros are rare. He appears in bronze only in the shrine of House VII 15,3.[478] Harpokrates also appears only once at Pompeii, in the House of M. Memmius Auctus, along with the Lares and Egyptianising statuettes of Isis and Anubis. Unlike Eros, however, Harpokrates is also found in a rustic villa near Boscoreale and in the House of the Opus Craticium in Herculaneum. A statuette of Harpokrates was also discovered in the cella of the Temple of Isis. It had been packed in a chest with a gold bead, rock crystal vase, double-spouted bronze lamp and two candelabras and probably served a liturgical role in the cult of Isis.[479]

Because these figures were found *in situ*, they can give some additional information about the popularity of cult for a specific god, not just for the popularity of certain images. A statuette of Hermes in a *lararium* implies the god was propitiated there. The presence of Hermes as a protector of the business dealings of the owner and thus his wealth and station is unsurprising. Divinities such as Zeus and Athena might be personal choices—the domestic worship of Zeus has a long history in Greece and as a goddess of craft and manufacture, Athena has place with a house producing goods—but these deities may also be politically motivated choices, reflecting a connection with Roman state cult

[477] Kaufmann-Heinimann 2007, 155, fig. 5.
[478] Boyce 1937, no. 329; Fröhlich 1991, 365; Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 222, GFV35, fig. 168.
[479] Van Andringa 2009, 199-200.

and, therefore, the owner's political connections to the centre of power. This desire to connect household worship with official state cult is explicit in the House of the Golden Cupids, where the owner has installed enthroned statuettes of the Capitoline Triad—Zeus, Athena and Hera—in his *lararium*. The rare presence of Hera and the semi-public location of this *lararium*, (in the peristyle of the house), leave open the question of whether this Pompeian was a devoted follower of the official state cult or if these statuettes were displayed to communicate political messages to visitors of the *domus.*[480]

The Roman Provinces

Whilst the Bay of Naples offers the most consistent datable evidence for bronze statuette ensembles, many statuettes have also been discovered in secure contexts the provinces of the Roman Empire. Statuette ensembles from every part of the Roman Empire have been well covered by Kaufmann-Heinimann.[481] Her analysis of these ensembles has revealed a general concordance between the subjects of statuettes in Campanian *lararia* and those from Gaul and Germania with some exceptions: statuettes of Ares and Nike are absent from Campanian *lararia*, but appear with some frequency in provincial finds; conversely Egyptian deities and grotesque figures, found in many Campanian *lararia*, are not present in the provincial domestic shrines.[482] In the private context of the home, at least, the populations of the provinces appear to have maintained worship of the primarily the same deities that appear in Campanian household shrines in the late first century BC. According to Kaufmann-Heinimann's analysis, statuettes depicting native deities are found in greater numbers compared to Greco-Roman deities in ensembles associated with public sanctuaries in Gaul, Germania and throughout the empire.[483] Sharpe's more recent

[480] Van Andringa 2009, 256-258. For a detailed study of the House of the Golden Cupids, see Seiler 1992.
[481] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998; See also Kaufmann-Heinimann 2002 and Kaufmann-Heinimann 2004 for updated finds.
[482] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 194 and fig. 139.
[483] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 204-5 and figs. 142, 143.

study of the statuette finds from Greece concludes that Greek domestic shrines continued to favour deities that were frequently found in Hellenistic homes, such as Aphrodite, Dionysos and Herakles, but that, with the exception of Hermes, subjects and types that were found in large number in Campanian *lararia*, such as Athena, Zeus and the Lares are largely missing from the Greek domestic shrines.[484] In the Veronese region of Italy, the subjects found in likely residential contexts dating from the first century BC to the fourth century AD are similar to those in Campania. Statuettes of Hermes, Aphrodite and Eros are the most common; those depicting Zeus, Athena and Herakles have been regularly found, though with less frequency.[485]

The same subjects remained in high use throughout the imperial period. A late *lararium* from a villa at Vallon is revealing. The villa is about twelve kilometres from the administrative capital of Avernicum (modern Avenches) has been well preserved due to a conflagration sometime at the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century AD and the subsequent abandonment of some of the buildings. Fifteen bronze statuettes were found *in situ* during excavations in 1989. They were discovered in an apsidal room (Room 40) decorated with a polychrome mosaic depicting Dionysos and Ariadne.[486] Evidence of a bench bronze hinges and burnt wood permit the reconstruction of a large armoire set against the wall on three sides of the room. The statuettes were all found within the room. Two depictions of Hermes, two of Artemis, one each of Ares and Apollon were found with together with a turtle, cock and goat in the north-east corner. These figures were set in a wooden *lararium.* A Herakles, Harpokrates and Isis-Fortuna figure were also discovered within the room, having fallen upon the mosaic.

[484] Sharpe 2006, 172-3.
[485] See Bolla 2007, 244ff.a, esp. tables on pp. 254-55.
[486] See Rebetez 1992, 6-9 and an updated report in Agustoni and Fuchs 2015.

As we have seen, statuettes of Hermes can be found in most domestic shrines and Herakles is a common figure. Apollon is also not uncommon, but statuettes of Artemis are far rarer. In addition, the statuettes of Isis-Fortuna and Harpokrates are unusual for a residence outside of Italy. Kaufmann-Heinimann considers the all but these last two to be products of local workshop of the first to second century AD, while she argues the depiction of the syncretised Egyptian gods to be Italian or southern Gaulish imports.[487]

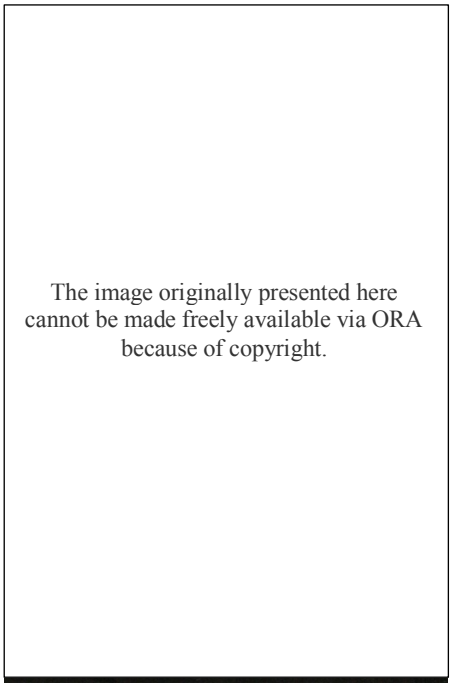

Fig. 4.3. Two bronze statuettes of Aphrodite from the south-east necropolis of Saida.

Funerary

A general absence of bronze statuettes from both Greek and Roman tombs has long been noted by scholars.[488] Indeed, in her recent research on Roman bronzes in funerary contexts, M. Bolla counts only eighty secure examples of freestanding bronze statuettes having been purposefully deposited in a grave.[489] Bolla's preliminary results show that where bronzes are found, figures of Hermes and Aphrodite are the most numerous.[490]

E. Poulsen noted the presence of several crudely made bronze statuettes of Hermes found in graves in Macedonia, Paeonia and Thrace.[491] These statuettes were subsequently studied by Sharpe who sees them as a second or third century AD

[487] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 285 (GF83).
[488] Rolley 1986, 32.
[489] Bolla 2015, 144.
[490] Bolla 2013, 4-6.
[491] Poulsen 1977.

phenomenon.[492] Hermes was an important figure in the funerary iconography of the Romans and appears in several other media such as terracotta statuettes and sarcophagus reliefs in his role as *psychopompos.* Bolla also notes a concentration of evidence in northern Germania and Gallia Belgica.[493] These bronze representations of the god likely fulfilled a similar function.

Images of Aphrodite were also common in the funerary art of the Romans. Three of the eight examples listed by Bolla come from female graves in the necropolises around Sidon, with a fourth found at Yasileh in Jordan.[494] While second to third century AD papyri from Roman Egypt indicate that bronze statuettes were given as part of a bride's dowry,[495] there is no need to see to see such statuettes as bridal gifts for unmarried women.[496] The cult of Aphrodite was well established and very popular in Syria and was widely worshipped as a Hellenic version of the eastern goddess, Astarte. A large number of bronze statuettes depicting Aphrodite have come from Roman Syria, some of which may very well have come from graves.[497] In any case, two examples from Sidon are still mounted to bases, indicating that they were likely not originally intended for deposition in a grave, but may have served as the focus of worship for a devotee of Aphrodite-Astarte (Fig. 4.3). Sharpe raises the possibility that these figures may have also been connected to the cult of Adonis, Aphrodite's consort, whose resurrection was celebrated annually in nearby Byblos by female worshippers.[498] The statuettes might then reflect the deceased's

[492] Sharpe 2006 280.
[493] Bolla 2013, 16.
[494] Bolla 2013, 20.
[495] See Burkhalter 1990.
[496] Reeder Williams 1979, 99.
[497] The de Clercq collection, acquired mainly in Syria, contained 140 statuettes of Aphrodite. See Ridder 1905. Rumscheid 2007 identifies a possible type of Aphrodite figure from Milas and Stratonikeia from sepulchral contexts in the region of Karia until Late Antiquity.
[498] Sharpe 2006, 281. Cf. **123**, a Syrian type considered to be a depiction of Adonis-Temmuz.

(or their family's) anticipation of a happy afterlife, a sentiment frequently found on marble sarcophagus reliefs of the late second and third centuries AD.[499]

4.5 Synthesis: Ashmolean statuettes and archaeological contexts

A lack of good provenance information for nearly all the statuettes in the Ashmolean collection prevents us from being able to make any definitive claims about the contexts in which they were used in antiquity. Instead, the evidence examined in this chapter presents us with the range of *possible* contexts in which we have statuettes *like* the Ashmolean statuettes and in which we can imagine them having once been a part. For example, the high proportion of Hermes statuettes found in secure archaeological contexts is reflected in the numbers of Hermes statuettes to be found in museum collections. Other deities similarly appear proportionately frequently in both the archaeological record and in museum collections. In chapter three we saw that Aphrodite was consistently among the most frequently represented subject across collections, along with representations of Eros. Athena and Zeus were also present in relatively high numbers in each collection. The archaeological evidence for these statuettes in known or likely *lararium* ensembles indicates that these subjects were chosen by the owners in broadly similar proportions relative to other subjects.

The representations of Aphrodite in the Ashmolean collection are useful for bringing together some of the physical contexts for bronze statuettes presented above and looking at how they inform the Ashmolean bronzes. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, Aphrodite is among the most frequently represented figures in the Ashmolean and in both 'imperial' and 'regional' collections.

[499] Zanker and Ewald 2012.

In the case of two statuettes, we can actually say something about their use as votives, if not their exact archaeological contexts. Statuettes **11** and **12** were both discovered at a Romano-British temple site at Woodeaton. **11** depicts a nude, seated female with her arms held in front of her, whilst **12** is a much cruder standing figure, draped from the waist down. Both figures have been identified as Aphrodite, though their unusual iconography suggests that they may actually be a sycretisatation of Aphrodite with a Celtic mother goddess.[500] The statuettes were discovered along with bird figurines and dozens of items for female adornment and amulets before the temple structure itself was excavated.[501] The actual deposition of the statuettes is unknown, nor is the deity to whom the temple was dedicated. The temple plan is of the Romano-Celtic type with a square building set within a square enclosure, constructed in timber during first century AD and replaced with a stone building in the second.[502]

The figures show the influence of local style on classical types. While **12** only retains a distant relationship to the Aphrodite Anadyomene type, the maker of **11** has attempted to use classicizing forms to render the female body, though only with mixed success: the propositions are strand and the betrays a local style that shares the gaping eyes and broad nose seen on several of the bronze figures from Southbroom.[503] S. Walker's argument that the both figures wear fashionable contemporary hairstyle seen in Rome is convincing, providing dates for each figure (AD 80-100 for **11** and AD 240-50

[500] Walker 2009 for interpretations as Aphrodite with contemporary Roman hairstyles. See catalogue entry.
[501] Kirk 1949.
[502] Goodchild and Kirk 1954.
[503] See Durham 2014, 201ff. and fig. 6a.

for **12**) and further indication of the flow of sculptural forms from the capital to the provinces.[504]

It is more difficult to reconstruct possible contexts for some of the other Aphrodite figures in the collection. **14** and **15** can be confidently classified as decorative due to their shapes. **14** is a half figure with a hollowed back, a shape which is seen for bronzes decorating Roman folding tripods and tables.[505] **15** is a very crude figure who is only recognisable as Aphrodite due to the placement of the arms, which cover the breasts and the genitals in an attempt to reproduce the stance of the Medici or Capitoline Aphrodite type. The function of the open work disk upon which the figure is mounted is unclear, but that the small figure may have served as a decorative handle on a lid is possible. Despite its low level of naturalism and small size, the visual form of the figure would have made it immediately recognisable to its Hellenistic or Roman viewer.

Another figure lacking whose details are lacking, but whose pose would have telegraphed her identity is a small statuette of the Anaadyomene type [**7**]. A short tang underneath this figure may have been used to mount it a decorative piece, though it could have also been used to mount the figure as a votive.

Statuette **1** largest of the Aphrodite figures. At 32.5 centimetres, it is probably to large to be a *lararium* figure, whereas many of the [**2**, **3**, **4**, **6**, **8**, **9, 10**] are of a size more typical for statuettes found in *lararia,* though the evidence of Campanian *lararia* has shown that there is no standard for size, material or quality.[506] The large Aphrodite figure

[504] Walker 2009
[505] See Klatt 1995.
[506] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 185.

may still have been the focus of household cult, much in the same way as the Pella Poseidon, discussed above, or it may have served as a larger decorative piece. Athough the type is a popular and well known one found mostly in Syria and Egypt, to my knowledge, there are no examples from a known archaeological context.

This broader archaeological picture can help construct a useful frame within which to assess the Ashmolean statuettes as products of Hellenistic and Roman visual culture and allow for a more nuanced interpretation of the degree to which the composition of the Ashmolean and other museum collection of ancient bronzes reflect the types that were being produced in antiquity. Even if the Ashmolean statuettes cannot be 'grounded' due to the lack of provenance information, I argue that a comparison of the statuettes in the collection and other modern collections can still be usefully understood as indices for the use of Classical forms in Hellenistic and Roman visual culture.[507]

[507] On 'grounded' and 'ungrounded' evidence, see Marlowe 2013, 4ff.

Chapter 5: Production and Consumption

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined the sacred, domestic and funerary evidence for the physical contexts in which bronze statuettes were used in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. In this chapter, the focus shifts to the technological and economic contexts for the production and consumption of bronze statuettes and introduces two further physical contexts—workshops and shipwrecks. The examination of workshop evidence is intended to locate bronze statuette production within the structure of Hellenistic and Roman society rather than define regional workshop circles.[508] The evidence from shipwrecks provides information about the transportation and levels of trade for metals and finished bronze statuary—that is, for both sides of the production/consumption equation.

The *chaîne opératoire* framework articulated by Leroi-Gourhan provides a useful means for assessing this sequence and relating it to the miners, merchants, artists, craftsmen and buyers who were involved.[509] Although developed as a methodology for examining aspects of prehistoric lithic technologies, *chaîne opératoire* can also be employed for understanding the socially constituted contexts in which technological processes occur.[510] An understanding of the operational sequence provides a foundation for questions about the economics of production and the relationships between technicians, as well as their material and social relationships as mediated through both finished and unfinished objects.[511]

[508] See Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 44–51 for an analysis of workshops related to the finds from Augst. See Poulsen 1977 for a review of the methodological challenges in identifying workshops.
[509] Leroi-Gourhan 1943; Leroi-Gourhan 1945.
[510] Dobres 2000, 155.
[511] Eccleston 2007, 2.

The premise advanced here is that looking at small figural bronzes purely as items of aesthetic value and over-focusing on the significance of those aesthetics within the statuette's ancient physical contexts can lead to a myopic understanding of the social relationships linked to these objects. The relationship of the statuette to its owner or user—or, worse, the modern viewer's aesthetic judgements—is privileged. In this chapter focus will fall onto the craftsman and his relationship to his work, seeking to understand how bronze statuettes were manufactured, where they were made and how they were consumed. The technological and economic environments within which bronze statuettes were created is important to understanding how Greek and Romans interacted with each other as social beings.

This chapter will thus look at how ancient bronze statuettes existed in relation both to their production and to their consumption. It begins with a brief overview of bronze casting techniques used in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, before moving to an examination of the metals trade and the archaeological evidence for small bronze workshops. The chapter then shifts focus to the consumer, examining evidence for the lifecycle of bronze statuettes after they left the workshop.

5.2 The production of bronze statuettes

Raw materials

A long series of processes in the *chaîne opératoire* of a bronze statuette existed outside the workshop both before and after the copper alloy was shaped into a figural representation. From the perspective of the bronze caster, several raw materials had to be procured before production could begin on a statuette, or indeed any bronze object. Although the bronze-casting process could not be accomplished without a supply of clay,

fuel and wax, the most important component was the metal itself. To trace the operational sequence backward from the workshop requires going back to the mines from which the metal ore originates. Four primary processes can be distinguished:

- **Mining of metal ores:** naturally occurring deposits of each the necessary metal ores— copper and tin and, later, also lead and zinc—must be located and removed from their native environment.
- **Extraction:** the process of obtaining the desired metal from the ore and processing it to obtain a pure enough form of the metal. The extraction process includes the technique of refining and smelting of ores to produce ingots of the pure metal.
- **Transportation:** the transfer of the metal from the site of extraction to the site where it will be sold or used.
- **Transaction:** the transference of the metal into the control of another, usually creating an exchange situation. For the time period in which we are concerned, this would almost invariably involve a monetary exchange.

The Metals Trade

According to C. Domergue, there were three principal stages in the commercial process for metals: collection of the extracted metal, transportation of the metal ingots and finally sale at the place of consumption.[512] The extant evidence shows that most extraction processes were conducted at or near mining sites, although in some instances the raw ore was transported long distances to specialised extracting facilities. This appears to have been the case for furnaces found on the island of Elba and at Leptiminus in North

[512] Domergue 2004, 146–147.

Africa.[513] In Attica, a number of ore washing and smelting facilities have been discovered near the Laurion mines at Thorikos.[514] The great quantities of silver and lead mined from Laurion in the fifth century BC were processed in *ergasteria* and smelted there before being transported to Athens.

Much of the evidence for the transportation and trade of metals comes from shipwrecks. The active trade in metals during the Hellenistic and Roman periods is attested to by the finds from numerous wrecks that carried copper, tin and lead to Italy and points eastward from the mines of the Iberian peninsula, Gaul and Britain.[515] The majority came from the western Mediterranean along the coasts of modern Spain, France and Italy, with a large number of shipwrecks off the coast of Corsica and Sardinia. Based on the frequency of datable shipwrecks, the period between the late second century BC and the second century AD was the most active.[516] The wrecks date primarily to the first and second centuries AD and speak to a robust Roman trade between Iberian mines and the Italian peninsula.[517] The frequency of shipwrecks containing metal as part of the cargo is also highest during this timespan, peaking in the Augustan period.[518]

Iberia was a major if not primary source for Roman metal wealth during the late Republic and early Empire with mines producing silver, gold copper, tin and lead.[519] A number of shipwrecks dating to the Hellenistic period show that there was also a substantial earlier trade in raw metals coming from the Iberian peninsula and supplying

[513] Elba: Shepard 1993, 44. Leptiminus: Wilson 2012, 135.
[514] Mussche 1998, 13–16.
[515] Domergue 2004, 143, fig. 6 shows, for instance, that the distribution of lead ingots from the mines at Carthago Nova in southern Spain in the first century BC reach as far east as Crete.
[516] Parker 1992, 8. Fig 4 shows that nearly half of Parker's catalogue of 1,189 ancient shipwrecks have a probable date of sometime between 150 BC and AD 150.
[517] Parker 1992, 8 and figs 3–6.
[518] Treister 1995, 19. These were primarily cargos with lead ingots traveling between Spain and Italy.
[519] Shepard 1993, 191.

Hellenistic kingdoms in the eastern Mediterranean as well as Italy.[520] These were probably transported first by Punic and Greek traders operating out of trading cities such as Gades and Massalia. Lower value metals such as copper, lead and iron were transported in the form of ingots to ports around the Mediterranean, where they would be used by the state for the minting of coins or the production of arms and armour or might be purchased by independent metal craftsmen.[521]

Parker's 1992 study assembles evidence from 1,189 shipwrecks in the Mediterranean dating from the early Bronze Age to the fifteenth century AD.[522] Many of these wrecks are poorly preserved and poorly reported, but Parker's analysis of a sample of 98 well-recorded cargoes dating between 400 BC and AD 400 shows that around 10% of shipwrecks, Mediterranean-wide, contained some sort of metal or ore as part of the cargo.[523] A brief mention of two shipwrecks dating from the late second century BC will illustrate two types of trade in metals that supplied bronze statuette makers.

The Baguad B shipwreck (late second or early first century BC) off the coast of southern France contained a cargo of 47 tin ingots along with five to ten tonnes of iron bars, Campanian pottery and Italic vessels.[524] At an average weight of 30 kilos, the tin ingots represent a very large consignment of substantial value. If we believe Pliny's assertion that in the mid-first century AD a *libra* of tin cost 80 denarii, then the value of the tin cargo would approach 343,000 denarii.[525] The ingots are of different shapes,

[520] Twelve lead ingots from the Mahdia wreck are from mines near Cartegena (ancient Carthago Nova). See Eck 1994, 93. On the trade in lead during the Late Republic, see Meier 1994.
[521] Gold and silver destined for minting in Rome may have been transported overland under military escort, hence the absence of these metals in ingot form from shipwreck sites (as suggested by Domergue). See Wilson 2012, 135.
[522] Parker 1992.
[523] Parker 1992, 20.
[524] Parker 1992, no. 77, 64.
[525] *HN* 34.48.

though most are round or oval and four are a truncated pyramid shape. All were stamped, most frequently with a profile bust of Hermes and the legend ΤΩΝ ΠΕΡΙ ΗΡΑΚΛΕΙΔΗ ΥΠΟ ΚΕΛ. A number of interpretations for this legend have been made. Parker connects the stamp to the southern Spanish city of Celti, but Treister prefers to interpret ΥΠΟ ΚΕΛ as denoting an official position, a Latin *cellarius*, and posits that the *hypocellarii* were contractors working under Herakleides who may have also been the mine owner.[526]

Whoever the owner of the ingots and whether the tin originated in Spain or Britain, a shipment of tin this large was unusual. We cannot know whether the ingots represent a single commission or a product intended for dispersal in Italian markets. We can be reasonably sure that the tin was intended for alloying with copper for the creation of bronze objects or the minting of bronze currency. The size of the Baguad B cargo of tin speaks to the high demand for objects made of bronze. We can postulate similar shipments between the tin producing regions of Iberia, Brittany and Cornwall to satisfy the demands of bronze casters, including those making statues and statuettes in Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Megadim A shipwreck off the coast of Israel is thought to date from about 140–130 BC and contained quite a different cargo of metals.[527] Copper bar ingots and two circular tin ingots were found along with many fragments of life-size bronze statues, bronze bracelets in various states of finish, gilded bronze balance plates, arrowheads and other bronze decorative items. These miscellaneous bronze objects weighed about 100

[526] Parker 1992, 76; Treister 1992, 36.
[527] Parker 1992, no 689, 273. The wreck is dated by associated Ptolemaic and Seleucid silver coins from c. 130 BC. Raban and Galili 1985, 355.

kilograms and were stored in two neckless Rhodian amphorae. Metal working tools, a horde of copper ship nails and small amounts of silver and gold were also found.

No other significant cargo has been identified with the wreck. Although we must be cautious on this point since it was found in shallow water scattered over a large area, the vessel appears to have only traded in scrap metal. Raban and Galili reconstruct a floating metal smith sailing from port to port buying and selling scrap metal.[528] The presence of metalworking tools and copper and tin ingots also raises the possibility that the ship carried an itinerant bronze smith. Whether the ingots were part of a cargo to be traded or were for use on the ship, the preponderance of scrap metal found in the Megadim wreck suggests that the secondary trade of bronze formed a significant part of the *chaîne opératoire* in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[529]

A workshop in Herculaneum offers a glimpse of the process by which metal ingots travelled from Iberian mines and were used in the production of metal objects, including statuettes. In this case, the metal is lead and the workshop was not a bronze workshop producing statuettes, but that of a *plumbarius* who made lead objects such as weights and pipes and provided lead solder for the repair of bronze objects. Shop VI, 12 is located on the *decumanus maximus*. It was excavated in 1961 and contained, among other finds, a crucible, three bronze candelabras, stone weights, two ingots of lead and a very fine bronze statuette of Dionysos inlaid with silver, copper and gold (Fig. 5.1).

[528] Raban and Galili 1985, 355.
[529] Treister 1992, 39.

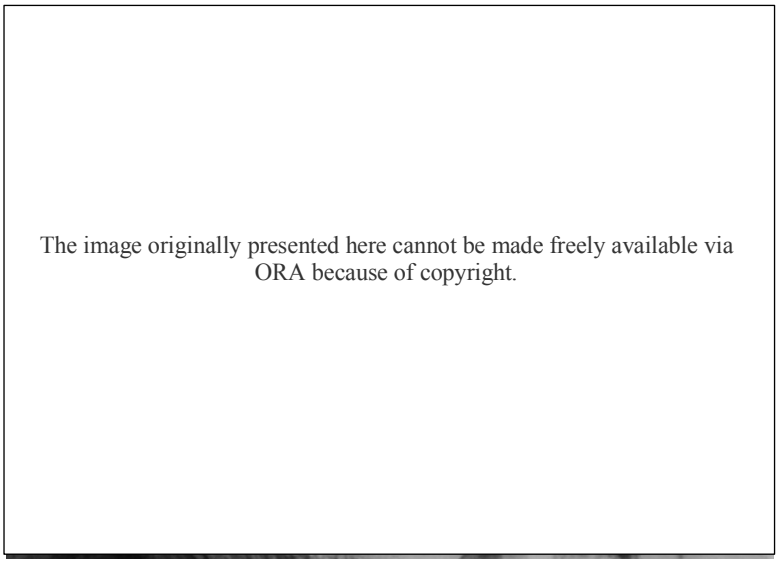

Fig. 5.1. View from the south-east corner of the *plumbarius* workshop (VI, 12) in Herculaneum.

The ingots are of particular interest in terms of the transactional relationships they represent between miners, merchants, administrators and end consumers. These ingots (2302=77598 (a) and (b)) are plano-trapezoidal in shape and contain a number of stamps and graffiti that shed some light on how they arrived in Herculaneum at workshop VI, 12 (Fig. 5.1). Of the various stamps and markings, the two ingots share three commonalities. They both contain a stamp bearing the word ADATRIMA, a stamp reading FAVSTVS and incised numbers (VIII on 2302=77598(a) and IV on 2302=77598(b)). These similarities permit us to postulate that the ingots arrived at the same port and were eventually sold to the *plumbarius* at the same time. Monteix reconstructs a Spanish origin for both ingots, but postulates different transportation for each based on the number and types of their stamps.[530] The incised numbers indicate a weight above the standard weight of 100 Roman pounds and would have been added by an inspector at the port.[531] The two common stamps ADATRIMA and FAVSTVS indicate two other intermediaries, traders or transporters who had control of the ingots between their arrival at an Italian port (probably Puteoli) and their final sale to the craftsman who worked at workshop VI, 12.[532]

[530] Monteix 2004, 371.
[531] Monteix 2004, 370; Domergue 2004, 151.
[532] Monteix 2004, 370.

The statuette of Dionysos (Fig 5.2) was found resting on a low bench, broken into three parts. It is a very high quality work, probably dating to the Augustan period. The figure measures 62 centimetres without the base and shows a wreathed youthful god with a small panther under his left foot. A patterned skin draped over the left shoulder and the fur of the panther preserves fine inlays of copper and gold indicating the spotted pelts. The eyes are also inlaid with silver and the lips with copper. The statuette and the candelabras also found in the shop are unlikely to have been part of the decoration for the space, and have been interpreted as bronze items waiting for a lead solder to be provided by the *plumbarius.*[533]

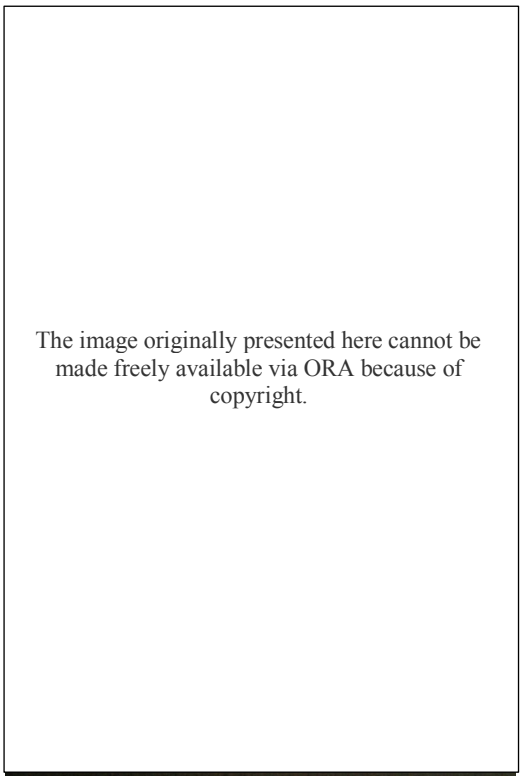

Fig. 5.2. Bronze statuette of Dionysos found in workshop VI, 12 in Herculaneum. Late first century BC or early first century AD. H. 62 cm.

We have scant information about the price of some metals. As mentioned above, Pliny the Elder indicates that in Rome in the first century AD a Roman pound of lead cost 7 denarii; the same weight in tin—Pliny's 'white lead'—was worth 80 denarii.[534] In fifth-century Athens, a talent of copper would have been worth 35 drachmas whilst an equivalent weight in tin cost 230–233 drachmas.[535] It is clear that economic factors played a significant role in the gradual move to replacing the tin in bronze with lead, starting in the Hellenistic period.[536]

[533] Budetta and Pagano 1988, 79. Cat. N. 30.
[534] *HN* 34.48.
[535] Domergue 2004, 147.
[536] Treister 1996, 342.

Recycled bronze

In addition to the mined metals, a robust trade in scrap metal existed. We have several examples of cities, rulers and priests selling off honorific statues and votive dedications in bronze to raise money. The city of Syracuse auctioned off its honorific statues to raise fund for war against the Carthaginians.[537] Classical and Hellenistic inscriptions from Athens and Oropos reveal that the *polis* authorised the melting of metal votives deemed obsolete or in need of repair.[538] In the *Res Gestae,* Augustus funded a new dedication of golden tripods in the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine through money raised by melting eighty silver statues carrying his image.[539]

The melting and reuse of old metal vessels, armour, broken bronze implements or destroyed statue parts was a much less expensive source of bronze than purchasing the constituent metals separately. Although the quality of the resulting bronze may not have been as high as mixing the alloy from pure metals, most of the figures represented by the Ashmolean material are not objects of high aesthetic value or technical virtuosity. They are unlikely to have required a very precise mixture of alloys to satisfy the standards of a sculptor or of a patron. Nor are most of the statuettes large enough to have been hollow-cast and thus warrant the structural need to closely differentiate how much tin or lead was to be mixed with the copper. For such lower- to mid-range quality statuettes, scrap metal would have been the more common and preferred means of obtaining the bronze necessary for manufacture.[540]

[537] On Syracuse: Plut. *Tim.* 23.4–5. See Blanck 1969, 96.
[538] Lindenlauf 2006, 31. On recycling metals in Greek sanctuaries, see Linders 1989/90.
[539] Aug. *RG* 24. See Zanker 1988, 86.
[540] Zimmer 1990,161.

The bronze workshop

The lost-wax technique was used almost exclusively for casting bronze statues (Figs. 5.3 and 5.4).[541] Bronze casting technique have been studied in depth by many scholars, so need not be outlined here. C. C. Mattusch has published extensively on the subject of bronze casting techniques, most recently treating in great detail the sculptures of the Villa dei Papiri and analysing the casting and manufacture of the numerous bronzes found there.[542] With regard to statuettes, particularly Roman statuettes, much of the scholarly literature consists of focused articles on individual or small groups of objects.[543] Exceptionally, certain large collections such as the small bronzes held in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum at Köln have been the subject of more extensive technical and scientific analysis.[544]

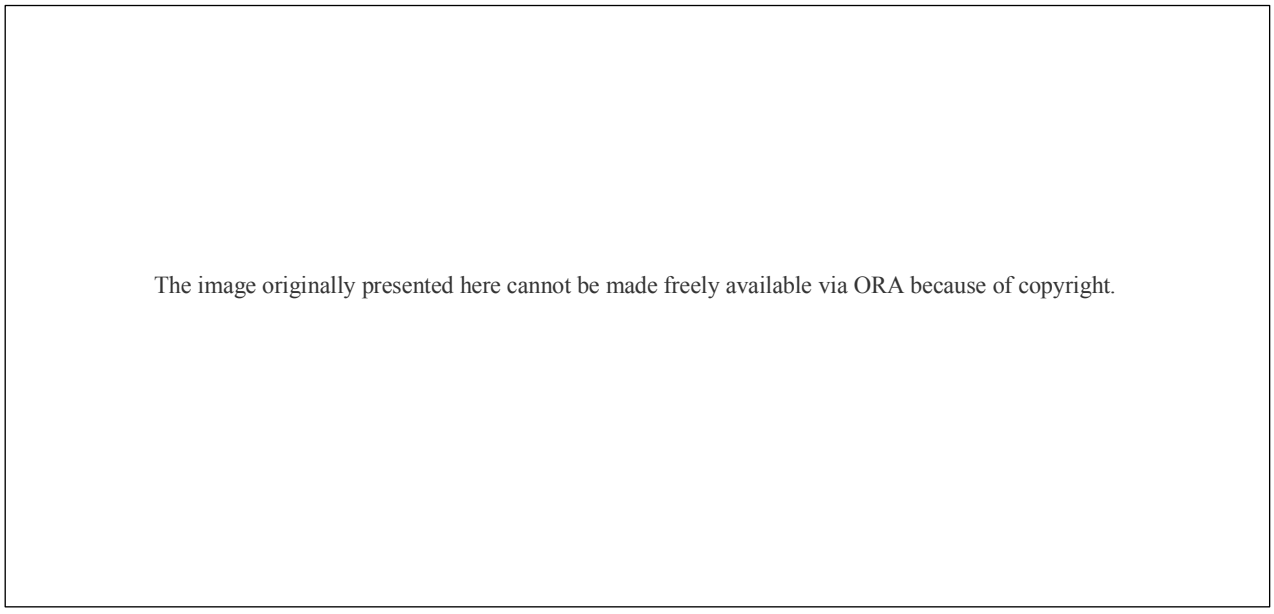
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Fig. 5.1. Illustration of the direct lost-wax technique for casting bronze sculpture.

[541] Haynes 1992; Lahusen and Formigli 2001; Mattusch 1977, 1988, 1996; Zimmer 1990. For a review of the important technical studies for ancient bronze-casting techniques, see Mattusch 1988, 22–30.
[542] Mattusch 2005.
[543] See for example the papers published in the proceedings of the International Congresses on Ancient Bronzes. Most recently: Deschler-Erb and Della Casa 2015; Giumlia-Mair 2002; Muşeţeanu, 2004.
[544] Riederer 2002; Thomas 2002. The Roman statuettes found at Augst have also been well studied in this way: Kaufmann-Heinimann and Liebel 1994.

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Fig. 5.2. Illustration of the indirect lost-wax technique for casting bronze statuettes.

Archaeological evidence for workshops

Large-scale sculpture

Most studies dealing with ancient workshops for bronze casting statuary have focused their attention on the production of large-scale statuary.[545] The reason for this is readily apparent. Although the evidence is almost always indirect and the remains difficult to interpret, the mark that monumental bronze casting leaves in the archaeological record is far more apparent than that of the small foundry. The facilities for the casting of monumental bronzes have left behind large pits where metalworking activity can be recognised. Mattusch's PhD dissertation is fundamental for its analysis of five casting pits in the Athenian Agora that the author argues are representative of typical bronze-casting facilities from the early fifth to the second century BC.[546] The temporary *ad hoc* nature of these facilities is emphasised by Mattusch and repeated by Zimmer, whose 1990 study examines and interprets the evidence from across bronze workshops in Greece from the Geometric to the late Hellenistic periods.[547] Once a specific commission was completed, the pits were filled in with debris from the workshops, including parts of broken moulds, vitrified brick, bellows nozzles, waste bronze and slag. Large-scale workshops—those that produced cult images for temples, statues for architectural adornment, commissions for sculptural monuments or life-size honorific statues—took on in many respects the qualities of a construction site. This usually involved some degree of terraforming, the moving or building of special equipment, the use of a number of tools and the generation of debris. Like a construction site, the large-scale bronze foundry was also cleaned up once it had served its purpose.[548] In order to keep down the cost of transportation and the

[545] See for example Mattusch 1977; Zimmer 1990.
[546] Mattusch 1977.
[547] Zimmer 1990, 156: 'Alle bisher bekannten Werkstätten für den statuarischen Bronzeguß in Griechenland haben temporären Charakter'.
[548] Zimmer 1990, 156.

potential for damaging the finished product, the foundries were located as close as possible to the intended site of erection.[549]

The production of small bronzes, whether statuettes, ornamentation, amulets or more banal tools and utensils, makes much less of an impact on the landscape and the built environment. Workshops specialising in small bronze objects still contained many of the same material remains as their larger counterparts. These workshops did not need to be large or located near a site of erection, and so could take on the characteristics of more permanent establishments. Existing constructions such as houses could be modified with relative ease to create an area for metal casting. The building requirements were few—at minimum, some sort of covered (though not necessarily enclosed) space and a furnace or hearth were all that were needed for an adequate bronze-casting workshop. Much of the small-scale bronze casting during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, including the casting of statuettes, would have been done on this scale.[550] We do not have evidence of 'industrial' level workshops making large quantities of mass-produced small bronzes, even at places such as Delos for which there is written evidence of a thriving bronze industry.[551]

[549] A number of these workshops have been identified for colossal statues in bronze. Athena Promachos: Zimmer 1990, 62–70. Pheidian workshop at Olympia: Mallwitz and Schiering 1964; Colossus of Rhodes: Kantzia, 1989; Zimmer 1999.
[550] Hawkins 2012, 175–176.
[551] Pliny *HN* 34.4. See Zarmakoupi 2013 for the adaptation of Delian houses to supply a secondary economy on Delos after its declaration as a free port under Athenian control in 167 BC. A coroplast's workshop can be identified in House VI B of the Theatre Quarter and a marble workshop (perhaps) in the House of Kerdon. Figural bronze attachments for *klinai* and chests along with a mould for a bronze *kline* leg were found in the Insula of the Bronzes in the Skardhana Quarter between 1961 and 1968, and comprise our best evidence for bronze production of Delos in the Late Hellenistic period. See Siebert 1973; Barr-Sharrar 1998, 168. See Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 421–435 for Delian *kline* production and the spread of bronze beds and couches as luxury items to Italy and the provinces from the second century BC to the first century AD.

Whilst building requirements might be minimal, the equipment and tools necessary for the casting of small bronze objects were still fairly substantial. It is these material remains more than any building features that allow us to reconstruct bronze-casting workshops. Gralfs enumerates the types of evidence necessary to hypothesise the existence of a metal working workshop in a given archaeological context:

1. Furnaces, fixtures
2. Raw materials, waste materials and scrap metal
3. Crucibles
4. Metalworking tools
5. Moulds and models
6. Unfinished or miscast objects
7. Finished cast objects[552]

Some combination of the above materials in an associated archaeological context is necessary before it is possible to recognise a bronze-casting facility. The most telling evidence of bronze casting includes a furnace or hearth that could have contained high-temperature fires along with evidence of the vitrifying of terracotta bricks, ash layers made from burning charcoal and associated finds of bronze slag or drippings. Of course these elements are only evidence of melting. In order to identify a possible domestic workshop, the tools and products of the casting process need also be present in the archaeological evidence. These include plaster or terracotta mould fragments, vitrified investment fragments showing evidence of residual bronze, figural elements and/or the gate and vent system. Ancillary objects in the casting process, including metal tools such

[552] Gralfs 1994, 5.

as tongs, rasps, terracotta tuyeres or pumice stone with bronze residue, also help to identify bronze working activity.[553]

Even with many of these types of evidence in place, a metal workshop can most securely be designated a *statuette* workshop only if it contains figured mould fragments, miscast or unfinished figures, models or fragments of statuettes themselves. It is relatively rare to find this kind of evidence together in a workshop context and few facilities are known with certainty to have cast statuettes. However, the casting of small bronze statuettes were primarily located in workshops that also produced other types of bronze objects, such as appliques, furniture fittings and supports, horse gear, vessels, utensils, brooches, nails and other small everyday metal objects. This type of casting was done within the confines of a house or small shop and it is in these contexts that we should seek the makers of bronze statuettes.

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Fig 5.5. Plan of House D/C near the Athenian Agora, showing where evidence of bronze casting was found.

[553] Mattusch (1977, 96) identifies more than thirty places in the area of the Athenian Agora where foundry debris has been identified. Of these she designates thirteen as workshops based on the presence of mould fragments, slag, vitrified furnace bricks and waste bronze.

Small-scale workshops

Athens

A house in Athens from the fourth century BC has provided some archaeological evidence along with an inscription to identify it as a domestic metal working site. Known as House D, it is located southeast of the ancient agora on the east side of the Areopagus Hill in an 'industrial' region where numerous coroplast, metal and marble workshops were located (Fig. 5.5).[554] The house was abandoned sometime in the second half of the fourth century BC, but during the second and third phases of its occupation it shows evidence of a small metal workshop.[555] The court of the house was probably partially covered by a shed roof resting on a wooden pillar sunk into the court during the house's second phase. Underneath this covered area, a large hearth was uncovered in the southeast corner of the court. Its floor tiles had been cracked by a long period of intensive heat use. Bronze and iron waste found nearby indicates that the hearth was used for metalworking.[556]

The area that would have been covered by a shed roof is rather narrow and could have been a small workspace protected from inclement weather. More likely it was intended to act a protected storage area for materials, tools and possibly for models and moulds. Zimmer views some sort of sheltered area as essential for the protection of clay models in larger bronze-casting operations.[557]

A further find can be associated with the same period of occupation. An inscribed lead *defixio* (Agora no. IL 997) was discovered in a early to mid-third century layer, but has been interpreted as having been displaced from its original deposition spot in the

[554] Young 1951, 139.
[555] Young 1951, 221–226.
[556] Young 1951, 222.
[557] Zimmer 1990, 158.

house foundations when the stone blocks of the abandoned house were robbed for building material.[558] The inscription binds two men, Aristaichmos and Pyrrias, who are described as χαλκέα (coppersmiths), and who, along with two other names mentioned on the tablet, were very likely the residents of the house and owners of the metal workshop.[559]

The question of whether statuettes were produced in the workshop at House D in the fourth century BC must remain open. No moulds or statuette fragments were found amongst the remains. The *defixio*, however, in its appellation of the residents as smiths suggests that whatever metalworking did take place was intended for consumption outside of the household. It is well known that the Greek house was the location for a number of industries (particularly weaving for household use).[560] It cannot be claimed that the occupants of House D were statuette makers, but the house does give some early evidence for a metalworking industry in Greek domestic contexts.

Metalworking debris from thirteen Greek or Roman foundries around the Athenian Agora has been identified, with activity concentrated around the west side of the agora and the industrial area to the southwest during the Greek period and around the South Stoa in the Roman period.[561] Evidence from fourth to third century BC layers of a commercial-industrial building in the Agora shows some evidence of bronze workshops existing alongside coroplastic and marble carving workshops where artisans could potentially make and sell their wares.[562] The building was in fact an artisan's quarter,

[558] Young 1951, 222–223.
[559] Mattusch 1977, 95–96.
[560] Nevett 2010, 7.
[561] Mattusch 1977, 97.
[562] Handler 2012, 35–36 and n. 119; 39.

similar to those uncovered at many Roman sites in the Western provinces, and contained evidence of bronzesmithing and some statuette production.

The Roman Provinces

Sites for the production of bronze statuettes multiplied with the spread of the Roman Empire. As bronze sculpture workshops sprang up in Rome and Italy during the late Hellenistic and Augustan periods to meet the demands of elites and sub-elites whose voracity for Greek sculptures could no longer be met by importing from Eastern Mediterranean workshops, during the first through third centuries AD metal workshops proliferated in the provinces to meet local needs. Workshop sites producing small bronze objects including statuettes have been found from Syria to Britain, with a large concentration of sites coming to light in Gaul and Germania. B. Gralfs has studied over 450 workshops working in bronze, iron and precious metals in the western provinces of the Roman Empire.[563] She notes that about one-fifth of the bronze and bronze/iron workshops in her catalogue specialised in the production of artisan pieces, including fibulae, jewellery, appliques and furniture fittings; of these, twelve have evidence of statuette production.[564]

It does not appear common for provincial workshops in the Imperial period to specialise only in making statuettes. In most of the workshops, statuettes were produced alongside other bronze objects, particularly fibulae, appliques, furniture fittings, and occasionally military equipment.[565] Of the workshops known to Gralfs, fewer than 5%

[563] Gralfs 1994, 105–138. Much of the following discussion on workshops for bronze statuettes is based on the data compiled by Gralfs. Although several metal-working workshops have been excavated since the publication of Gralfs study, hers remains the most comprehensive collection of data regarding metal-working workshops in the northwestern provinces.
[564] Gralfs 1994, 68; 140–141.
[565] Workshops at Augst, Blicquy, Cluzel, Horbourg, Malain, Regensberg, Strasbourg, Verulamium and Xanten were workshops producing a mix of statuettes and other bronze objects. Gralfs 1994, 140.

show evidence for statues or statuettes. Those that do are almost all located in cities or settlements, often within artisan quarters.[566] The primary production capacity was used to make bronze objects for which there was a larger market, such as utilitarian instruments, tools and fibulae. Statuettes were made less frequently, perhaps primarily on a commission basis for the smaller segment of the population that could afford them.[567]

Verulamium

At Verulamium, in Britain (modern St Albans), metalworking workshops were present in the buildings of Insula XIV from some time just after the Roman occupation of the town in AD 43. The site continued to be used for metalworking when it was rebuilt around AD 75 (after the town was sacked by Boudicca's armies in AD 60–61) and until it was destroyed by a conflagration that affected much of the *municipum* around AD 155–160. A much later building on the site which appears to have been in use from the last quarter of the third century until the end of the fourth also contains evidence of metalworking.

During Frere's Periods I though IIB, a span of about 82 years (AD 43–60 and AD 75–130), evidence for bronze and iron foundries has been discovered in several rooms within the building. The earliest, located in room 27, had a hearth in the east corner

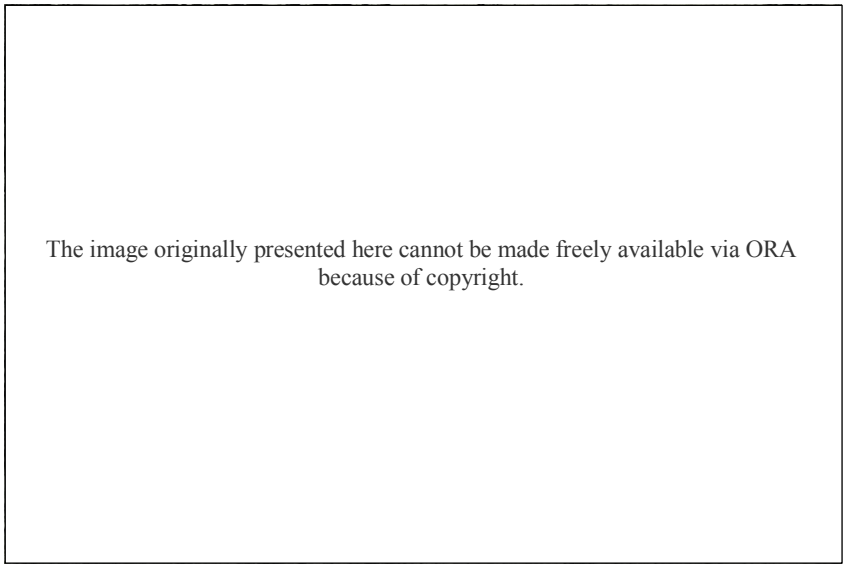

Fig. 5.6. Room 27 of Insula XIV at Verulamium, Period I, showing bronzeworking boxes.

[566] Gralfs 1994, 162.
[567] Gralfs 1994, 70.

and three rectangular recesses set in the floor measuring 22–24 centimetres square and reaching a depth of 2–3 centimetres (Fig. 5.6). Within these recesses were found layers of fine, sandy earth with a great deal of bronze powder and small lumps of metal.[568] Similar recesses, called 'green boxes' by Frere due to their colouration by bronze dust, were found in other rooms during later phases as well. In Room 20 from Period IIA, the recesses were placed directly over those from the destroyed building of Period I. The room also contained many pieces of scrap bronze. Room 9 also contained 'green boxes'. In period IIB, the boxes appear in Room 13 where there was also a circular furnace, and two crucibles were found in the adjacent Room 12. After about AD 130 these boxes seem to have become obsolete for bronze casting at Verulamium. The workshop in Room 28 contained a variety of bronze, iron and lead scrap as well as a cast bronze dolphin and iron objects, but showed no sign of a 'green box'.[569] Frere interprets these boxes as receptacles for the bronze waste coming from metal vessels turned on a lathe, but the sand in the boxes and the bronze drops also found there suggest they could have also been used to stabilise investment moulds during a pour. [570]

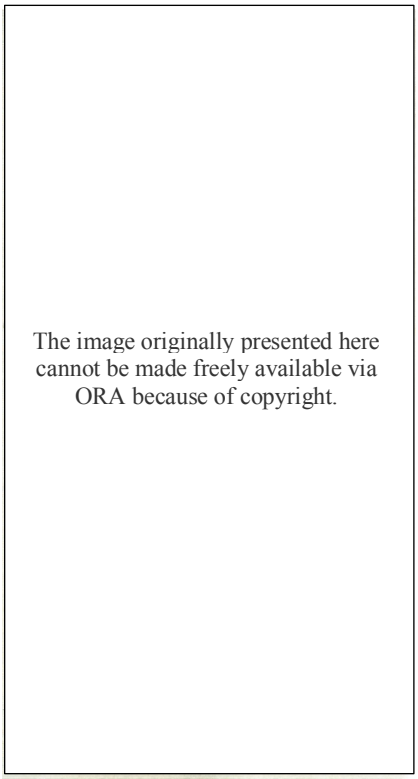

Fig. 5.7. Bronze statuette of Aphrodite found at Verulamium. Second or third century AD. H: 20 cm. Verulamium Mus. inv. SABMS 78.1

[568] Frere 1972, 18.
[569] Frere 1972, 42. Dolphin: fig 41, no. 133.
[570] Frere 1972, 11.

The late third century structure built on the site of Insula XIV after it had burned in the Antonine period also contained evidence of metalworking. A cellar under room 5 was dug out after the building had been constructed. It contained several tools as well as many fragments of bronze and iron objects that point to it being a storage space for the bronze and iron smith. It is from this context that a statuette of Aphrodite (Fig. 5.7) was found, along with statuette fragments of an arm with a rough prong attachment and a miscast lower leg.[571] All three were likely being stored as scrap metal.

Blicquy

At Blicquy in modern Belgium three bronze statuettes were found in excavations of what has been identified as a bronze and iron foundry. Other bronze objects and bronze foundry sites had been found in the area previously and the site of the second to third century workshop was well placed only about 2 kilometres from both the *vicus* of Blicquy and the sanctuary at Aubechies.[572] Within the foundry, a furnace measuring 1 metre by 2 metres and with a depth of 0.5 metres contained evidence of vitrification, a layer of charcoal ash and bronze droplets. This furnace was separated from the main

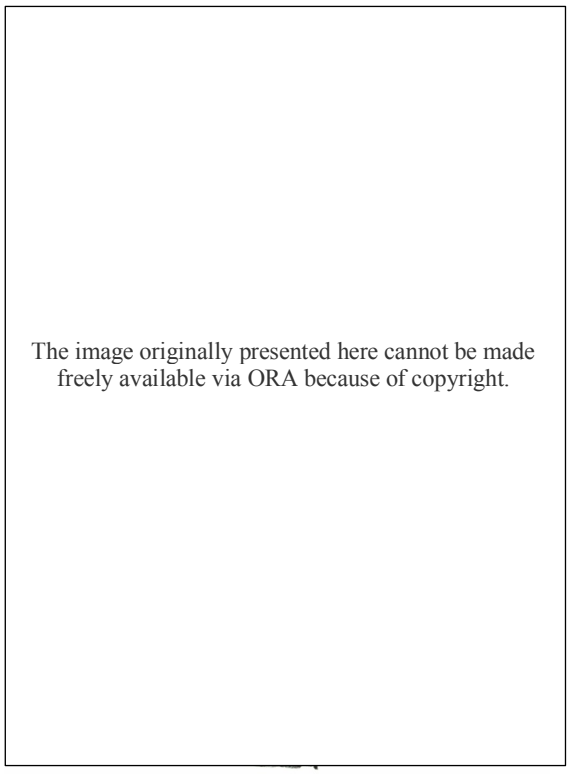

Fig. 5.8 Bronze statuettes of Ares and a bronze bust of Athena found at a metal workshop near Blicquy H. From left to right: 8.3 cm, 7 cm, 7 cm.

[571] Frere 1972, 140–144, n. 155–157, fig 49 and pls.XLII–XLIVa.
[572] Bronze finds include a Panthea statuette, a moulded bronze knife handle and a statuette arm. See Amand 1975, 7. On dating: Amand 1975, 9. On other regional foundries: Amand 1975, 10.

habitation area of the building by a wall that probably acted as a barrier to the noxious fumes created during the casting process. Although no moulds were found, crucible fragments of various sizes were found within the context of the workshop. These contained residue of a copper-tin and zinc alloy.[573] Fragments of copper and lead ingots and strips of sheet bronze that were probably intended for melting were also found in the workshop.[574]

One of the statuettes, a figure of Ares measuring 7 centimetres, was discovered within the workshop. A very similar, though slightly larger (8.3 centimetres) and less sensitively worked, statuette of Ares came to light along with a bust of Athena in another workshop deposit (Fig. 5.8). This deposit also contained scrap metal and iron tools. The Ares statuettes are examples of a very common type in Gaul and Germania and close to an example from the Ashmolean collection [**17**]. The Athena is 7 centimetres in height and sits atop a flaring, flat base. Some silver inlay remains in the eyes. It likely served as an ornament for the top of a spatula.[575] The larger Ares statuette and the Athena bust were found with 57 other small bronze objects such as fibulae, appliques handles and other small bronze pieces. This deposit may represent a scrap metal heap.

The workshop at Blicquy is a rare example of a workshop found outside city and settlement contexts in the western Roman provinces. Whereas the majority of metalworking buildings have been found within settlement contexts and it is not unusual to find metalworking within a villa context, single stand-alone workshops do not appear to have been as frequently established.[576] We must, however, consider the difficulty of

[573] Amand 1975, 26.
[574] Amand 1975, 19.
[575] Amand 1975, 31–33, fig. 13, 1–3.
[576] See Gralfs 1994, 142: List 4.

recognising small, isolated operations in non-settlement areas, and admit that a historical interest in the excavation of settlement and city sites may obscure our understanding of homestead metal workshops. The proximity of the Blicquy site to a settlement, a villa and a sanctuary in a region that was known for its bronze and iron production suggests an interpretation of the site as a family homestead producing metal instruments and implements as well as statuettes for regional distribution.[577]

Pompeii

Two houses in Pompeii that came to light in the nineteenth century have often been interpreted as a domestic bronze workshop with a commercial space for selling finished wares. The houses are located in Region VII, insula 4, numbers 59 though 62: the House of the Black Wall (also called House of the Bronzes) and the House of the Terracotta Shapes (Fig. 5.9). Between the entryways for the two houses is a room of about 30 square metres with two entrances (60, 61). Excavated between 1832 and 1834, this *taberna* produced 249 bronze objects. These consisted primarily of bronze vessels, handles, figural ornamentation and fittings, as well as 60 statuettes or statuette fragments. Eight bronze double-herms depicting Dionysos on one side and a satyr on the other were also found, four of which remain in Naples.[578] In addition, a large, round bronze vessel containing number of unidentifiable bronze fragments was discovered in the *taberna.* The unusually high number of bronzes found in the context of this commercial space seems to suggest that it was the shop of a *faber aerarius* specialising mainly in small figural bronzes.[579] However, the excavation diaries do not mention the discovery of any evidence

[577] Gralfs 1994, 11; Amand 1975, 44.
[578] Mus. Nat. Arch. Naples, inv. nos. 5074, 5079, 5079b, 5080.
[579] Gralfs 1988, 72.

for bronze working within the space; it was devoid of a furnace, moulds, metalworking tools or bronze waste.

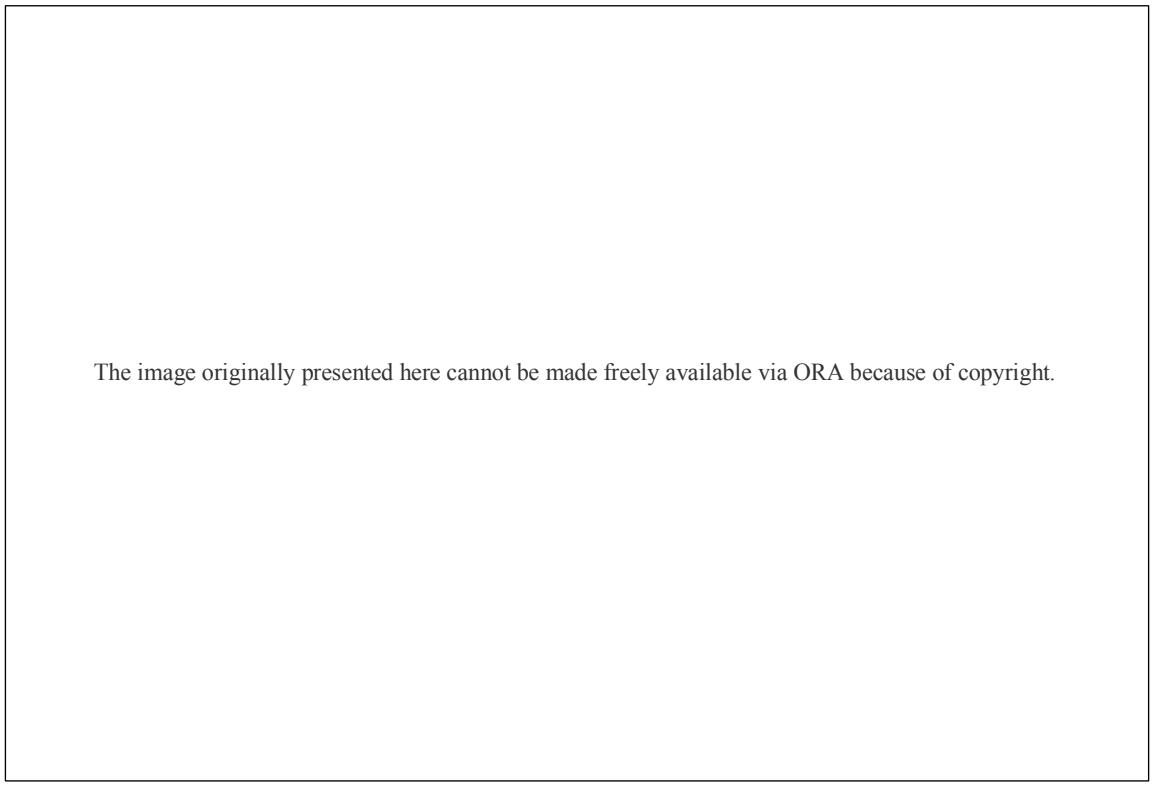

Fig.5.9. Plans of the House of the Terracotta Shapes and House of the Bronzes (House of the Black Wall) at Pompeii (VII, 4, 59-62), showing where large deposits of bronze objects were discovered.

Doorways providing access from the *taberna* directly into the atriums of both the House of the Black Wall and the House of the Terracotta Shapes indicate that the activities of the shop were in some way related to the inhabitants of the houses. The discovery of another large deposit of bronze objects in *oecus* m of the House of the Black Wall and of an anvil and forge tongs in the peristyle of the House of the Terracotta Shapes have led scholars to hypothesise that the bronze working took place within the houses. Eschebach claimed that the House of the Terracotta Shapes was turned into a bronze workshop after the earthquake in AD 62 left many buildings damaged and caused

a number of wealthier inhabitants to leave the city.[580] Gralfs also interprets the finds from the House of the Terracotta Shapes as the remnants of a bronze workshop.[581]

The lack of a furnace and no signs of crucible fragments or bronze waste make this interpretation problematic. Whilst it is possible for the notes on the excavation to have failed to record slag or crucible fragments, it is unlikely that a furnace or hearth showing evidence of high-temperature firing could be overlooked. As Staub-Gierow notes in her monograph on the houses, an anvil and a pair of tongs is not sufficient evidence to postulate a workshop. She also points out some peculiarities in the excavation notes indicating a deposit of numerous bronze objects often associated with the House of the Terracotta Shapes should in fact be associated with the House of the Black Wall, and posits that the former's association with the *taberna* at the time of the eruption of Vesuvius is questionable since the doorway to the shop appears to have been bricked up in antiquity.[582]

The similarity of finds in the *taberna* and in *oecus* m of the House of the Black Wall as well as the direct access between the shop and house are indications that the inhabitants owned or operated the shop, but there is not enough evidence to claim that they were the casters of the wares sold there. The house may represent an interesting case of a *negotiator* specialising in buying scrap bronze and selling finished bronze statuettes and figural pieces, while the melting and casting took place elsewhere. *Oecus* m may have served as a storeroom for the *taberna,* but as it was a well-decorated room with wall paintings and a pavement it is more likely that the valuable objects from the house and

[580] Eschebach 1970, 57.
[581] Gralfs 1988, 73.
[582] Staub-Gierow 2000, 110.

shop were placed there for safe-keeping just before the eruption. The deposits are described as being found under a layer of soil differing from the volcanic layer that covered the houses, and appear to have been purposefully buried before the inhabitants fled the cataclysm.[583]

The presence of a commercial context for the sale of bronze statuettes, one perhaps unattached to a workshop, provides a possible counterpoint to a model that places production and transaction at the same site or in the hands of the same individual. The shop may be reconstructed to represent several stages in the *chaîne opératoire.* Instead of the raw ores extracted from the earth, refined and transported to a market, as in the case of the *plumbarius* at Herculaneum VI, 12, the bronze *negotiator* of the House of the Black Wall utilised scrap metal as his raw material, as was arguably the case for many makers of bronze statuettes. The inhabitant of the house may not have made the bronzes, but facilitated their production through commercial activities, selling the finished goods at a street-facing shop where the consumption process could be initiated.

5.3 The consumption of bronze statuettes

We have glanced at the processes by which bronze statuettes were manufactured—how they were transformed from raw ores into a recognisable figurative form. We will now turn to the other side of the equation—that is, the consumption of bronze statuettes. Once the potentiality of a statuette as represented by the raw materials and the craftsman's skill became a realised finished product, it was involved in a new set of relationships. As statuettes, they had different purposes than the alloyed metal did when the bronze caster melted it in a furnace. It was now ready to be consumed—acquired and then used. The

[583] Staub-Gierow 2000, 80 and 84.

method of this consumption was, of course, variable and every manufactured object, bronze or otherwise, ancient or modern, has a unique history comprised of a series of relationships in which it is a social actor.[584]

Four distinct processes were involved in the consumption of bronze statuettes. These were:

- **Transaction:** the transference of an object into the control of another, creating an exchange situation. For the period for which we are concerned, this would almost invariably mean the exchange of coinage. The transaction process need not necessarily have taken place, as in instances where the producer of the object was also its consumer. It might also need not have been a mutually consensual process between willing parties, as in cases of theft or pillage.
- **Transportation:** the movement of the object from place of transaction to place of installation, or movement between one place of installation and another.
- **Use:** any manufactured object was made for some use. This may have been active use, as with tools or cookware. Use may also have been passive and the act of installation may have been its primary physical manifestation, as with a votive offering dedicated at a temple. Passive use also incorporated the viewing of an object whose purpose was to be viewed—that is, one in which the primary and salient characteristic was aesthetic or in some way visual.[585]
- **Disposal:** the relinquishing of control over an object. This too may have been active or passive. In the case of loss by negligence or accident, the disposal was passive, that is, without the consent of the user. In active disposal, the user of an

[584] Gell 1998, 7.
[585] Cf. Herbert's definition of visual culture, quoted in Dikovitskaya 2005, 53. See also Gell 1998, 24 on viewers as 'recipients' of an art object's agency.

object knowingly passed control of an object to another party or otherwise abandoned control of the object. Disposal may also have entailed purposeful destruction.



Fig. 5.10. Bronze statuette of Mars from Foss Dyke with dedicatory inscription. Second or third century AD. H 25.5. cm. BM inv. OA.248

Transaction

The ways in which bronze statuettes passed from the bronze caster into the hands of the customer are difficult to reconstruct based on surviving archaeological evidence. Absent of concentrated finds of bronze objects within an architecturally defined space, evidence of shops is difficult to detect. It is probable, however, that the majority of newly created finished freestanding statuettes were sold directly from the caster to the end consumer without passing through a middleman (as is common in modern retail practice), and that the relationship was one between producer and consumer based on market forces of supply and demand.[586] The shop attached to the House of the Black Wall in Pompeii was associated, albeit not physically, to a bronze-casting facility between AD 62 and AD 79. The absence of any metal working tools or furnaces within the shop itself indicates that it was likely only used to display finished products and perhaps to collect or buy scrap bronze.[587]

[586] Cornell, Crawford and North 1987, 26.
[587] Gralfs 1988, 72 notes that two statue arms and three statue bases were found in the shop along with a bronze vessel filled with various undefined bronze pieces. She interprets these as scrap metal.

The price paid for a bronze statuette surely depended on the cost of raw materials, the cost of any labour and a profit mark-up based on the skill and time of the caster. We do not have too much information for small bronzes in this regard and the records on prices that are available come from quite disparate chronological points. According to an inscription on the base, two members of the Colasuni family dedicated a bronze statuette of Mars found at Foss Dyke in Britain to Mars and the emperor's *numen* sometime in the second or third century AD (Fig. 5.10).[588] The inscription relates that they paid one hundred sesterces for the statue and that the bronze smith, Celatus, made the figure from a pound of bronze at the cost of three denarii (=12 sesterces at 4 sesterces per denarius).[589] For this dedication, the cost of the bronze smith's labour makes up nearly 83% to 93% of the total cost, depending on whether the inscription is read as Celatus giving his contribution on top of that of the Colasuni or if it simply states the cost of a pound of bronze. In second-century Italy the cost for a silversmith's service made up about 58% of the total cost.[590]

The scant evidence for the famed *kline* production of Delos consists of three fulcrum attachments along with appliques, perhaps for a chest, and moulds for bronze legs.[591] Would bronze fulcrum attachments, such as **128**, **133** and **134**, have been made in a workshop specialising in figural objects that could have been commissioned by a *kline*-maker? The bronze shop attached to the House of the Black Wall in Pompeii appears to have this type of specialist.[592] If that were the case, a close working relationship would

[588] British Museum, inv. OA.248.
[589] The full inscription reads 'deo Mar(ti) et nu(mini)b(us) Aug(usti) Colasuni Bruccius et Caratius de suo donarunt as sester(tios) n(ummos) c(entum). Celatus aerarius fecit et aeramenti lib(ram) donavit factum (denariis) III'. Toynbee 1964, 66 and n. 4.
[590] Duncan-Jones, 1982, 126.
[591] Siebert 1973, 561–567, 583–585. On the fame of Delian bronze legs and *fulcra* for couches: Pliny, *HN* 34.4.
[592] Gralfs 1988, 72.

need to exist between the *kline* workshop, providing accurate measurements for the fittings to the bronze caster who would have to create a model to the appropriate size. There was no standard size for a fulcrum attachment, nor the decorative busts that adorned them, although fulcrum attachments grew larger on average over the course of the Roman period until they went out of use around the end of the first century AD.[593] It would have been more economically viable for a *kline* maker to have one or two bronze casters, probably slaves, who could work from a set of stock models (already designed by a skilled sculptor or craftsman) to fit the specification of the *klinai* to which they were meant to decorate. However, a close relationship between craftsmen in different mediums and industries has been postulated in Athens in the Classical period, where resources could be combined to acquire raw materials and supplies.[594]

Transportation

As mentioned previously, large-scale bronzes of a size to require large casting pits were cast as close as possible to the site where they were intended to be erected to minimise the need for transport, which at least during the Archaic through Hellenistic periods would have added a substantial sum to the total production costs without the benefit of a developed road system.[595] Whilst it is possible a statue could be manufactured in parts in one or more foundries at some distance from the installation site and assembled at or near the site, there is no evidence that this was common practice for either Greek or Roman large-scale statuary.

[593] Barr-Sharrar 1987, 8.
[594] Handler 2012, 4.
[595] Zimmer 1990, 157.

The situation is, of course, different for statuettes. Their small size presents very few obstacles to transportation. Even large statuettes could be easily transported without too much concern for damage if properly packed. Little can be said with certainty about how and in what numbers statuettes were transported from the places they were produced to markets or directly to customers. A purchaser could even simply carry a statuette to the site of its installation, as would presumably be true for a workshop attached to a sanctuary.

Shipwrecks again provide some evidence for the long-distance transportation of statuettes during the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods. The statuettes from the Mahdia shipwreck, for example, formed part of a mixed cargo that also contained large-scale bronzes, marble sculpture, *klinai*, architectural pieces and stele. The ship also contained twelve lead ingots bearing Latin stamps that Eck shows originated from Iberian mines.[596] The ship is generally agreed to have been heading to Italy for Roman customers in the first half of the first century BC.[597] The small bronzes are all in good middle Hellenistic style and were probably not produced specifically for an exclusively Roman market, but their presence does testify to a Late Republican taste for small-scale statuary and bronze ornamentation in the Hellenistic manner.

The Antikythera wreck also carried three statuettes that were heading for the Roman market, so it is clear existing bronze statuettes were in demand and were transported from locations in the Eastern Mediterranean to the Italian peninsula as part of

[596] Eck 1994, 93. Cf. Treister 1992, 37. Three names are represented amongst the stamps on the ingots: Gn(aeus) Atellius T(iti) f(ilius) Mene(nia tribu); M(arcus) Planius L(uci) f(ilius) Russinus; and L(ucius) Planius L(uci) f(ilius) Russinus.
[597] See Hellenkemper-Salies 1994, 21–22 for a summary of the various attributed dates for the wreck.

mixed cargoes.[598] That these two cargoes may have been spoils of conquest complicate their interpretation as products for a Roman consumer demand, but they may also be commercial products. Barr-Sharrar makes an argument for some of the Mahdia bronzes having originated at Delos. Though she argues for an interpretation of the statuettes as war booty, it is also a possibility that they were sold as art objects in a Delian marketplace.[599]

Use

Once a bronze statuette was in a purchaser's possession, it could be used in a number of ways. The presence of statuettes in the *lararia* of Roman houses and their use as the focus of household cult has been discussed.[600] However, many small bronzes appear to have been conceived as ornamental and decorative objects for vessels, utensils and furniture. For these kinds of figures, the statuette's use (at least initially) was dictated by the function of object that it adorned, which can sometimes (but by no means always) be identified by appearance, structure or technical features. Some were purely decorative as is the case with most appliques and attachments. Three high-quality decorative busts in the Ashmolean collection—two silenoi [**133**, **134**] and a maenad (?) [**128**]—would have likely adorned expensive, high-status *klinai*.[601] Another attachment for a dining couch or bed is a seated male figure [**179**]. The presence of a hole and the strong curve of the figure indicate that it was originally intended to be attached with a rivet or nail to the 'field' of a *fulcrum,* the curved element at the transition between the horizontal and the vertical parts of the *kline.*[602] Fully three dimensional statuettes were also employed for ornamentation. Among the Ashmolean collection, the seated figures of Dionysos [**25**] and

[598] Kaltsas, Vlachogianni and Bouyia 2012, nos. 40-42.
[599] Barr-Sharrar 1998, 194–195.
[600] See above, section 4.4
[601] On *klinai* as Roman luxury items, see Wallace-Hadrill 2008, 421ff.
[602] See Faust 1989, 34 for the elements of 'Relieffulcra'. Cf. **179** with a reclining figure from the London art market: Faust 1989, no. 473, pl. 4,2.

another possible maenad [**127**] were cast flat underneath so that they might be set upon another object with legs hanging over. This practice of employing statuettes for the ornamentation of highly-valued vessels had been practiced since the

Other statuettes were designed to be ornamental, but were incorporated as a structural element of a larger object or served some utilitarian purpose themselves. Such would have likely been the case for a Silenos/Bes figure [**135**]. The statuette was produced to serve as a decorative foot for a portable brazier, a small altar, a large bronze vessel or, perhaps, for a larger statuette.[603] A similar function as a support can be reconstructed for the figure of a seated satyr [**132**]. The figure sits on an arched foot and is flattened on the top, an indication that it was an integral structural part of the object to which it once belonged. Two further statuettes in the Ashmolean collection—both very likely depicting Eros—show how both small and large statuettes were designed (or altered) to be used in this manner. The first, a 5.6 centimetre high figure stands frontally with arms raised above the head [**72**]. A flattening of the top of the head and hands indicates that this figure once held a small bowl and perhaps served as a candleholder.[604] At the other end of the spectrum is the 40 centimetre high statuette of Eros from Cirencester. This statuette differs from most others in the Ashmolean collection in that it belongs to a higher level of artistic production and was almost certainly the product of a workshop specialising in hollow cast statues and statuettes, requiring the facilities discussed above for larger sculpture, whereas a figure like **72** could have been made in a workshop that produced statuettes alongside other metal objects such as fibulae and nails. The figure is technically complex. Although the separately cast wings are now missing,

[603] Franken 1996, 106.
[604] See catalogue entry.

the cavities where they would have been attached remain. Other blemishes created during casting have been covered with square and rectangular patches. These are especially visible around the chest and on the backside of the legs. The nipples and areolas have a reddish tint, different from the rest of the figure, suggesting that they are copper inlay. That the statuette originally functioned as a lampstand has long been suggested by scholars due to the remains of nails in both palms.[605]

The functionality of these objects is just one aspect of their use. As ornamental objects, bronze statuettes also delighted their viewers through their aesthetic qualities, subject matter or placement. Like large-scale statuary, statuettes made of bronze could be used as a means of status display. In the *Satyricon,* Petronius' narrator describes the ostentatious dinner display before him, which included among the silver dishes a donkey of Corinthian bronze for holding olives; later he is treated to sight of lamps decorated with little bronze fishermen.[606] The Eros figures in the Ashmolean collection discussed above would likely have been prominently displayed in a similar manner.

Disposal

The relinquishing of physical control over a bronze statuette constitutes its disposal. A frequent means of purposeful disposal practiced by the Greeks and Romans was the dedication of a bronze statuette at a sanctuary, shrine or temple. In this case the use and disposal of the statuette are one in the same action. Roman writers give an indication of how statuettes that had been used in the home, either decoratively or as part of household cult could be disposed if through dedication with the added incentive of the material and symbolic value of the statuette communicating the status of the dedicator. Pliny the

[605] See catalogue entry.
[606] Petron. *Sat.* 31 and 73.

Younger, for example, places an order with for a marble base for a statuette of Corinthian bronze (albeit, probably a large one, perhaps half-life size) that he indicated one would expect to go in a home, but which he has decided to dedicate at the Temple of Jupiter.[607] The Foss Dyke Mars, mentioned above (Fig. 5.12), presents some of our clearest evidence of a statuette commissioned and created for the purpose of being used as a dedication.

Statuettes were clearly also disposed of by being sold to metalworkers who could recycle the metal Many statuettes found at workshop sites, such as the Aphrodite from Verulamium and the figural bronzes at Blicquy, mentioned above, have been interpreted as scrap metal. Finally, disposal also came in the form of burial. Whether under duress in attempts at safekeeping or purposefully at sanctuary sites, as a dedicatory practice or to clear room for newer dedications, disposal of bronze statuettes by burial has been a main source of information, outside of the Bay of Naples for assemblages of bronze statuettes.[608]

5.4 Conclusions

The workshop was where the process of turning pure metals into bronze figures took place and has left some evidence in the archaeological record. For large-scale cast bronzes, the archaeological remains can be more readily identified and interpreted, though these facilities appear to have been for the most part temporary. For the casting of small bronzes, evidence must be sought in smaller, less architecturally purpose-built

[607] Plin. *Ep.* 3.6
[608] See Kauffmann-Heinimann 1998.

spaces. The evidence for small bronze workshops might consist simply of bronze splatters or the tools and equipment needed for high temperature firing.

Although the processes that took place in the workshop were the most important and 'strategical'[609] in the production of bronze statuettes and thus have constituted the bulk of this chapter, an examination of the *chaîne opératoire* presents the opportunity of looking beyond the workshop and into the technological, economic and social factors that informed the processes by which raw materials were processed and by which craftsmen and customer interacted with bronze statuettes.

[609] On 'strategical' tasks vs. variable tasks in technical endeavours, see Schlanger 1994, 145.

PART III
Case Studies

Chapter 6: Case Studies

6.1. Introduction

I have now examined both the modern historical contexts of the bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean collection and the ancient production and display contexts that can be reconstructed from the archaeological record. In Part I, the specific collection history of the Ashmolean statuettes was examined against other major European and North American collections with regard to the collectors, donors and curators who shaped it. Their collecting habits and tastes were in turn examined in relation to the historical conditions and influences that had an impact on the makeup of institutional collections, with the object of putting forward some possible explanations as to why collections have the characteristics that they do and why certain types are found frequently across collections. Taking into account the possible distortions of the market in fakes, forgeries and imitations, as well as the accidents of survival, a hypothesis was advanced that these types, which have survived in such numbers in modern collections, were also some of the most frequently produced bronze statuettes in antiquity during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Part II tested this hypothesis against the archaeological evidence for production, use and display of bronze statuettes. It investigated the various physical contexts in which statuettes have been discovered, with special attention paid to those types that appear to survive in large numbers in museum collections. The evidence shows that bronze statuettes were used in a wide range of contexts by Greeks, Romans and Etruscans, being primarily found as votives and in the domestic sphere but also occasionally in burials, public buildings, shrines, workshops and in shipwrecks. The examination of this evidence suggests that many of the types found in modern collections may have originated in

domestic contexts, especially as *lararium* statuettes and as figural parts of domestic furniture. The evidence is scattered outside of a few key sites such as Pompeii, Herculaneum and Augusta Raurica where the original contexts for a relatively large corpus of ancient bronzes has been preserved. Chronology remains difficult to pin down with accuracy and many of the bronzes can only be given broad dates or assigned an epochal period (Hellenistic, early Imperial, late Imperial, etc.). Despite the challenges of evidence and dating, over a long timeframe stretching from the late Hellenistic to the late Imperial periods the archaeological record appears to support the assertion that a number of the figural types present in the Ashmolean and other collections did indeed comprise a significant part of the ancient figural repertoire.

The final part of this thesis is aimed at defining the intersection between the Ashmolean statuettes and the archaeological record. The purpose of this is to draw out some aspects of Hellenistic and Roman visual culture that may aid our understanding of the societies and cultures that used such statuettes, particularly with regard to the relationships indexed by their production, use and display. The chapter is structured around three case studies, preceded by a brief summary of the theoretical underpinnings for this mode of investigation.

The three case studies were selected because their subjects are well represented in the repertoire among the Ashmolean statuettes. Using representations of dwarfs, Herakles and Hermes, these studies utilise the Ashmolean material as a springboard for understanding some of the broader themes around the development of the bronze statuette repertoire in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

The first case study is on dancing dwarfs. It looks at a type found frequently in collections and originally conceived for production as small-scale objects independent of any large-scale models. These bronze statuettes have been found with some frequency in both Hellenistic and Roman contexts and are somewhat less wrapped up in ideological arguments about the relative importance of classical *nobilia opera* to the Roman practice of copying Greek sculpture. Next, small Italian bronze representations of Herakles from the fourth to the first century BC are investigated for what their form may reveal about how classical Greek figural types representing the hero were negotiated in Italian cult practice. Finally, this section will seek to address questions about the repetition and replication of the Hermes-Thoth type and the functions it served in both Ptolemaic Egypt and the later Roman repertoire of Hermes representations.

6.2. Theoretical background

The nature of the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronzes, especially its eclecticism (derived from the variety of sources from which it was acquired) and its almost total lack of provenance (due to having been primarily acquired through donations and purchases from the art market rather than excavation), make its value as an object of study somewhat murky. This may partially explain why it has long been generally ignored by scholars. Indeed, some scholars have advocated ignoring unprovenanced bronzes completely, insisting that they add little value to the study of the ancient world.[610] It is the contention of this study that despite the significant limitations that a study of the Ashmolean bronzes entails, reframing the questions being asked has the potential to yield new information about visual culture *processes* in both antiquity and the modern period.

[610] Anderson 2014, 93 and n. 2.

To be sure, any claims about ancient societies that draw on the analysis of unprovenanced objects will be dependent on comparisons with material from scientific archaeology or corroboration in the historical record, but collections like that of the Ashmolean are still able to fill out and enhance our broad understanding of ancient visual and material culture. As I hope the preceding chapters have shown, these kinds of bronzes are interesting in what they can tell us about reception of classical antiquity in the modern period and the ways in which visual culture processes have historically shaped museum collections and influenced scholarly interpretations of Greek and Roman art.

The ways in which modern societies have received the sculpture of Graeco-Roman antiquity and the specific historical visuality with which they have looked at ancient sculpture have had such a profound impact on its historiography (and thus our understanding of ancient visual culture) that the two discourses can scarcely be disentangled.[611] The accumulation of small-scale 'antiques' or copies 'after the antique' by antiquaries, connoisseurs and collectors left an indelible mark on contemporary visual culture as the repetition of visual forms actively influenced the production and reproduction of social and cultural meaning.[612]

Within the wider modern discourse on Greek sculptures and the ways in which the Romans received, reused and adapted their range of formal principles and ideologies, this section of the study is concerned with analysing bronze statuettes as part of the milieu of

[611] See Marvin 2008 for the clearest and most comprehensive account of the historiography of the 'copy myth' for Roman ideal sculpture. Although Roman bronze statuettes have a slightly different relationship to Greek sculpture, many could still be considered under the rubric of *Idealplastik* and have certainly suffered from the same prejudices as large-scale Roman ideal sculpture. See e.g. Lamb 1969, 225 on the statuette from Herculaneum thought to be a version of a mounted Alexander by Lysippos (Naples 1487): 'the statuette itself is clearly Roman. It shews the Roman copyist at his worst, and we ought not to libel the Greek artist by stressing the connection.'

[612] Gell 1998; Skeates 2005, 2; Cf. Sekula 1999 [1986], 155 on the photographic archive and the construction of meaning.

sculptures and images that inhabited the houses, cities, sanctuaries and tombs of the Hellenistic and Roman worlds. If we accept that the survival rate of certain figural types amongst the Ashmolean and other collections of ancient bronze statuettes is broadly indicative of their production rate in antiquity—with caveats regarding differences in rates of survival depending on type, context and location as well as the understanding that there are likely to be significant variations depending on chronology and geography—then they become valuable documents. They are not only images, meaningfully constituted and signifying wider social and cultural ideologies, but are also important material artefacts of the visual culture processes that constructed, reproduced and reinforced social and cultural values.[613] In this way we may regard Ashmolean statuettes as the products of a visual culture process that represented, in Hölscher's words, 'a new system of visual language, shaped in late Hellenistic times and remained in operation through the Roman period, [representing] not merely a new phase of development, but a fundamental break.'[614]

One of the justified criticisms of this approach is its tendency toward the ahistorical, flattening out differences in style, technique, subject matter and function across a very large geography composed of extremely diverse cultures that certainly did not remain static throughout the centuries investigated here. With bronze statuettes, we are further limited by the scarcity of finds coming from scientifically excavated, datable contexts. The statuettes in the Ashmolean collection cannot help answer questions of chronology, stylistic development or cultural distinction on their own. However, as stated above, the evidence of survivals in modern collections (along with what archaeological

[613] Skeates 2005, 4; Hall 1997, 32; Sturken and Cartwright 2009, 3. See also Stewart 2008, 3.
[614] Hölscher 2004, 87.

evidence we do have) suggests that there were certain types of bronze statuettes that retained their basic visual format from the late Hellenistic to the late Imperial periods. The consistency of these types over such a long timespan suggests that they maintained their ability to effectively communicate ideological messages, even though the content of those messages may and indeed must have varied depending on specific historical and contextual circumstances. It is the effectiveness and the flexibility of this visual language that is of the most interest. We must use the archaeological evidence to help fill out its picture.

6.3. Tiny canon: statuettes of dwarfs

It seems appropriate to begin with a type that, perhaps more than most others, could only have been developed on a small scale. Full-sized images would undermine the novelty of the figures. Their small size, which allowed them to be carried around on the person, may in addition reflect their possible apotropaic properties.[615]

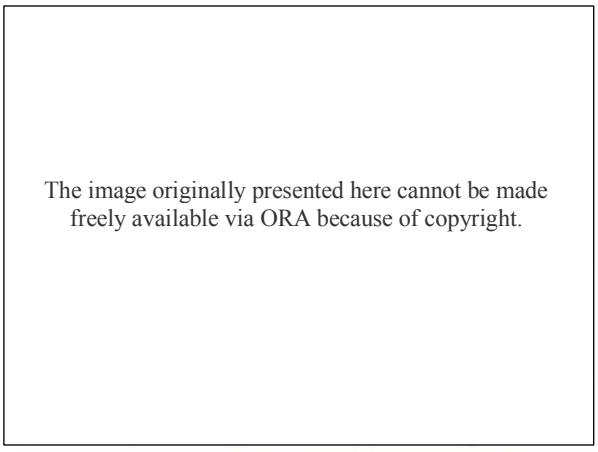

Fig. 6.1. Red-figure stamnos fragment, showing dancing dwarf. c. 450-440 BC. Erlangen University, inv. I 707.

The Hellenistic period saw a greatly increased interest in the depiction of dwarfs, along with other physical abnormalities and deformities such as hunchbacks and cripples—the so-called 'grotesques'. The popularity of these figures continued throughout the Roman period. For freestanding sculptural statuary it is significant that these figures

[615] Wace 1903.

were produced in media that allowed for their serial production, namely bronze and terracotta.[616]

Depictions of dwarfs appeared in Greek art before the Hellenistic period, as attested to by Archaic terracotta statuettes and red-figure vases of the fifth century BC (Fig. 6.1).[617] Dynastic Egypt also had a long tradition of representing both human and divine dwarfs. The dwarf god Bes had a well-developed iconography and ritual function before the Ptolemies ruled in Egypt, appearing as a dwarf with a protruding tongue, paunch belly and leonine face in New Kingdom representations and with progressively stylised features during the Late Period.[618] Significantly for the interpretation of dwarf statuettes, human dwarfs in Egypt were associated with ritual dances.[619]

Dwarfs in the Ashmolean collection

There are at least five statuettes depicting dwarfs in the collection of Ashmolean bronzes (**151**–**155**).[620] Three are shown as entertainers. **152** and **154** are dancers, whilst **155** played a (now missing) double *aulos.* **153** is also probably an entertainer, though others have interpreted it as a combatant dwarf or pygmy.[621] The figure does appear to have an agonistic expression, but this might also be interpreted as the look of concentration found

[616] Dwarf statuettes were also produced in other materials such as marble and faience. A 10 cm marble figure is in New York (Metropolitan Museum inv. 26.7.1403) and 6.3 cm faience figure resides in Baltimore (Walters Art Museum inv. 48.1784). However, the vast majority of surviving dwarf statuettes are of bronze or terracotta, suggesting that these were the preferred media for this type of statuette. Contrast with the sandal-binding Aphrodite type where the figure appears frequently in both marble and bronze. See Künzl 1970.
[617] Dasen 1993, 201-204; Garmaise 1996, 8.
[618] Dasen 1993, 58-9.
[619] For example, the dwarf Djeho, whose Late Period sarcophagus records his role as a sacred dancer. Dasen 1993, 150-152.
[620] **156** may also depict a dwarf, but this identification is tentative.
[621] Garmaise 1996, no. 128, p. 217; Burlington Fine Arts Club 1904, no. C64. The Πυγμαῖοι were a mythical race of small-statured men, first mentioned by Homer (*Il.* 3.3-7) who yearly battled the cranes (*geranomachy).* Pygmies or combatant dwarfs were frequently represented amongst the 'grotesque' repertoire.

on many surviving figures of dancing dwarfs—such as the *krotalist* in Naples who also wears a similar loincloth to the Ashmolean statuette (Fig. 6.2).[622] As our figure is missing the lower parts of all of his limbs, we cannot reconstruct what he may have held in his hands, or even if it was a weapon or instrument (or perhaps neither). The position of the upper legs indicates that the left was bent and raised off the ground, a position better suited for a dancer than the grounded stance we would expect for a combatant. The backwards swing that can be reconstructed by the position of the left arm is also more in keeping with the standard iconography of dancing dwarfs.[623] In the absence of any distinctive iconographical evidence to the contrary, it seems best to place this statuette amongst the corpus of dancing dwarfs.

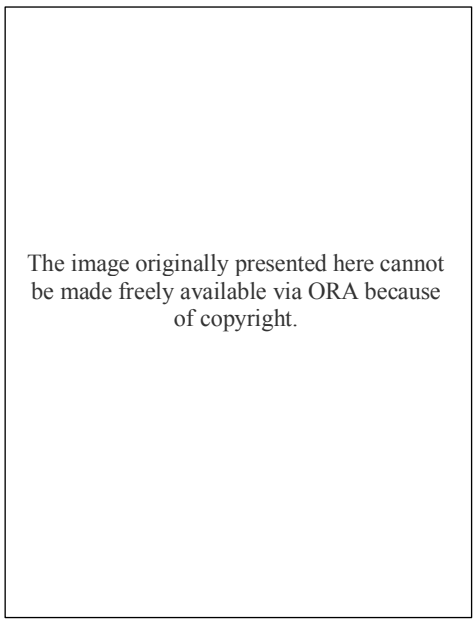

Fig. 6.2. Bronze dancing dwarf *krotalist*. Late Hellenistic. H: 13 cm Naples Mus. Naz, inv. 27734.

The posture of **151** is more difficult to interpret. The figure is shown kneeling, with the left arm reaching backwards to rest the hand on the small of the back and the remains of the right arm stretched out perpendicular to the body. The whole of the figure is poorly executed—none of the facial features are discernable aside from a protrusion indicating a nose. The figure exhibits the same kind of expansive movement that characterises many other depictions of entertainers, especially dancing dwarfs, and so

[622] Roux and Barré 1877, pl. 41, 1.
[623] Cf., for example, a figure in Berlin (inv. Misc. 8487), Garmaise 1996, p. 187-8, no. 15.

has been included in this category, but its identification as both dwarf and entertainer is conjectural and of little value in our analysis of this type.[624]

None of the statuettes in this group have any recorded provenance, save for **151** which may have been purchased in Saqqara.[625] Like many bronzes dwarf statuettes, dating is often a matter of conjecture. The most securely dated examples come from Pompeii and Herculaneum with a *terminus ante quem* of AD 79.[626] The Mahdia shipwreck, which contained what are now probably the three most famous dancing dwarf statuettes, provides another relatively secure date. Though there has been substantial debate over dating the wreck, it is now generally accepted to have sunk sometime in the very early first century BC (c. 100-80 BC).[627] However, the actual usefulness of this date is complicated by the possibility that the dwarfs were made at some unknown time before the wreck.[628]

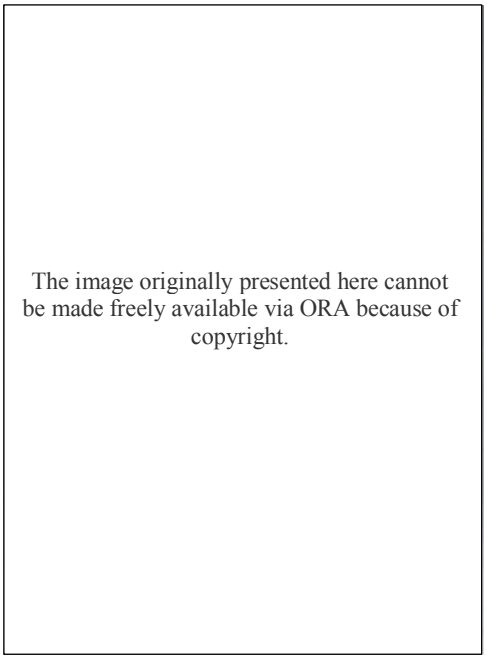

Fig. 6.3. Bronze dancing dwarf from the Mahdia shipwreck. Late Hellenistic. H. 32 cm. Tunis Bardo Mus., inv. F215.

152 wears a *sakkos*-like head covering with a significant affinity to that worn by the male dancer from the Mahdia wreck (Fig. 6.3). Scholars have variously interpreted this head

[624] Cf. a standing figure in a similar posture in Reinach *Rép.* II 815, 7.
[625] Depicted in Shaw 1757, pl. II, J and purchased during Shaw's visit to Saqqara, p. 485-6.
[626] Garmaise 1996, nos. 1, 3, 4.
[627] Hellenkemper-Salies 1994, 2 (c. 80 BC); Stewart 1990, 229 (c. 100 BC); Himmelmann 1983, 72 (c. 100 BC); Adriani 1963, 92 (c. 100 BC); Fuchs 1963, 11- 12 for a summary of earlier dating attempts.
[628] Fuchs 1963, 18 (second half of the second century BC); Stewart 1990, n. 39 (130-100 BC); Adriani 1963, 90-92 (c. 150-120 BC) Pfisterer-Haas 1994, 491 (late Hellenisic).

covering, with hypotheses ranging from a flute bag[629] to a veil that has been thrown back off the face.[630] Additionally, an example from Pompeii exhibits a large, incised circle delineating the navel similar to that seen on the Ashmolean figure, showing that this styling was being practiced by at least AD 79.[631] Ultimately, this range of dates illustrates the difficulty of situating such statuettes chronologically and the need to resort to stylistic criteria in attempts to determine dates. **152** does bear some stylistic resemblance to the male Mahdia dancer, especially in the treatment of the facial features, which carefully render the depressed nasal bridge and prominent forehead indicative of the achondroplastic form of dwarfism.[632] A date in the second century BC seems most likely based on the proposed dating of the Mahdia figure. It should be kept in mind, however, that the Mahdia figures are exceptionally large for dwarf statuettes—the male dancer measures 32 centimetres—and were the products of a very fine workshop at the high end of the market. The Ashmolean figure is only 9 centimetres high, though the sculptor has paid close attention to the modelling in order to capture the contrast between the heavily muscled torso with its slightly distended stomach and the chubby, stunted limbs framing a naturalistic but grossly overlarge erect phallus. Nevertheless, comparison with the much finer Mahdia figure must be done cautiously as the two statuettes represent very different levels of art production.

[629] Wrede 1988, 110.
[630] Pfisterer-Haas 1994, 485.
[631] Garmaise 1996, 165.
[632] Dasen 1990, 192.

The dancing dwarf

Because of our inability to accurately date the majority of bronze dwarf statuettes, for the purposes of this thesis we are more interested discovering the origins of the figural types seen commonly amongst statuettes of dwarfs. The pose adopted by many of the dancing dwarfs, with one arm raised, one lowered and bent wrists on both, was in common use for depictions of figures playing the *krotala* from the late Archaic period. This can be seen in two examples from the early fifth century BC: an Etruscan female statuette from a tomb in Spina dating to about 490–480 BC (Fig. 6.4) and an Attic red figure cup from Vulci from about 525–475 BC in the British Museum (Fig. 6.5).[633] The denotation of this posture appears to be that of a *krotalon* player. There are, of course, variations for *krotalists*—the Mahdia male dwarf holds his arms in quite a different position, though he carries a *krotalon* in his left hand. Figures may in addition adopt this pose to indicate that they are dancing, though they do not play instruments.[634]

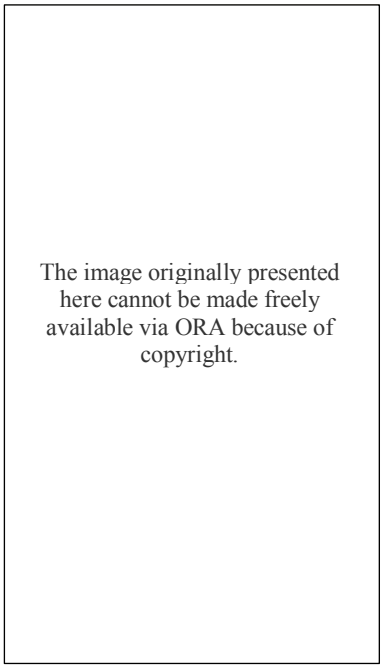

Fig. 6.4 Etruscan bronze statuette of a female dancer. From Spina. c. 490480 BC. H. 10.4 cm Ferrara Arch. Mus. inv. 2898.

[633] Statuette: Hostetter 1986, 32, no. 8, pls. 11-12. From Tomb 128, 10.4 cm, (Ferarra Arch. Mus. inv. 2898. Cup: Boardman 1994. 249, Fig. 7.22C., British Museum. Signed by Epiktetos.
[634] Garmaise 1996, no.s 38, 42, 45 (terracotta).

Some of our earliest evidence for this posture in the repertoire of Hellenistic small bronzes comes from Galjûb, about 16 kilometres north of Cairo. This material is now in the collection of the Roemer-und-Pelizaeus-Museum in Hildesheim. The bronzes, consisting of dozens of very small statuettes, relief medallions, relief plaques and metalworking tools, were said to have been found in a sealed clay vessel in the ruins of a house. The bronzes were published by A. Ippel, who interpreted the statuettes as unfinished models used by a goldsmith to make personal adornment such as hair or clothing pins.[635] He dated the find to the beginning of the second century BC based on stylistic considerations, [636] though others have argued for dates ranging from the second half of the third century to the end of the second century BC.[637] Amongst the statuettes are four dwarfs depicted in the *krotalon* player posture, two nude males and two females in Isiac costume (Fig 6.6).[638] The figures exhibit a uniform, if unusual, style. The most striking feature is their elongated and extremely rotund torsos. This feature is accompanied by sensitively detailed facial features and small but dynamic limbs arranged so that the males appear to form mirror images of the females.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Fig 6.6. Dancing dwarf figures from Galjûb, Egypt. Late third–early second century BC. H: (clockwise from upper left) 3.6 cm, 4.3 cm, 4.4 cm, 4.5 cm. Roemer-und-Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim. inv. 2342, 2255, 2253, 2266.

[635] Ippel 1922, 4. The hoard was purchased in 1919 from a dealer in Cairo by Wilhelm Pelizaeus.
[636] Ippel 1922, 85-6.
[637] Kayser 1965, 34 (end of second century BC); Grimm 1979, nos. 195A-D (second half of the third century); Himmelmann 1983, 72 (last quarter of the third century BC).
[638] Ippel 1922, 45-6, nos. 30-33, pl. IV. Isiac connection denoted by an 'Isis knot' tied between the breasts.

154 is the only Ashmolean bronze to adopt this posture. It is a truly diminutive figurine, measuring only 1.9 centimetres in height. It was cast with a ring at the back indicating that it was intended for suspension. It is small enough to have been worn as an object for personal adornment—perhaps part of a pendant—but could equally have been part of a *tintinnabulum*. These wind chimes, for which we have several examples from Pompeii, were usually composed of apotropaic images such as phalluses and grotesque figures.[639] All facial features have been worn away, but it is likely that they were never very fine to begin with. What appears to have been important in the making of this small figure was the silhouette. Despite is tiny size, the large head and torso that characterise dwarf figures are clearly visible, as are the disproportionately small and bowed legs. The position of the arms is also clearly distinguishable. The right is raised next the head with the wrist bent, and the left is lowered against the side of the body with the hand apparently placed behind.

Alexandria's traditional status as the source of all Hellenistic genre sculpture has been steadily eroded over the past several decades, as scholars have increasingly recognised that there is little direct, datable proof coming from Alexandria itself and larger numbers of works have been found in or are suspected to come from sites in Asia Minor, mainland Greece, Italy and even Gaul.[640] In the case of dwarf statuettes, however, Egypt does appear to be the most likely source for the origination of the motif. As mentioned above, dwarfs were represented in dynastic monuments with relative frequency and were long associated with ritualistic dances.[641] In the Roman sources, dwarf entertainers appear to specialise in an obscene form of humour attributed to

[639] See Garmaise 1996, 114-118.
[640] For Gaul, see Boucher 1976, 188-190.
[641] Stevenson 1975, 76; Dasen 1993, 157.

Alexandria.[642] It seems likely that the Classical Greek iconographic conventions for depicting castanet playing and dancing were combined with a previous Egyptian tradition of dancing dwarfs to produce the type. The Galjûb hoard provides what are probably late third or early second century BC examples of the type, though these are rather idiosyncratic. Other examples in bronze cannot be securely dated earlier, but later examples appear in significant numbers, particularly in Italy.[643]

Conclusions

The dancing dwarf type was developed exclusively for small-scale statuary. Many of the surviving bronze examples exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship and attention to the expressive possibilities inherent in the incongruous proportions of the different body parts. Finely worked, relatively large statuettes such as those found in the Mahdia wreck (which were also inlaid with silver) were prestige pieces. These were no doubt intended for the private art market in Italy. Had they reached their destination their display in a symposium context seems likely, given the Dionysiac connotations of the ivy-wreathed dancer.

The Mahdia figures, though, are exceptionally large. Most of the depictions of dwarfs in bronze are of much small stature. Indeed, we have seen examples in both the Ashmolean collection and in the hoard from Galjûb of figures of dancing dwarfs created specifically for the purpose of being worn or suspended. **154** was intended for suspension; the Galjûb pieces served as decorative toppers for pins. In both cases, the function of the figures goes beyond the charm of a small depiction of small people. The apotropaic

[642] Eg. Luc. *Merc. Cond.* 27. 'Ἰωνικὰ συνείρων Ἀλεξανδρεωτικὸς ἀνθρωπίσκος'; Garmaise 1996, 46.
[643] Garmaise 1996, 160-61. Boucher 1976, 200.

powers attributed to dwarfs in the Hellenistic and Roman period very likely had something to do with the choice of this subject for articles of personal and domestic adornment. The sizes of these very tiny statuettes belied their great power as talismans.

The motif of the dancing dwarf, which likely originated in Egypt given its long history of depicting dwarfs and their strong association with ritual dancing, appears to have been a favourite in regions outside of Egypt as well. Statuettes from Herculaneum and Pompeii, along with other finds reasonably attributed to an Italian provenance, speak to the type's popularity in Italy through at least the first century BC.[644]

6.4. Votive canon: Herakles in Hellenistic Italy

Herakles is the most frequently represented mythological figure in the Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronzes. Of the eighteen identified statuettes of the hero, eleven can be characterised stylistically and typologically as originating in Italian workshops. In other words, the majority of the Ashmolean's bronze statuettes of Herakles are Italian, a condition that we have seen is typical of many European and North American collections, large and small.[645] The Italic style is distinctive both in the repertoire of subjects represented as bronze statuettes and the style in which they were rendered. Regional Italian collections contain many small bronzes depicting warriors, priests, priestesses, worshippers and Herakles, all displaying strong, lingering archaisms in their conception. It is the last subject that will be examined in detail in this case study. The abstracted, geometric forms and often mannerist treatment of the body seen in many surviving Herakles statuettes makes for a stark visual contrast to their counterparts made

[644] Dancing dwarfs are frequently depicted as part of Nilotic paintings and pavements in Italy though the third century AD. See Versluys 2002.
[645] See above, 118-121.

in the Hellenic tradition. There is an intriguing tension inscribed in these statuettes that negotiates between what is usually recognised as an indigenous Italian style for the representation of the hero-god and external artistic influences represented by the incorporation of high and late classical Greek sculptural forms.[646]

This section seeks to understand and define this tension by attempting to reconstruct the (art) historical contexts for the Italic-style Herakles statuettes at the Ashmolean. In doing so it will address questions about what can be claimed to be specifically Italian in these statuettes and what features developed under Greek or Roman influence. These statuettes are more than Italian translations of Greek prototypes. Their widespread use, especially that of the 'attacking Herakles' or *promachos* type, requires a more substantial explanation. The choice of this type of Herakles statuette for votive offerings over the more naturalistic Hellenic types that were available in Italy from the fourth century BC suggests that the form of the statuettes was in some way significant to the populations that used it. Did it replicate a cult statue? How might different forms of bronze statuette offerings depicting Herakles—ranging in style and quality from native Italian to high Hellenistic—signify differently within the contexts of regional Italian cults? Why does the *promachos* format all but disappear sometime in the second or first century BC?

I will first look at the characteristics of the Ashmolean statuettes before investigating how bronze statuettes of Herakles fit into the hero's place in Italian art, cult and votive practice. This will lead to observations on how Italian votive practices and

[646] The lack of internal coherence in the development of art in Italy and its apparent susceptibility to external influences has been remarked upon in Bianchi Bandinelli and Torelli 1976, 15.

artistic tradition responded to external opportunities and pressures emanating from Greece and Rome during the third to first centuries BC.[647]

Herakles figures in the Ashmolean collection

The catalogue contains eleven figures of Herakles that adhere to types characteristic of Italian workshops.[648] All are individual standing figures shown either in an attacking pose or at rest. None are shown seated in the Hellenistic style of a Herakles reportedly from Bactria [**102**]. Nor is there any known myth or narrative context for any of the figures, as there is for a statuette of the Herakles wrestling the Nemean lion [**104**].

The figures in the attacking pose adhere to a highly standardised basic schema but also display a high level of variation within that schema. Differences in the height, proportions, facial features, hairstyles, the placement and comportment of the limbs, the draping of the lion skin and the degree of stylisation give the figures a diverse appearance. No two in the Ashmolean collection are identical, nor am I aware of any exact duplicates in other collections.[649] The hero is shown in an aggressive stance, striding forward with the left leg and knee bent in a slight lunge. The right arm is raised to about the height of the head and (where preserved) wields a club. The left arm is extended either straight out or slightly bent. The attribute held in the left hand is missing in all the examples, but is positioned to hold a cylindrical object (except for **90**, whose left palm is

[647] I am using 'Italian' as a convenient term for grouping the Etruscans with other native tribes living on the Italian peninsula south of the Alps. I recognize the inherent dangers in lumping together disparate (albeit highly connected) ethnic groups under one umbrella term, but use of the term will allow me to navigate between general points about the image of Herakles in Italy and the specific evidence related to individual Italic tribes. See Colonna 1961, 251-252; Bentz 1992, 185.

[648] **88–95, 97–99.**

[649] Exact duplication is rare for any ancient bronze statuette types. Even if made in the same mould, adjustments to the wax models and the addition of cold-worked details after casting produce differentiated final pieces. Cf. Barr-Sharrar 2016.

facing up).[650] The remains on **93** and **94** suggest that a bow or bow and arrow should be restored. A lion skin is present on all the statuettes but takes several different forms. Two figures [**91**, **93**] wear the lion skull over the head as a hood, its front paws tied in a knot above the sternum with the rest of the skin tucked under the left armpit and draped over the left forearm. In the other five figures [**88**–**90**, **92**, **94**], the lion skin is simply draped over the left forearm. In all cases the skin is rendered in a highly stiff and stylised fashion. It may contain relief decoration that distinguishes the lion's head, paws and tail [**90**, **94]**, or stippling and hatch patterns may be used to convey the fur of the animal [**89**, **91**, **93]**. All the figures wear a short hairstyle, though some are more elaborate than others. Two figures [**89**, **90**] have a protuberance (*cornetto)* emanating from above the forehead.[651]

The remaining four Italic figures show the hero in a relaxed posture. **95** may be a variant of the *promachos* Herakles type. He does not adopt the aggressive stance of the other figures, but his right arm is upraised in a similar manner. Unfortunately, the arm is missing below the elbow and it is unknown whether the figure could have wielded the club, though this seems likely. This figure also holds the lion skin in an idiosyncratic fashion; it is draped over the left forearm, but he also grasps the edge with the left hand. We may see another variation in **97**. This figure lowers the right arm and extends the left from the elbow. Attributes are missing from both hands, but they were both designed to hold cylindrical objects and there are some remains of what was probably a club in the right hand. The figure wears the lion skull as a cap with the paws tied above the sternum as in other examples, but the long lion skin is draped over the left side down to the knee, a

[650] See for example a statuette said to be from Todi in the Toledo Museum of Art (inv. 78.22). Schwarz 1990, no. 23.
[651] Balty 1962 argues that this element is a simplification and abstraction of the lion scalp. Franzoni (1980, 155) leaves this interpretation opening, arguing that it could be the lion scalp, and ivy leaf or both. I am inclined to understand it as a single leaf (though not necessarily ivy), possibly representing a victory crown.

motif that appears to be rare amongst these types of small bronze representations of Herakles.[652] **98** is a relaxed figure shown holding a spherical object—perhaps an apple—in the left hand with a lion (?) skin over the left forearm and resting on the left shoulder. **99** shows the hero with the right hand on the hip and a long lion skin draped over the left forearm. The left hand is held tight against the body and holds the remains of what was probably a club.[653]

Each of the Ashmolean's Herakles statuettes from pre-Roman Italy falls within a spectrum between simplified geometric abstraction and the naturalism achieved through sensitive modelling and accurate proportions. Figures such as **92** and **93** are almost like stick figures, lacking volume and mass. The transitions between their parts are abrupt and angular, emphasising the linearity and elongation of their construction. The lion skins hanging from their forearms are little more than impressionistic geometric shapes. The limbs of a figure like **91** do not convey any sense of underlying musculature or structure. Figures such as **89** and **90** are more solidly grounded. They have more mass and appear as if they occupy a volume of space. The modelling of the musculature is more apparent and, especially in **89**, displays an interest in conveying the effects of movement on the body of the figure. However, both **89** and **90** are also characterised by stiffness, betraying an overarching concern for adhering to a compositional formula over a more fluid and natural representation of the human form. **94** and **99** are closest to the 'naturalistic' end of the spectrum. The underlying musculature is emphasised. There is an obvious attempt to

[652] Although the state of preservation is poor, a Herakles statuette from Fontana Liscia (Akademisches Kunstmuseum, Bonn inv. C 6) appears to be of a similar type. See Naso 2002, 361, no. 15, fig. 19.
[653] A drinking horn or Acheloos horn is also possible as the element does appear to curve slightly. There are examples of Herakles holding a horn, but many comparative examples, including a statuette from Pompeii, clearly show a club. Boyce 1937, no. 371; Adamo-Muscettola 1984, 15–20. Cf. Lorenz 2003, 327, nos. 186 and 187, figs. 55.47–48.

render the tension of the body between motion and rest. The stiffness remains, and the tendencies toward abstraction never leave the rendering of the lion skins.

Herakles in pre-Roman Italian Art

Bronze statuettes were an important component for the votive practice of the Etruscans and their Italic neighbours. They were also employed from an early date and with great skill as figures applied to objects such as mirrors, candelabras, *thymiateria* and *cistae*.

Herakles/Hercle appears in Etruscan art in the late sixth century BC. The etymology of the name and its derivation from Herakles betrays the Greek origin of the hero and his cult, but the means by which images of the god came to the Italian peninsula is a matter of debate. In his early study of the cult, image and mythology of Hercle in Italy, J. Bayet considered the transmission of Herakles' image and cult to Italy to be the work of Ionian Greek artisans who settled in Etruria in the sixth century and established ceramic and bronzecasting workshops that portrayed the hero.[654] A hydria from Caere and cast bronze decorations for tripods from Vulci are some of the earliest Etruscan representations of Herakles.

Freestanding statuettes

The vast majority of Herakles statuettes found in Italy, housed in local and regional Italian museums and dispersed in collections throughout the world, depict Herakles in the *promachos* pose. As seen with the statuettes in the Ashmolean collection, variations on the type are plentiful, especially in the arrangement of the lion skin, the level of archaism

[654] Bayet 1926b, 16.

and abstraction present and the precise relationship of the parts that create a more or less active figure. The basic schema remains virtually unchanged: the hero strides with the club held in the upraised right hand (very rarely the left) while extending the left arm upon which is draped the lion skin. Often an attribute is held in the left hand; the legs are separated to a greater or lesser degree to create a sense of action and movement. Although our knowledge of the precise archaeological contexts for these statuettes is limited to a small percentage of the total surviving figures, the evidence points toward the frequent and favoured use of this type as votive offerings in Italian sanctuaries.

Early, archaic figures appear to derive much of their iconography from Cypriot representations of the hero, which in turn were influenced by depictions of the Phoenician deity Melqart.[655] They show Herakles standing stiffly, similarly to a *kouros* but with the right arm raised to brandish the club. The skull of the lion skin is draped over the head, the forepaws knotted around the neck and the skin cinched around the waist so that the lion's hind legs fall down the hero's legs.[656] Sometimes he is depicted wearing a tunic underneath the lion skin, a costume also found on Attic black-figure and early red-figure vases.[657] Unlike most archaic Greek depictions of the hero, Italic Herakles figures are beardless. The types that were elaborated in this period remained in production until the Roman period.[658]

[655] Bayet 1926b, 35–44; Cristofani 1985, 281.
[656] See for example, a statuette in the British Museum: Richardson 1983, 340, no. 1.
[657] Richardson 1983, 340.
[658] Di Niro 1977, 12.

Bayet classified these early representations as the 'Cypriot type' and argued that they were dependant on a colossal statue that forms part of the Cesnola collection at the Metropolitan Museum. He connected the transmission of this form to Ionian Greeks. (Fig. 6.7).[659] A proliferation of Herakles imagery exhibiting Cypriot and Ionian influences may also be attributable to the significant movement of Greeks from Asia Minor as a result of Persian aggression in that region.[660] Bayet further remarked on the widespread presence of bronze figures of his 'Lake Fucino' type in diverse private collections and despaired at ever classifying and analysing the figure statistically.[661] The type is referred to here at the *promachos* type. Bayet viewed this type as a distinctly Italic (rather than Etruscan) creation, but believed that it did imitate a cult statue.[662] Many other scholars prefer to see Greek influence.[663] The type begins to appear in Italy in the late fifth century BC, eclipsing the Cypriot type by the third century. It was dominant in Italy until the second century BC.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

6.7 Colossal statue of Herakles said to be from west of the temple at Golgoi, Cyprus. c. 530-520 BC. H: 217.2 cm Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 74.51.2455.

Two statuettes in the Ashmolean collection [**91**, **93**] show a variation somewhere between the two types outlined by Bayet. Both depict the hero wearing the lion skin as a

[659] Bayet 1926b, 39, n. 3. See Karageorghis 2000, 125, no. 190, figs. 190.1-190.4.
[660] The first group of painted tombs at Tarquinia are generally accepted to have been painted by Ionian Greeks. Spivey 1997, 58.
[661] Bayet 1926b, 44–45: 'One ne cesse d'en voir chez tous les antiquaires; et, dans ces conditions, tout essai de classement et de statistiques (types et provenances) est d'une absolue vanité.'
[662] Bayet 1926b, 44.
[663] Boucher 1971, 73; Richter 1915, 95; Woodford 1976 suggests the type is modelled on the Herakles Alexikakos statue by Hageladas.

hood with the forepaws wrapped around the neck as in the Cypriot type, but tucking the rest of the lion skin under the left arm and letting it drape over the left forearm.[664]

Although artistic and stylistic influences certainly moved between Etruria and the Italic tribes that bordered it, most likely through itinerant workshops[665] and the *promachos* type was current throughout Italy from the late fifth century BC, the majority of bronze statuettes of this type appear to have come from locations in the Sabellian and Umbrian regions of central Italy. A study by G. Colonna attempted to do what Bayet thought futile, and classified the vast number of Herakles and Ares statuettes (among other types) produced in the Sabellian and Umbrian regions during the 'Archaic' period, assigning them to masters and workshops.[666] Five years later, in a short article he did the same for statuettes produced during the Hellenistic period.[667]

Alongside these combative Herakles types, types showing the hero at rest were also current in the repertoire of Etruscan small bronzes from the late fifth century BC and became increasingly popular during the fourth century. The Hellenistic period saw the continued use of the *promachos* type in votive contexts, but fewer of the statuettes are found as applied figures. Resting Herakles types appear to have been favoured for these purposes.

The use of the attacking Herakles during the third and second centuries was prolific, especially in central Italy. This type was by far the favoured for use as a votive offering, though other types are still frequently seen, particularly resting types.

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[664] Balty 1961 and Balty 1962 on typology.
[665] Maggiani 1985, 157.
[666] Colonna 1970.
[667] Colonna 2005 [1975].

Applied statuettes

In the Classical period statuettes of Herakles occurred in funerary contexts as part of candelabra and other tomb furniture. The tombs excavated at Spina produced at least seven statuettes of Herakles from the top of candelabra dating from about 440 to 370 BC.[668] These statuettes all depict the hero in a relaxed or resting posture. Two (which appear to have had their wax model created in the same mould) show the hero placing his left foot on an amphora and resting his head on his left hand in a pose reminiscent of the metope from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia where Herakles is shown resting after his battle with the Nemean Lion (Fig. 6.8).[669] This imagery also appears on fourth century depictions of the hero on engraved mirrors and likely depicts the hero in his aspect as the protector of springs and water sources.[670]

Another candelabrum in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France has a figure of the attacking Herakles crowning it. The provenance of the candelabrum is not known, but based on the style of the figure, Adam placed it in the late fifth or early fourth century BC (Fig. 6.9).[671] A further example of the applied use of a Herakles statuette is the late fourth century example in the British Museum, also of unknown provenance, that once formed part of a situla handle (Fig. 6.10).[672] S. Haynes attributed the handle to a possibly northern Etruscan workshop.[673] It also shows the hero at rest with club lowered and the

[668] Hostetter 1986, 43ff.
[669] Hostetter 1986, 47–49, nos. 23, 24., pls. 28a-–c, 29d–e.
[670] Pfiffig 1980, 9; Schwarz 1990, 197.
[671] Adam 1984, 50, no. 50.
[672] Inv. 1824.4-46.12. Walters 1899, no. 1249.
[673] Haynes 1985, no. 165.

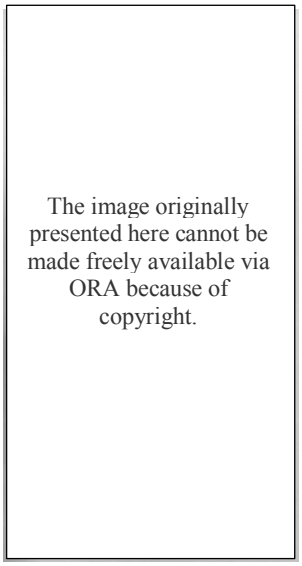

Fig. 6.8 Bronze statuette of Herakles resting on an amphora. Candelabrum finial from Spina, Tomb 58 C. c. 380-370 BC. H. 8.6 cm. Inv. 26677

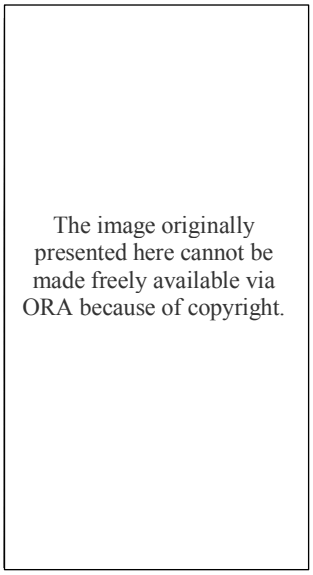

Fig. 6.9. Bronze statuette of Herakles *promachos*. Candelabrum final, provenance unknown. Fifth century BC. H: 11.7 cm BnF, inv. B.B. 1479.



Fig. 6.10. Bronze statuette of Herakles at rest. Situla handle, provenance unknown. c. 350-300 BC. H: 25.6 cm. BM, inv. 1824.4-46.12.

apples of the Hesperides in the left hand, a type that was introduced in the late fifth century BC but became widespread during the fourth.[674]

Herakles in Italian cult and votive practice

Hercle/Herakles was incorporated into the mythology of the Etruscans during the second half of the sixth century BC.[675] The multivalent spheres of influence that the god assumed for his worshippers over the centuries ensured that his cult persisted in Italy well into late antiquity. The rapid spread of the god's image and cult in the archaic period has been attributed to the ease with which he could be assimilated with a range of indigenous deities that shared similar characteristics, though we know very little about the deities and cult places of the Italic peoples before the fourth century BC.[676] The most prevalent

[674] Cristofani 1985, 282.
[675] Stafford 2012, 195; Pfiffig 1980, 8.
[676] Bradley 2005,132. Papi 1991, 1054; Di Niro 1977, 12, n. 13.

evidence for Italic cults of Herakles in the sixth and fifth centuries and for its spread is the number of bronze statuettes representing the hero that have (or are said to have) been discovered in central Italy. A lack of provenance and archaeological contexts for the majority of these figures means they are of limited value for reconstructing the archaic cult in any kind of specific way. In addition, before the monumentalisation of rural cult sites in Italy began in the late fourth century, sacred precincts were rarely marked architecturally in stone with temples or other sanctuary buildings making it difficult to discern their organisation archaeologically.

What, then, is the relationship of this Herakles type with the hero's cult in Italy? The sheer number of Italic Herakles figures, especially of the *promachos* type, seem to suggest that the hero cult was widespread in Italy. In the late first century BC Dionysios of Halikarnassos points out in the *Roman Antiquities* that many temples and altars are dedicated to Herakles throughout Italy and that one is, in fact, hard pressed to find a place where the hero is *not* worshipped.[677] Indeed, the bronze figures have been found in most parts of Italy, from Campania and Lucania in the south to sites around the northern Etruscan cities of Chiusi, Orvieto, Bolsena and Cortona.[678] An especially dense distribution comes from Sabellian territories (modern Abruzzo and Molise).[679]

Herakles was worshipped in many guises in Italy. The popularity of the *promachos* Herakles figures among the votive statuettes suggests that from the origins of the cult, Herakles was propitiated in his martial aspect as a paragon of physical force and

[677] Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom* 1.40.6.
[678] Bayet 1926b, 46.
[679] Van Wonterghem 1992.

valour and the bringer of victory.[680] The movement of soldiers in Italy may have been a prominent factor in the spread of the Herakles cult during the fifth century.[681]

In addition to this warlike aspect, Herakles was also worshipped as a protector of the peaceful activities of herding and trade. Herakles' association with both were evident in the early cult established at the Ara Maxima. Ancient writers record that in the Roman mytho-historic tradition Herakles killed Cacus at this location for stealing the cattle of Geryon, which the hero was driving across Italy. It was also where King Euander first established the rites worshipping Herakles as a god.[682] The site of the Ara Maxima was the Forum Boarium, an important cattle market and commercial centre of Rome.[683]

Herakles also assumed the role of a deity of fertility, abundance and healing. In this aspect he was venerated as the protector of natural springs and of water sources. As mentioned above, imagery of Herakles with an amphora was developed for bronze statuettes and for engraved mirrors in the fifth century BC.[684]

The interpretation of cult sites dedicated to Herakles has often rested on an association with one the hero's protective functions. Thus in the Sabellic regions of Italy a correlation has been recognised between the cult of Herakles and the transhumance routes (*traturri*) that criss-cross the Appenines between Apulia and Abruzzo.[685] However, as T. Stek has argued, many sanctuaries to Herakles have been recognised precisely

[680] Papi 1991, 1054; Bradley 2005, 136.
[681] Cristofani 1985, 282. Papi 1997, 142.
[682] Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.39; Livy 1.7.4-8; Prop. 4.9; Ov. *Fast.* 1.543-82; Vir. *Aen.* 8.184-305.
[683] Coarelli 1988.
[684] See above, p. 241.
[685] See esp. Van Wonterghem 1999.

because they appear to be close to transhumance routes, not on the basis of finds.[686] The *tratturi* may have also been the best routes in the region for travel of all kinds, including trade and military, and need not have been tied specifically to the movement of livestock.[687]

The presence of cult worship of Herakles cannot always (or usually) be confirmed by the presence of bronze statuettes depicting the hero. In the first place, where the provenance is even known the evidence of the bronze statuettes consists mostly of isolated finds that do not necessarily form a part of any votive deposit.[688] Secondly, before the third century when a greater number of epigraphic sources start appearing in Italian sanctuaries, it is often difficult to ascertain the specific divinity to whom a sacred place is dedicated. The third to second century deposit found at Carsoli, for example, contained a rather fine Herakles statuette along with statuettes of Ares, nude and sacrificing youths and a large number of female figures.[689] A Herakles statuette found in a deposit from Fontana Liscia near Orvieto was discovered together with sixteen other statuettes, bronze instruments and a number of coins dating from the Archaic to the Imperial period (Fig. 6.11).[690] The deposit is associated with what may have been an open-air sanctuary,

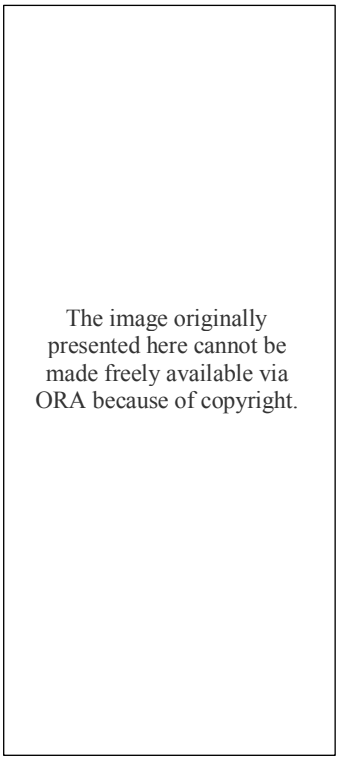

Fig. 6.11. Bronze statuette of Herakles from Fontana Liscia. H: Early Imperial. 8.9 cm Akademisches Kunstmuseum, Bonn inv. C 6.

[686] Stek 2009, 56.
[687] Bradley 2005, 139-140.
[688] Bradley 2005, 132.
[689] Cederna 1951, 185-200.
[690] Bentz 1992, 61 (no. 8), fig. 57. Walberg 1987, 464, no. 25.

one that did not leave any significant architectural remains or an indication of the deity to whom it was dedicated.[691] The practice of honouring a number of deities in association with a site's primary divinity is attested to by the Tabula Aragonensis, where Hercules Cerealis is one of the divinities listed as receiving special honours within an enclosure sacred to Ceres.[692]

The majority of bronze statuettes of Herakles, as well as other male and female figures produced between the sixth and fourth centuries BC, appear to have been made for votive purposes. Many retain long tangs under the feet, the remains of the channels used to pour the molten bronze into the mould during casting.[693] These tangs served to attach the statuettes to a stone base.



Fig. 6.12. Bronze statuette of Herakles from Mount Falterona. c. 450 BC. H: 18 cm. BM Inv. 1847, 1101.1.

Statuettes serving as votive offerings were not always displayed. The finds from the Lake of the Idols (Mount Falterona) in 1838 brought to light over 600 statuettes of males, females and anatomical parts dating from the sixth century BC to the early second century BC, along with over 1,000 pieces of *aes rude* and 2,000 arrow heads and javelin points. The offerings were thrown directly in to the lake, which appears to have been a station

[691] Bentz 1992, 59.
[692] De Cazanove 2007, 52. See Del Tutto Palma 1996.
[693] As seen, for example, on a Herakles figure of the "Rapino Master". Colonna 1970, 139, no. 418, pl. C. See also Galestin 1987, 132.

along a transhumance route between Etruria and the Po Valley.[694] The finds from the lake included a statuette of Herakles now in the British Museum and dating to about 450 BC (Fig. 6.12).[695]

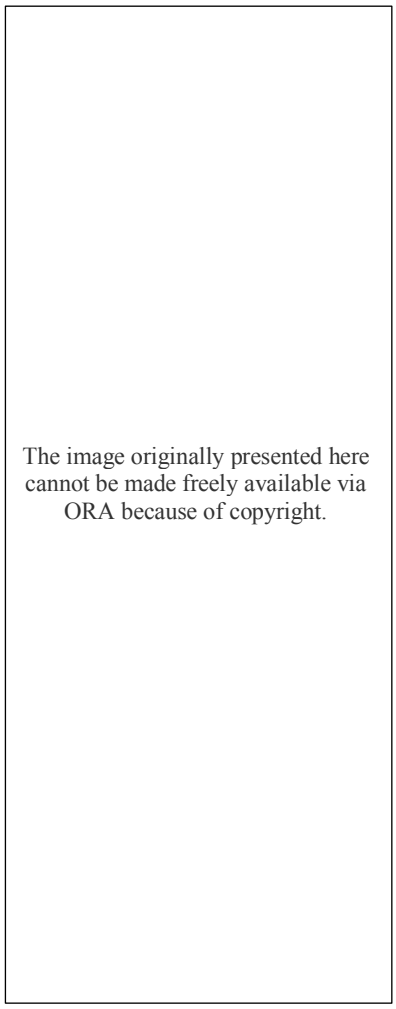

Fig. 6.13. Bronze statuette of Herakles from Poggio Castiglione. c. 300 BC. H: 28 cm. Florence Arch. Mus. inv. 5.

Despite the apparent importance of Hercle in Etruscan cults, only a 'handful' of Etruscan statuettes survive that are datable to the Hellenistic period from archaeological contexts, compared to hundreds of Umbro-Sabellian figures.[696] In contrast to the large numbers of male and female human figures developed during the third century, votive statuettes of deities coming from Etruria are comparatively rare.[697] In the Sabellic areas that make up modern Abruzzo and Molise, on the other hand, a significant number of Herakles statuettes have been uncovered. Many without specific provenance have also been assigned to this region.[698]

An impressive statuette from Poggio Castiglione in the Florence Museum of Archaeology is said to have come from a '*fortezza*' near Vetulonia and was dated by Cristofani to the beginning of the third century BC (Fig.

[694] Fedeli 2001, 89-90; Scarpellini 2013, 1033-1036.
[695] Inv. 1847,1101.1. Walters 1899, no. 463.
[696] Bentz 1992, 191. Hercle's centrality to Etruscan cult is attested by the appearance of his name on the second century BC Piacenza liver. See van der Meer 1987.
[697] Bentz 1992, 185. On the male and female offering figures see in this catalogue **160-167**.
[698] Colonna 1970.

6.13).[699] The precise context for this 28 centimetre statuette is unknown, but it is of a very different sort than the lower quality, smaller figures that make up the majority of the statuettes that were certainly used as votive offerings. The influence of Praxitelian styles is apparent in the accentuated curve of the stance and the elongation of the figure. The horn in the right hand also has drinking connotations that place this statuette in the realm of the symposium and suggest that it may have been a decorative figure, perhaps a table-top adornment.

The Herakles sanctuary at Campochiaro was an important Samnite religious centre until the beginning of the first century BC, when there was a drastic decrease in cult activity at the site. This has been attributed to Sullan repression of the sanctuary and the movement of the cult to the nearby *municipium* of Bovianum after the Social War.[700] The Tabula Peutingeriana which contains the epithet *Herculis Rani* is associated with the sanctuary. Torelli has used this evidence to argue that the cult at Campochiaro was devoted to a version of Hercle Salarius, protector of the salt trade.[701]

The sanctuary of Herakles Curinus was one the few non-urban sanctuaries in Italy that continued to receive substantial patronage after the Social War. The reasons for the decline of established Italian rural sanctuaries in the first century BC have been a matter of debate. One traditional view is that Rome closed down or relocated the cult of many of the sanctuaries, particularly those that served as tribal or federal meeting places such as fanum Voltumnae, Pietrabbondante and Campochiaro, in order to break up the *pagus*-

[699] Inv. 5. Cristofani 1985, 283. A replica of this statuette in the British Museum is probably a modern copy (Walters 1899, no. 1248).
[700] Capini 2003, 250.
[701] Torelli 1993.

vicus settlement pattern of the Italic tribes.[702] Another view sees the decline of the rural sanctuaries as collateral damage resulting from Roman municipalisation and a shift of focus to cult sites within cities.[703] This is a complex debate that has recently been analysed in detail by T. Stek.[704] There is little doubt that the architectural expansion and refinement of Italian sanctuaries ended after the Social War, but as Stek points out, in Samnium at least the archaeological evidence does not support a view that the Romans closed or destroyed the sanctuaries.[705] Continued use is evident at several sites, albeit at a significantly reduced level. At Campochiaro there is only rare evidence of activity in the first century BC, but the site saw steady dedications of less valuable material such as lamps until the second century AD.[706] The sanctuary at Torre del Satriano appears to have been revitalised and reorganised in the first century BC and continued to actively receive dedications, though their forms changed to reflect a sanctuary operating under Roman cult practices and a Roman political framework.[707]

Although indigenous deities become less attested or were assimilated into Roman cult practices after the Social War, Herakles retained his importance.[708] The god Hercules was also an important deity in the Roman colonies and was indeed a paradigmatic god of colonisation. E. Bispham has recognised a possible Republican narrative in the accounts of Hercules' exploits in Italy and his role in uniting Italy by expelling tyrannies, building roads, intermingling populations, building cities and resettling prisoners.[709] He notes that

[702] Stek 2009, 28, 74-75 and n. 120.
[703] Stek 2009, 32.
[704] Stek 2009. See also the edited volume of articles in Stek and Burgers 2015.
[705] Stek 2009, 29.
[706] Capini 2003, 250.
[707] Battiloro and Osanna 2015, 176. Finds include a bronze statuette of a Lar dating to the second or third quarter of the first century AD.
[708] Van Wonterghem 1992, 328.
[709] Bispham 2006, 115-116.

the variety of meanings that the hero carried for local populations meant that the Romans, as part of the expansion of their hegemony over Italy, could invest the Hercules of their state cult with messages about their actions in Italy in an idiom familiar to local populations.[710]

6.5. Divine canon: Hermes-Thoth and Ptolemaic portraits

In the preceding pages we have seen that Hermes is the most commonly represented deity in the Roman bronze statuette repertoire. Figures of the god survive in bronze collections of all sizes. Although the distribution of Hermes figures is denser in Italy and the western provinces, finds from virtually every part of the Roman Empire indicate that bronze statuettes of the god had a widespread appeal.[711] The contexts in which Hermes figures have been discovered are wide-ranging. Their ubiquity and the god's popularity are likely related to the diversity of his spheres of influence. To the Romans he was—among other aspects—a bringer of wealth and plenitude, the protector of trade and tradesmen, a protector of flocks and shepherds, the inventor of language, the patron deity of the gymnasium, the protector of the home and the guide for the dead.[712] As such, small representations in bronze have been found in sanctuary, domestic and funerary contexts.[713]

Visually, Hermes appears in the repertoire of small bronze statuettes within a relatively narrow range of types. Most representations of the god show him standing, though seated figures are also common. Hermes is rarely seen running (or

[710] Bispham 2006, 117: 'for a Roman Hercules carrying such messages, there was a 'Sabellic' Hercules who might act as an interlocutor.'
[711] See, for example, Boucher 1976, map X for the distribution of a standing Hermes type with the chlamys draped over the left shoulder.
[712] Combet-Farnoux 1980.
[713] See above, chapter 4.

flying/alighting) in Roman sculpture.[714] Occasionally he is portrayed reclining.[715] The standing types are also found frequently applied to vessels and furniture, in wall paintings, on engraved stones and in relief sculpture. Standing statuettes almost invariably show the god as an athletic, muscular youth.[716] The level of naturalism and quality of the execution fall across a wide spectrum. Some are highly refined and rather large statuettes, like a possible Hermes figure in Louvre made by an artist with a substantial knowledge of the works of Polykleitos and enough skill to translate fifth century sculptural forms into a small-scale format.[717] At the other end, extremely abstracted and schematic forms characterise finds from some of the provinces, such as the statuette found at Southbroom in Britain.[718] These latter are more likely the products of less specialised craftsmen who also made a range of more utilitarian objects such as fibulae and pins.

This case study will examine a variant of the standing Hermes that has usually been identified as Hermes-Thoth or 'Hermes égyptisant'.[719] These statuettes are recognisable by the inclusion of a vegetal element jutting upward above the forehead of the figure, above the forehead. The identification of this object was the subject of an academic debate at the beginning of the twentieth century between A. Furtwängler, who identified it as the feather of an ibis (a bird sacred to the Egyptian deity Thoth),[720] and R. Foerster, who also connected the attribute to Thoth but preferred to see a lotus leaf.[721] P.

[714] **44** is a running figure. A similar figure is in the Colchester Castle Museum (Inv. COLEM 1948.72), Durham 2012, no. 53. See also Simon 1990, fig. 198 and Simon and Bauchhenss 1992, 508, no. 47 for a running figure probably from a *lararium*. Running figures can also be found in Pompeian wall paintings. See, for example, a fresco in the *vestibulum* of house I, 9, 1. Combet-Farnoux 1980, 425, pl. V, 3.
[715] Simon and Bauchhenss 1992, 508, nos. 49–51.
[716] Cf., however, caricatured and ithyphallic statuettes of the god serving as part of *tintinnabula*; e.g. Naples NAM inv. 27854, see Johns 1982, fig. 39.
[717] Inv. Br 183. Zanker 1974, 6, no. 2, pl. 1,3 and 2,6; Beck, Bol and Bückling 1990, 654, no. 186.
[718] Durham 2014, fig 4b.
[719] Boucher 1976, 110.
[720] Furtwängler 1898; 1901; 1902. Collected in Furtwängler 1913.
[721] Foerster 1898; 1901; 1904; 1914.

Perdrizet interpreted it as a lotus flower petal.[722] Most recent scholarship favours Foerster's attribution,[723] but Furtwängler also retains several adherents.[724] I believe the lotus leaf to be the most convincing identification.

Using three examples from the Ashmolean, this case study examines the type in more detail. I will first situate the Ashmolean figures within a typology before examining the Roman contexts in which bronze statuettes of this type have been found. Next, we will look at the iconography of the type and the available evidence for identifying a Greek model and the possible connections of the type with Ptolemaic portraiture.

The Hermes-Thoth type



6.14. Bronze statuettes of Hermes-Thoth in the Ashmolean Museum. Cat. **32**-**34**.

[722] Perdrizet 1903, 392; Perdrizet 1911, 27–30.
[723] Kyrieleis 1975; Lehmann 1988; Smith 1988; Fischer 1989; Svenson 1995; Thomas 2001, among others.
[724] Notably, Bol and Weber 1985, 146; Wrede 1981; Franken 1994.

The Ashmolean contains three figures of the Hermes-Thoth type of varying quality (Fig. 6.14). **32** is the best modelled and proportioned. The muscles of the torso and arms are crisply defined. The taut folds of the chlamys are sensitively made and the transition from skin to cloth clearly delineated. The chlamys falls over both sides of the left forearm in two stiff zigzag folds. The head is twisted to the right with the glance directed slightly upward. The features of the face and hair are less distinct but the mouth is visibly opened. The head does not retain any sign that there were once wings attached.



Fig. 6.15. Right profile view of **32** showing the seam created during the casting process

33 follows the same schema as **32**, but is much less carefully executed. The forms are much more indistinctly modelled and the proportions are unbalanced. Although some effort has been made to show the left leg trailing slightly behind the right, the weight distribution between the legs is not naturalistic. The hands are overly large and the head too small. Despite the inability of the maker of this bronze to cast a figure with classical proportions, (or disinterest in so doing) the effort to adhere to an overall schema of the same type that was used for **32** is evident. The arrangement of the drapery is close. The diagonal line created by the pull of the chlamys across the chest has a similar degree of incline. The way that the drapery falls on both sides of the left forearm for both figures is also very close. **33** also turns the head sharply to the right in the same way as **32**. The maker of **33** has rudimentarily attempted to show the athletic build of the figure so clearly present in **32** through horizontal grooves on the abdomen.

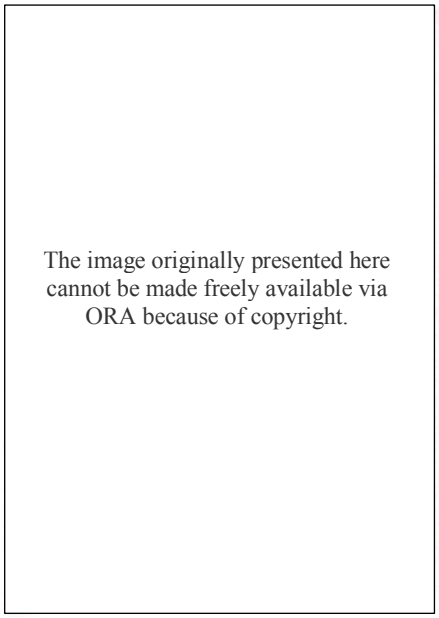

Fig. 6.16. Bronze statuette of Hermes. From Stara Zagora. Kazanlăk Historical Mus. inv. 1156.

One aspect of the manufacturing technique of **32** should be briefly addressed. The figure retains a visible seam around the head, running down the length of the left arm and the chlamys (Fig. 6.15). This seam indicates that the statuette was made in a two-piece mould. Signs of direct casting in a two-piece mould are often seen as indicative of a modern imitation or forgery.[725] Given that this method of casting is unusual for Roman bronze statuettes, which were much more commonly made through lost wax casting, this figure should be treated with caution. However, the use of a two-part mould does not automatically consign it to the category of modern imitation. Another Hermes-Thoth statuette discovered in the vicinity of Augusta Traiana (modern Stara Zagora) and now in Kazanlăk is surrounded by flashing where the molten bronze seeped between the mould halves during casting (Fig. 6.16).[726] S. Heinz also provides evidence for the use of bivalve mould casting at Thonis-Heracleion during the Ptolemaic period.[727] Based on parallels such as these, we will still consider **32** as an authentic Roman bronze—but with caution.

34 adheres to a slightly different schema than the other two statuettes. The figure is small (5.8 centimetres preserved height) and many of the details are obscured by soil incrustation, but the basic compositional elements are still clearly present. The lotus leaf above the head is much more prominent on this figure. The caduceus is held against the

[725] Galestin 1981, 102–104.
[726] Kazanlăk Historical Museum inv. 1156. Vassilev 1995, 132.
[727] Heinz 2013, 135.

left shoulder and rendered as a flat, two-dimensional form without any perforations (as on **33**). The figure is incomplete, broken off just below the knees and missing the right forearm. The purse can confidently be reconstructed in the right hand; with the legs restored, the figure's total height would be about 7 centimetres. This figure belongs to a series of very similar statuettes, all measuring between about 6 and 8 centimetres, that sometimes also include the figure of a ram set against the right leg.[728] This schema will be examined in more detail below.

Very little information is known regarding the provenance of these statuettes. **32** and **33** were part of the collections transferred to the Ashmolean from the Bodleian Library in 1887. The provenance of **34** is completely unknown.

Typology

The Hermes-Thoth type can exhibit significant variation within a compositional schema that is overall very stable. The three statuettes from the Ashmolean exhibit features common to nearly all the known statuettes of the type. The most salient feature is the presence of the lotus leaf at the top of the head. The shape of the leaf is primarily of two types: either short, rounded and blunt as seen on **32**, or long, tall and pointed as seen on **34**.[729] This is the defining attribute of the type; without it, the type can become indistinguishable from other standing Hermes statuettes. Two other statuettes in the Ashmolean collection [**35**, **36**] display similar compositions, but wear prominent petasoi without a lotus leaf. They cannot be considered as belonging to the Hermes-Thoth type.

[728] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 20.
[729] See Svenson 1995, 54 and figs. 8.10, 8.11.

Other features occur with varying degrees of stability between examples. All three of the Ashmolean statuettes exhibit a turn of the head to the right, a characteristic shared by most examples of the type. The extension and raising of the right arm to hold a moneybag is another characteristic shared by all three figures and the great majority of statuettes of this type, though again the degree to which the arm is extended or raised vary amongst them. The moneybag appears to always be held suspended from a closed fist for the Hermes-Thoth type, and never held in the palm of the right hand as in a type common to Gaul.[730]

The variable elements are the same for the Hermes-Thoth type as they are for other Hermes statuettes. The wings of the god are usually located on the head, sometimes attached to a petasos but often attached to a headband or springing directly from the hair. More rarely the wings appear on sandals or on the ankles. Infrequently the figure wears a leafy crown.[731]

Like other types of Hermes statuettes, the different arrangements of the chlamys allow for a diversity of appearance. For the majority of Hermes-Thoth statuettes, the chlamys is arranged in one of three ways (Figs. 6.17a-6.17c):

1. Pinned over the right shoulder and pulled diagonally across the chest, covering the left shoulder and draped over the left forearm. This is the most commonly found arrangement.[732]

[730] On this type see Boucher 1976, 103–108.
[731] See Boucher 1976, 111 on this type. Figures wearing a leafy crown have mainly come from the sites buried by Vesuvius.
[732] Type V in Kaufmann-Heinimann's typology of standing Hermes statuettes. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977, 29.

2. Resting bunched up on the left shoulder and draped over the left forearm.[733]

3. Simply draped over the left forearm and falling to the ground.

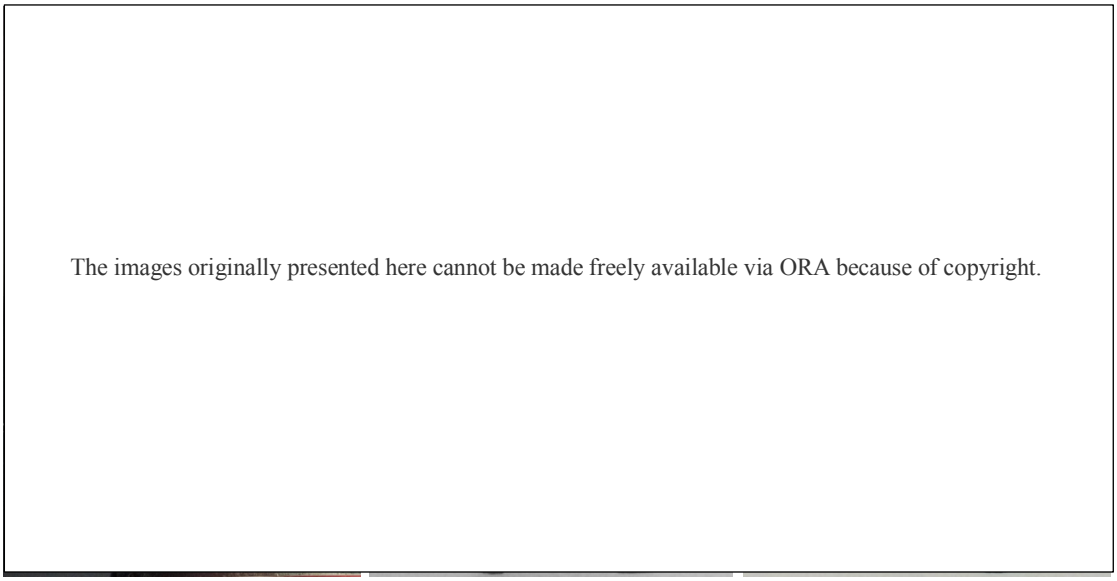

Fig. 6.17a–6.17c. Bronze statuettes of Hermes-Thoth showing different arrangements of the chlamys. a: Mus. Naz. di Napoli, inv. 115554. From Pompeii. b: Arch. Magazine, Pompeii inv. 20277. From a villa near Boscoreale. c: Formerly in the Fouquet collection, Cairo.

Other variants also occur, but much more rarely. Five statuettes from Thrace and Moesia are completely nude.[734] Another statuette from Dacia depicts the god in a long mantle draped over both shoulders and reaching the feet.[735] One example from Pompeii that retains traces of gilding shows the chlamys resting on the shoulder and draped along most of the length of the left side.[736] There is thus evidence of all five variations of the chlamys identified by A. Kaufmann-Heinimann applied to the Hermes-Thoth type. This would suggest that the only differentiation between this type and other types of Hermes statuette is the lotus leaf on the head. In some cases this is accurate, but the last two variants are very rare and appear to be changes wrought on the basic model in order to

[733] Kaufmann-Heinimann's Type II. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977, 29.
[734] Vassilev 1995. Kaufmann-Heinimann's Type I. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977, 29.
[735] Marinescu 2000, 198, no. 3, fig.3. National Museum of Transylvanian History, Cluj-Napoca V.1088. Kaufmann-Heinimann's Type IV. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977 29.
[736] Kaufmann-Heinimann's Type III. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1977, 29.

suit local tastes. In many other respects, the stance, arrangement of the arms, turn of the head and hairstyles show a high degree of consistency from statuette to statuette.

The form and angle of the caduceus are also variable. Where preserved on these figures, it most often rests against the left shoulder and takes the form of a winged staff with the two snakes forming a figure eight. This is a common Roman form.[737] The variation of the angle for the caduceus is hardly surprising given that on many examples it was moulded separately in wax and attached to the figure before casting. This could create variations in the angle within the same workshop, even if the same mould was used to model the staff. This appears to have been the case with many of the statuettes and accounts for the generally better survival of the caduceus amongst statuettes of this type.[738]

The hair is usually composed of short tight curls, a common hairstyle for Hermes from the fourth century BC. Very often the small size and poor quality of the bronzes make recognising the details of the hairstyle difficult, but where these smaller details remain the hair generally follows the style found in the larger and better-preserved examples. These often show the curls falling a short way down the back of the neck and bunched together to create a small cluster at the peak of the forehead. On the more stylised and archaising examples, the curls are arranged in neat, orderly rows framing the face.[739]

[737] Laubscher 1992, 319; Boetzkes 1913 on the caduceus.
[738] Boucher 1976, 110.
[739] As on, for example, a fitting for a tripod (?) formerly in the Fouquet collection. Perdrizet 1911, 32, no. 45, pl. XVI, lower left.

Due to the summary workmanship or poor preservation of the statuettes, it is often difficult to determine whether the figure wears a petasos or a band of some sort in the hair. The petasos is clear when it has a plastically modelled brim that extends proud of the plane of the face. On such small figures, however, both petasos and band are often indicated simply with a groove or cold-worked incised line behind the front locks. Locks are not always discernable on the crown of the head to signal whether a headband or petasos is intended. The locks are clearly indicated on the crown of the head for the highly schematic Hermes figure from the Athenian Agora (Fig. 6.19).[740] This figure wears a winged headband. The inclusion of the petasos in the Hermes-Thoth type appears to have been a matter of taste. It is frequently missing in the statuettes and is not integral for recognition of the deity or of the type. Indeed, based on the Hellenistic statuary evidence it may be a Roman addition.

As mentioned above, **34** belongs to a group of statuettes that are slightly different in their unusual proportions. This group was described by S. Boucher as 'plus trapeux et le visage est plus lourd.'[741] The figures are characterised by a large head and prominent lotus leaf. They exhibit a strong consistency in height, measuring between 6 and 8 centimetres. This group also shows the same variations in chlamys, petasos and caduceus discussed above. Additionally, the group can be divided according to whether a small ram is standing against the lower leg.[742] The ram is an animal associated with Hermes from at least the Greek Archaic period, but also frequently depicted alongside the god, not only in small-scale bronzes but also on stone reliefs of the Imperial period.[743]

[740] Agora Inv. B 248. Shear 1936, 19, fig. 16. See below, 264-5.
[741] Boucher 1976, 112.
[742] See Bolla 1997, 41.
[743] Archaic art: Siebert 1990, 311ff. Reliefs: e.g. Simon and Bauchhenss 1992, nos. 226, 228.

Contexts

As with corpus of classical bronze statuettes in general, the majority of the Hermes-Thoth type statuettes cannot be assigned to specific archaeological contexts. Most of the figures are isolated finds, rarely discovered together with other statuettes or archaeological material. These isolated finds complicate the picture of the dissemination and spread of a type. The portability of the statuettes meant that they could potentially be carried over long distances by individuals before being lost or deposited. This evidence cannot be used to demonstrate the penetration of the image into the visual culture of a region. However, enough examples have been discovered with recorded find places within a well-defined geographical area that some comments can be made about the spread of the type. As might be expected, the statuettes for which we have relatively good archaeological contexts come primarily from the Bay of Naples. The finds from elsewhere are difficult to relate to a specific building or sanctuary context, but the range of find spots at least indicate to us that the models for the Hermes-Thoth type or the statuettes themselves were moving around the Empire.

There is of course always the spectre of forgeries, and their potential to skew our picture of the popularity and spread of any bronze statuette type. Most of the Hermes-Thoth figures are extremely modest both in size and execution. The question of whether these figures are evidence of the 'mass production' of small, simple bronze statuettes in the Roman period or are the result of modern castings is a difficult one to answer. Some scholars have recognised the pitfalls in using such figures for evidence of serial

production.[744] The Hermes-Thoth type is certainly susceptible to imitation and forgeries have been recognised in collections.[745]

Three statuettes have been found in Pompeian houses and another at a villa near Boscoreale. In each case, the statuettes were found with other small bronzes and in places that indicate that they were part of a *lararium* and were the focus of domestic worship.

Pompeii

The earliest and probably finest of the three statuettes from Pompeii was discovered in 1878 in the House of Oppius Gratus and Quartilla (IX, 6, 5.7). It was found in the southeast corner of the peristyle with two bronze Lar statuettes, jewellery, lamps and vases.[746] The association of the Lares with the Hermes statuette leave little doubt as to its function as one of the household *Penates.* There does not seem to have been an architecturally articulated *lararium* near the statuettes, but Boyce thought there could be a *lararium* in the kitchen off the opposite corner of the peristyle where there is a small niche.[747] The statuettes have been associated with a skeleton that was found eleven days earlier near the *tablinum* with fifty-nine silver coins, gold and silver rings, nine bronze bracelets and some mirrors.[748] The skeleton has been interpreted as that of a fugitive based on this collection of coins and metals.[749] Whoever the person was, if the statuettes can be associated with him it is indicative of their value, though whether that value was economic or symbolic cannot be known. In addition to the lotus leaf, the figure of Hermes also wears a leafy crown of laurel with the long ribbons falling over the front of the shoulders (Fig. 6.17a).

[744] Poulsen 1977, 27; Boucher 1976, 279; Galestin 1981, 103.
[745] For example Bolla 1997, 42.
[746] Fiorelli 1878, 372–373; Boyce 1937, 86–87, no. 431.
[747] Boyce 1937, 86–87.
[748] Fiorelli 1878, 372–373.
[749] Guzzo 2003, 113.

In 1891, excavations of the House of Aufidia Successa/House of the Cenacolo (V, 2.h) uncovered another Hermes statuette *in situ* in a highly decorated arched niche.[750] It has traces of gilding and was found together with bronze statuettes of a kneeling woman and Athena and a dolphin-shaped amulet. A votive head of a Bacchante, a small circular altar and a lamp (all of terracotta) and two coins of Germanicus and Nero were also found in the niche.[751] The back wall was painted with a scene of Herakles standing at an altar with skyphos and club accompanied by a pig. The shrine is located on the north wall of a narrow space behind the *tablinum* ('k'), preceding the garden, to the right of the door. Boyce identified two other lararia in the house, one in the east wall of the *fauces* ('a') and another in the kitchen off the northeast corner of the atrium ('p').[752] This Hermes also wears a laurel crown along with the lotus leaf and has the chlamys draped along his left side.



Fig.6.18. Statuette of Hermes-Thoth from the House of A. Trebius Valens (III, 2, 1a). First century BC–first century AD Arch. Magazine, Pompeii, inv. 2276.

The third statuette was found in the southwest corner of a small, decorated room ('u') to the west of the peristyle in the House of A. Trebius Valens (III, 2, 1a). It was found together with bronze statuettes of Aphrodite and Herakles, a monopod marble table with a support in the shape of a Dionysos herm, a glass storage flask, a terra sigillata plate, bronze vessels, an iron knife, a glazed lamp and six bronze coins.[753] In this case, the statuettes are not associated with a *lararium* and appear

[750] Boyce 1937, 37, no. 108, Pl. 8,1; Fröhlich 1991, 269, no. L48, pl. 32.
[751] Boyce 1937, 37; Mau 1893, 26–27.
[752] Boyce 1937, 36–37, nos. 106, 107.
[753] Spano 1916; Allison 2004 (http://www.stoa.org/projects/ph/rooms?houseid=14).

to have been stored in the room, perhaps sometime before the eruption of Vesuvius.[754] However, the figures depict some of the most popular subjects represented in Campanian *lararia*[755] and they appear to have been made in the same workshop.[756] This house was severely damaged when a bomb dropped on it during World War II, but Boyce records a niche in the kitchen above the hearth in 1937.[757] It is very likely that these statuettes belonged to a *lararium.* The statuette belongs to the same type of Hermes-Thoth statuette as the Ashmolean Hermes [**34**] and has a ram against the right leg (Fig. 6.18).

Boscoreale

The Hermes-Thoth figure from a villa near Boscoreale is the only example that has been found strongly associated with other Egyptian deities (Fig. 6.17b). The statuette was uncovered in October of 1907 with a large group of finds. These included seven other statuettes in bronze, a silvered bronze relief plaque, a fragment of a marble statuette, a small ivory head, a bronze lamp, a number of bronze and glass vessels, a sistrum and a strigil in bronze, the upper part of an amphora with a painted inscription and part of a terra sigillata cup.[758] The statuettes were housed in the Pompeii storerooms. Many were destroyed when the site was bombed in 1943 but the excavations journals recorded, along with the Hermes statuette, a figure of Isis, one of Isis-Fortuna, a Serapis, two figures of Harpokrates, a Artemis-Selene and a Athena.[759] The marble statuette fragment, also destroyed, depicted a seated female divinity, perhaps Hera, Fortuna, Bona Dea or Concordia.[760] The presence of the silvered plaque, which depicts the Egyptian triad Isis, Serapis and Harpokrates in Hellenic form along with a sistrum, strongly suggests the

[754] Allison 2004a (http://www.stoa.org/projects/ph/rooms?houseid=14).
[755] See Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 193, fig. 139.
[756] Adamo-Muscettola 1984, 26.
[757] Boyce 1937, 30, no. 64.
[758] Stefani 1994, 13, nos. 40–66.
[759] Stefani 1994, 33–36, nos. 53–60.
[760] Stefani 1994, 38, no. 62, who compares it with the seated goddess found at Pompeii.

worship of Isis or other Egyptian deities in the villa.[761] In this context, the Thoth aspect of the Hermes figure was also likely to have been significant for the worshippers. Whether the room in which they were found functioned as a site of domestic worship or storage area for precious objects is unclear.[762] The presence of cult paraphernalia such as the sistrum, the plaque and perhaps the lamp would suggest the former, but there were also a number of more prosaic objects such as the bronze vessels, amphora neck and terra sigillata cup that could be considered evidence for the latter. The small ivory head most likely came from a piece of furniture and has been recognised as having the portrait features of Agrippina Minor, dating it to around the middle of the first century AD.[763]

Athens

A small Hermes-Thoth figure was found lying on top of the bedrock outside of a cistern 58.2 metres south of the stylobate of the Hephaisteion (Fig. 6.19). Within the cistern were two other bronze statuettes—a Herakles of the Farnese type, and a youth with an animal skin tied around his waist and carrying a lagobolon. Excavators also found a marble herm and two small ivory statuettes. The finds in the cistern dated from the fourth century BC to the fourth century AD. The quality of the Hermes statuette is similar to the statuettes found within the cistern and like them appears to be of a late date.[764] Whether it can be associated with the secondary context of the

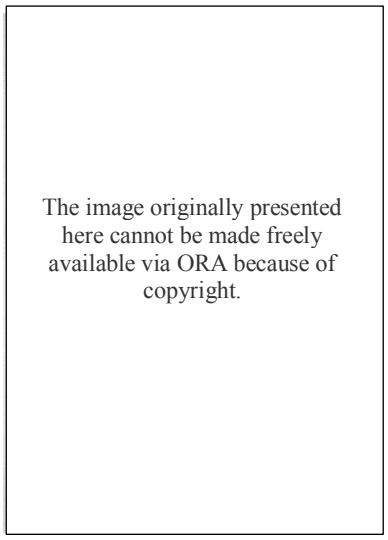

Fig. 6.19. Bronze statuette of Hermes-Thoth from the Athenian Agora. H: 8.6 cm Agora Mus., inv. B248.

[761] On the cult of Isis in Pompeii, see Tran Tam Tinh 1964.
[762] Stefani 1994, 76.
[763] Stefani 1994, 38, no. 63.
[764] Shear 1936, 16-19. Sharpe 2006, no 93.

cistern is unclear. This particular statuette provides us with little information aside from a known location where the type has been found.

The statuette is small and stands on a circular base (8.6 centimetres total height with base). It was evidently meant for display. The figure wears a winged headband with the lotus leaf attached. The drapery is very schematic and abstracted as it falls off the left arm. There has been little effort at modelling the body beyond indications of a navel and pubic hair through surface engraving. A small ram rests against the right leg. The facial features are simply but distinctly etched onto the face. The whole figure is rather two-dimensional.

Other finds

A Hermes statuette was found in the House of the Bicentenary (V, 15) at Herculaneum, but details of its find context have not been published.[765] The house was excavated in 1937 and 1938 and occupies the largest amount of square footage in Herculaneum on a plot 18.6 metres wide and twice that in depth. It has a large atrium but a relatively small peristyle court. The ground floor of the house contained shops that opened onto the Decumus Maximus and the upper floor appears to have consisted of a number of rented units. A *lararium* was discovered in the peristyle court, but it is unclear whether the statuette belongs in this context or to one of the upper floor units or shops. The figure wears the chlamys resting on the left shoulder and draped over the left arm and a leafy crown with long ribbon falling on his shoulders.

[765] Herculaenum Archaeological Magazine inv. E 1780. H: 18.5 cm (with base). Budetta and Pagano 1988, 68, no. 25.

Another provincial statuette was recovered at Kaiseraugst.[766] It was found in 1989 in a late layer of a building dating to the first half of the third century AD.[767] The function of the building is unclear, but none of the structures in the section where the statuette was found (W 20) could be positively identified as a habitation.[768] The statuette itself is the same type as the Ashmolean's **39**, with a similarly large head in proportion to the body (Fig. 6.20). Kaufmann-Heinimann assigned it a date in the first or second century AD and noted its generic provincial style and mass-produced quality.[769]

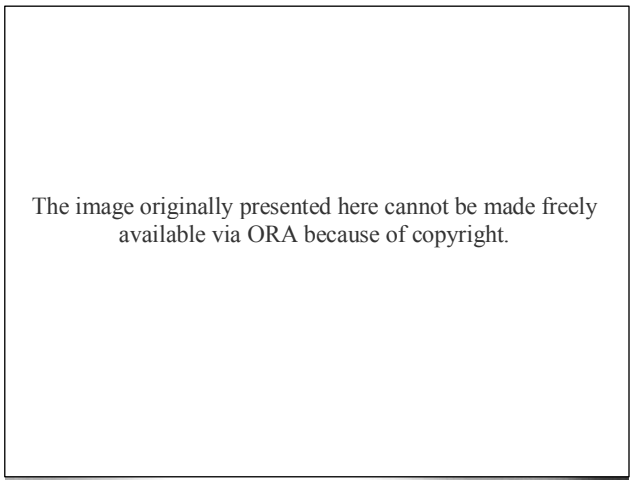

Fig. 6.20. Bronze statuette of Hermes-Thoth from Kaiseraugst. First or second century AD. H: 6.7 cm. Römermuseum, Augst, inv. 1989.05.C03948.1.

Also worth mentioning is a statuette found at the Roman fort at Haltern and dating to the Augustan period. The presence of this statuette in Germania at such an early date may have been the result of soldiers carrying small statuettes with them on campaign.[770]

The archaeological evidence suggests to us that the Hermes-Thoth type was found in most parts of the Empire by the second century AD, but our limited knowledge of the contexts in which the statuettes were found does not allow us to draw many conclusions about how these types may have been used differently from other statuettes of Hermes.

[766] Augst Römermuseum inv. 1989.05.C03948.1 H: 6.7 cm. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1994, 15, no. 12, pl. 16.
[767] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 137.
[768] Müller 1990 87-91; Müller 1991, 251-258.
[769] Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 56, n. 199; 165.
[770] Berlin Antikensammlung Inv. Fr. 1906. H: 7.8 cm. Stupperich 1991, 180-181. fig. 11b.

Even in the relatively well-preserved contexts around the bay of Naples, the use of the statuettes is unclear. There is at least one instance where the figure can be definitively associated with a *lararium* (House of Aufidia Successa/House of the Cenacolo). Another that was found with two Lar statuettes also likely formed part of a *lararium* (House of Oppius Gratus and Quartilla). The contents found together with the statuette from the villa near Boscoreale also suggest the statuette's involvement with household cult. It is only in this last instance, however, that the Hermes-Thoth type is found with Egyptian deities. As the typology outlined above shows, there are few iconographic differences between Hermes statuettes of the Hermes-Thoth type and the commonest standing Hermes types found throughout the Roman Empire. Only the lotus leaf atop the head creates a distinctive iconographic difference. Although far from the most standard format choice for a standing Hermes statuette, the frequency and spread of the figure type during the first and second centuries AD indicates that it was a valid choice for use in household shrines and perhaps, like other figures of Hermes, for use as votive dedications, apotropaic figures and personal talismans.

Model

Most scholars agree that the Hermes-Thoth statuette type derives from an Alexandrian creation of the Hellenistic period. Opinions diverge when it comes to assigning a date. Many are content to give a vague 'Hellenistic' date.[771] Bol and Weber placed the original statue in the late Hellenistic period, contemporary with the Hermes statuette recovered from the Mahdia wreck (c. 100 BC).[772] Others hypothesise an original of the third century BC.[773]

[771] Bolla 1997, 41-42; Vassilev 1995, 132.
[772] Bol and Weber 1985, 146-147. On the Mahdia Hermes: Fuchs 1963, 20; Höckmann 1994. The dating follows Höckmann.
[773] Thomas 2001.

What is of interest here is what might be claimed about this type's relationship to Ptolemaic portraits. Boucher has recognised a difference between statuettes of the Hermes-Thoth type and most other Roman Hermes statuettes, claiming that the former exhibit portrait features, more nervous energy and greater movement than the Polykleitan-inspired forms of the latter.[774] Adamo-Muscettola acknowledged that the type bore the features of Ptolemaic portraits, but saw them as too generalised to make any positive identifications of individuals.[775] Vassilev argued for an affinity between some Roman Hermes statuettes from Thrace and the Hellenistic bronzes of Ptolemy III (discussed below), but stops short of recognising portraits in the Roman figures.[776]

Despite the variation exhibited in the drapery and headwear, the consistency of several other features of the Hermes statuettes of the Hermes-Thoth type suggest they derive from a common prototype. The lotus leaf is depicted across all examples. Additionally, almost all of the examples I have come across have similar hairstyles at the front of the head consisting of tight curls; the hairstyles at the back do show an increased level of variation. In almost all of the examples, the wings are placed on the head, whether as part of a petasos, headband or springing directly from the hair. In the majority of the statuettes the caduceus (where it survives) rests against the left shoulder. The head is turned (to a greater or lesser degree) to the proper right and right arm raised (to a greater or lesser extent) in most cases. The fact that these features occur together with such regularity makes it more likely that the lotus leaf is part of an established model and not simply an attribute that can be appended to any Hermes figure type.

[774] Boucher 1976, 110-111.
[775] Adamo-Muscettola 1979, 87.
[776] Vassilev 1995, 132.

But does this model come from Ptolemaic Alexandria, and if so, was it a portrait statue of one of the Ptolemaic kings as has been suggested? Many of the Roman period Hermes-Thoth statuettes are too small or too coarse to make adequate comparisons on the basis of facial features. We certainly could not depend on a statuette like **33** to recognise the portrait features of an individual king. An almost complete lack of full-body life size or larger portraits of Hellenistic rulers also limits our ability to establish a formal relationship to a body type. In order to proceed, we must depend primarily on the evidence of Hellenistic small-scale sculpture and the iconographical details used in Hermes imagery in the portraits of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

Hellenistic connections

Iconography

The attribute atop the head of the Hermes figures has been puzzling for modern scholarship. The debate between whether it is a lotus leaf, petal or bud or whether it is an ibis feather now has largely settled on the lotus leaf.[777] An ibis feather would signal an explicit relationship between Hermes and Thoth. The bird was sacred to the Egyptian deity and he is often depicted with an ibis head in pharaonic representations. An interpretation as some part of the lotus flower, on the other hand, signified Egypt (or Alexandria) more generally to a Greek or Roman viewer. The lotus flower was a highly significant symbol in Egyptian theology and art.[778] Well before the Macedonians had conquered Egypt, the lotus flower had come to symbolise that land. It developed in pharaonic Egypt as a symbol of rebirth, regeneration, beauty and fragrance.[779] Its symbolic aspects aside, the lotus plant was also a food source and important nutritionally

[777] See above, p. 249-250.
[778] It appears, for example, in a painted relief of the Osiris Chapel in the Temple of King Sethos I in Abydos as the end of one of two staffs carried by the ibis-headed Thoth. It is depicted alongside the papyrus flower, which together represent the two Egypts-Upper and Lower. Lange and Hirmer 1967, pl. LI.
[779] Svenson 1995, 55

to many Egyptian social classes.[780] In cultic use, during the Hellenistic period it was a symbol of everlasting life associated with Isis, Serapis and Harpokrates.[781]

The single lotus leaf, however, was not a native motif to Egyptian art, nor was it an attribute of Thoth or any other Egyptian deity. The earliest secure evidence of a figure of Hermes with a lotus leaf identified visually with Thoth is late, coming from the reverse of bronze coins minted in Alexandria under Antoninus Pius. On these an ibis accompanies the god, who is recognisable by the caduceus (Fig. 6.21).[782] The use of the single lotus leaf as an attribute for a deity in the Ptolemaic period resulted from combining the highly significant and symbolic local plant with a well-known Greek artistic motif that was already associated with Hermes in his role as tutelary god of the gymnasium.



Fig. 6.21. Coins of Antoninus Pius minted at Alexandria.

[780] Herzhoff 2005, 822. Cf. Hdt. 2.92.2-4; Theophr. *Hist. pl.* 4.8.9-11.
[781] Svenson 1995, 55.
[782] Furtwängler 1898, 5-6, figs. 1-3. See Thomas 2001, 83, n.590 for a Hadrianic coin of Hermopolis showing Hermes with a *hemhem* crown and an accompanying ibis, but no lotus leaf.

The single lotus flower can be found in Greek art long before it appears in the art of Alexandria. It was used frequently as decorative ornament in Attic black-figure pottery and also appears as an object in the painted narrative scenes. G. Koch-Harnack's analysis of sixth and fifth century BC Greek painted vases revealed that among other meanings the lotus flower appears in scenes of an erotic nature, scenes of battle and those emphasising power and leadership.[783] Iconographic similarities to the lotus leaf attached to a headband are also known from Greek art of the Classical period. The best-known example is probably the 'Marathon Boy' in Athens (Fig. 6.22).[784] Retrieved from the sea in 1925 without any other contextual clues, the just over half-life-size bronze has frustrated interpretation, specifically with regard to objects held in the hands and the activity in which the youth was engaged.[785] The soft forms of the body, exaggerated contrapposto and slightly off-balance pose are associated with the works of Praxiteles and have led to attributions to the master himself. If not by Praxiteles, general scholarly agreement places this statue as a late Classical original of the third quarter of the fourth century.[786] That the statue should be understood as an ephebic athlete is suggested by the fillet worn in around the head.

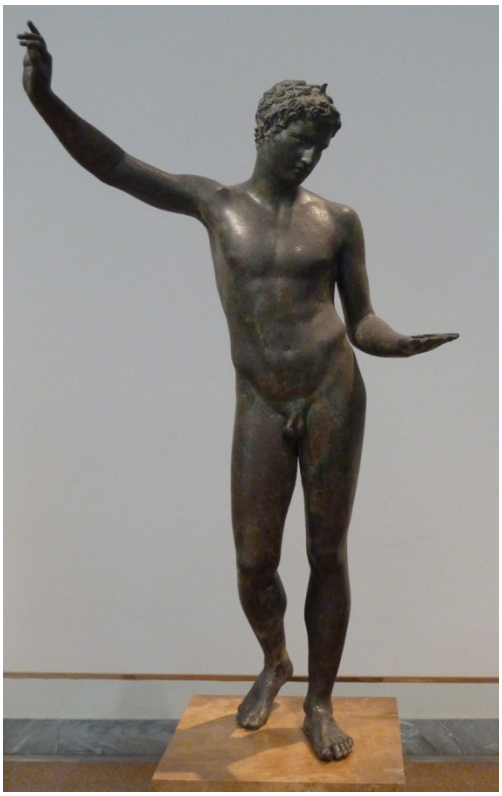

Fig. 6.22. Bronze statue of a youth found in the sea off Marathon, the 'Marathon Boy'. Late fourth century BC, H: 130 cm. Nat. Arch. Mus., Athens, inv. X15.118.

[783] Koch-Harnack 1989, 49ff. See also Krug 1968, 34-37 (Type 10).
[784] NAM, inv. X15.118.
[785] Rhomaios 1924/25; Lullies and Hirmer 1960, 93.
[786] For attribution as Roman 'servant statue' imitating Classical sculpture, see Ridgway 2000, 331, n. 40 and most recently, Mattusch 2015, 124.

The pointed object projecting from the band has been described as a 'tongue' that imitates the style of the god of the palaestra, Hermes (Fig. 6.23).[787]

The motif of a single leaf attached to a fillet is also found on red-figure vessels of the fifth and early fourth centuries BC. A parallel to the headwear of the 'Marathon Boy' is the figure of Hermes on the name vase for the Birth of Dionysos Painter.[788] The volute krater was dated by Trendall and Cambitoglou to the very end of the fifth century or the very beginning of the fourth century BC.[789] It shows Hermes, clearly identifiable by the caduceus in his left hand, looking on as Dionysos emerges from the thigh of Zeus at the centre of the scene (Fig. 6.24). He wears a fillet in added white in his short hair. Above his forehead is a small conical element that assumes a shape very similar to the



Fig. 6.23 Detail of the head of the 'Marathon Boy' showing the leaf attacked to the fillet.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Fig. 6.24. Detail of a red figure volute crater by the Birth of Dionysos painter showing Hermes wearing a diadem with a single leaf. Late fifth or early fourth century BC. Arch. Mus., Taranto, inv. I. G.8264

[787] Lullies and Hirmer 1960, 93.
[788] Taranto Inv. I. G. 8264. Trendall and Cambitoglou 1978, 35, no. 6, pl. 9,1.
[789] Trendall and Cambitoglou 1966, 692.

'tongue' seen on the 'Marathon Boy' and the shape of the lotus leaf found on many representations of Hermes-Thoth.

Although the god himself is depicted in this way only occasionally in Greek painted vases, a number of mortal figures portrayed in gymnasium or musical settings also wear the fillet with a single leaf.[790] The few examples reviewed here illustrate that the lotus flower was employed in Greek art from an early period and that fillets with single leafs (whether identified as a lotus or not) were being used in Greek sculpture and painting from the fifth century BC. The lotus *flower* was frequently used in Egyptian visual culture and had long established cultural and religious meaning, but the use of a single lotus *leaf* worn by a figure not seen in Egypt until the Hellenistic period.[791] The single leaf motif worn in the hair as part of a headband was familiar to the Greek viewer as deriving from the agonistic world of the gymnasium and its patron god, Hermes.[792] For Egyptians, too, a leafy crown was a recognisable symbol of victory.[793] The use of a single *lotus* leaf thus had the ability to communicate the concept of victory to both Greek and Egyptian audiences within the Ptolemaic kingdom. For other Greek audiences, the lotus leaf attached to a headband could convey a message about (athletic) victory while also representing Egypt—and, by extension, the Ptolemaic dynasty—in a more general way.

A terracotta plaque from Abukir that probably dates to the Hellenistic period shows a large ithyphallic herm between training athletes set in the architectural frame of a *palaestra* (Fig. 6.25).[794] It has a prominent leaf atop its head. Herm statues of Hermes and

[790] See Charmoux 1959, 34-35 for further examples. Thomas 2001, 51.
[791] Svenson 1995, 55.
[792] Lehmann 1988, 292.
[793] Heliodorus (*Aeth.* IX, 22 and X, 3) reports that a lotus leaf crowns were used by the Egyptians to signify victory. Foerster 1901, 48.
[794] Alexandria Greco-Roman Museum inv. 18755. Breccia 1930, 73, no. 469, pl. XLIII, 3.

Herakles were typical decorations for the Hellenistic gymnasium.[795] In the context of the Greek gymnasium, the depiction of a lotus leaf as a deliberate reference to the Egyptian god Thoth is improbable. Instead, the connotations of victory associated with leaf crowns are signified in the use of this motif. If the herm in the plaque depicts Hermes, it would most likely be in his aspect as *Enagōnios*. If it does not, the closest parallels we have for an individual being depicted in herm format wearing a single lotus leaf are portraits of Ptolemaic kings.[796]

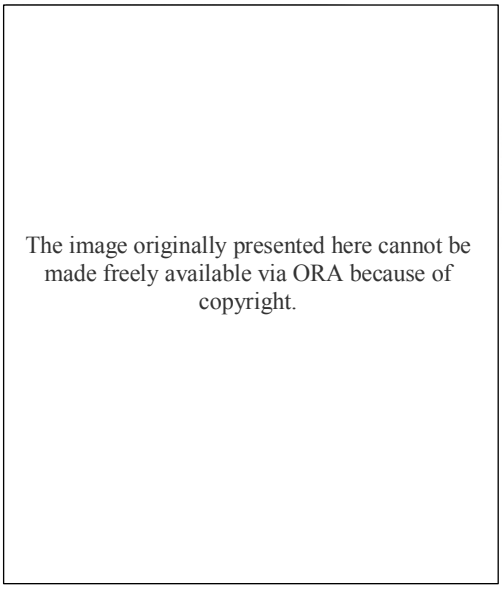

Fig. 6.25. Terracotta plaque with a herm wearing the lotus leaf from Abukir, Egypt. Hellenistic. Greco-Roman Mus., Alexandria inv. 18755.

Hermes and the Ptolemaic kings

Having inherited an established Egyptian tradition of assimilating the pharaoh with the god Horus and depicting him with divine attributes, the coin portraits of the Lagid kings show that they were adept at deploying such divine attributes for expressing the ideology of their reign.

A recently recognised variant of the gold Theoi Adelphoi *mnaieion* may provide evidence of early adoption of Hermes' attributes by the Ptolemaic kings.[797] Two examples of the well-known series depicting Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II on the obverse and Ptolemy I and Berenike I on the reverse have small attributes appearing behind the

[795] Wrede 1986, 35.
[796] Cf. a small-scale bronze herm wearing the lotus leaf in the Indiana University Museum of Art in Bloomington that bears Ptolemaic portrait features, perhaps those of Ptolemy III. From the Burton Y. Berry Collection. H: 8.9 cm. Calinescu 2004, 3, fig. 1. I did not have access to W. W. Rudolph, *Highlights of the Burton Y. Berry Collection*. Bloomington (1979), where the bronze is first published.
[797] Lorber 2014.

diademed heads of the kings. Behind Philadelphos is a Gallic shield, which is paralleled with a caduceus behind the head of Soter. Olivier dates the issue toward the end of the Theoi Adelphoi coinage. Metallurgical analysis has shown the issue was one of the last of the series and that it was probably minted under Ptolemy II and not Ptolemy III, though the possibility of the latter could not be entirely excluded.[798]

The importance of this issue, rare though it is, lies in the depiction of the caduceus behind Soter. Lorber interprets its use in the same position as the Gallic shield behind Philadelphos on the obverse to suggest that just as the Gallic shield was employed as a personal emblem of the second Ptolemy to promote his victory over the mutinous Galatian mercenaries, the caduceus should be read as a personal emblem of the dynasty's founder.[799] We must, though, consider the possibility that the coin was minted under Euergetes. This would indicate that the caduceus is included as an emblem that the king wished to project back onto his forebear to help legitimise his own assimilation with Hermes. Euergetes is thought to be the first king to employ the winged diadem as part of his royal image. He is depicted with this attribute of Hermes on a bronze issue of the Thracian city of Abdera dating to after 241 BC,[800] but a number of small-scale sculptures are also thought to depict the king with the attributes of Hermes-Thoth. If the issue was minted under Philadelphos, for whom there is little evidence of assimilation with Hermes,[801] then, as Lorber claims, the caduceus could be evidence that assimilation with

[798] Olivier and Lorber 2013; Lorber 2014, 207.
[799] Lorber 2014, 208.
[800] Thomas 2001, 35.
[801] Queyrel's attribution of a bronze applique bust from Delos with a winged diadem as Philadelphos (1984, 295–300, pl. 25) is doubted by Smith (1988, 39, n. 67). See also Barr-Sharrar 1987, 77, no. C 172bis; Laubscher 1988, 36, n. 44; Thomas 2001, 36 (Ptolemy I). Thomas (2001, 37, p. 14, 1) sees Ptolemy II in the double herm from Cyprus with wings and lotus leaf in the hair.

Hermes was a part of Ptolemaic self-representation from as early as the reign of Soter and the founding of the dynasty.

Sculptural production from Egypt provides the strongest evidence for a particular desire of Ptolemaic rulers to take up the divine attributes of Hermes in their own representation. The bronze statuettes of Ptolemy II and Arsinoe II in London, in which Ptolemy is depicted with an elephant scalp and the club of Herakles, are often used, despite their modest quality, as the primary examples of small-scale statuettes that may give an idea of the appearance of full-scale bronze Ptolemaic ruler portraits and their use of divine attributes.[802] The several bronze statuettes that have been identified as Ptolemaic portraits also comprise the closest evidence we have for the appearance of the full-size Hellenistic portrait statues of the Ptolemies.

Scholarship has long drawn connections between sculptures of Hermes-Thoth and portraits of the Lagid kings. In 1905, F. Hauser argued that a mould of Hermes-Thoth found in Egypt was a portrait of Ptolemy IV Philopator,[803] a claim Furtwängler refuted.[804] O. Rubensohn also recognised a Ptolemaic portrait in a small marble head from the Delta (at that time part of the Dattari collection) in another 1905 article.[805]

This evidence should be considered carefully. The vast majority of purported Ptolemaic portraits come from the sphere of small-scale sculpture. Quite apart from any issues of damage and poor preservation that often obliterate the face, portrait features can be difficult to identify on most sculpture at this scale. The London statuettes are securely

[802] BM inv. 38 422 H 39 cm (Ptolemy II); 38 443 H: 35.5 cm (Arsinoe II). Kyrieleis 1975, cat. B1 and J2.
[803] Hauser 1905. Mould: Edgar 1903, no. 3204, pl. III.
[804] Furtwängler 1913, 380–381.
[805] Rubensohn 1905. Svenson 1995, 257, cat. 209, pl. 25 (as Ptolemy I (?)).

identifiable not by their portrait features, but by the double cornucopia (*dikeras)* held by the female figure. This was a personal symbol of Arsinoe II.[806] Sculpture at this level was not produced in royal workshops with a mandate to incorporate recognisable portrait features into their sculptures of the king.[807] Rather, these small-scale images were oriented toward a market for objects that were probably used by private individuals as votives in royal and other cults, or served as the focus for such a cult in private settings. As R. R. R. Smith has pointed out, scholars have ascribed a stronger portrait intention to many of these small figures than they likely ever had.[808] Indeed, while many of the figures exhibit generic portrait features that can be recognised as being 'Ptolemaic', such as the a strong chin, bulbous brow, deep sunk eyes set close together and small mouth with full lips, these are rarely pronounced or individualised enough to ascribe to a specific king on typological grounds. The figures cannot be shown to derive from an identifiable official portrait type.[809]

Large-scale portrait sculpture of Ptolemaic kings with the lotus leaf attribute or otherwise employing the attributes of Hermes is rare,[810] but bronze and terracotta statuettes and other 'minor arts' offer some good evidence for the possible appearance of the missing full-body ruler portraits that existed in Alexandria and in centres around the eastern Mediterranean.[811] Here, we are interested in those statuettes that exhibit some of the formal characteristics of the Hermes-Thoth type statuettes produced during the Imperial period.

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[806] Smith 1988, 91.
[807] But see Smith 1996 on the limited inclusion of portrait features for royal statuary from native Egyptian workshops.
[808] Smith 1988, 150 (App. V).
[809] Cf. Smith 1996, 206.
[810] But see marble heads in Stuttgart—Fischer 1989 (Ptolemy Apion) and in Bonn—Jucker 1975 (Euergetes) and a double herm from Cyprus—Foerster 1904.
[811] See Palagia 2013 for the historical evidence for Ptolemaic portrait statues outside of Egypt.

Two important statuettes are the well-known 'Wrestler Group' discovered in Antioch (now in Istanbul)[812] and a statuette in Bonn.[813] That both statuettes are likely of Egyptian manufacture is attested by their unpolished surfaces and lack of cold-work detailing. The portrait of Euergetes has been recognised in both statuettes. For the 'Wrestler Group', J. Charbonneux first identified the winning wrestler with the winged diadem and lotus leaf as this Ptolemaic monarch.[814] H. Kyrieleis later undertook a fuller analysis of the group and the series of seven other versions, arriving at the same identification and concluding the group is a miniature version of a monumental bronze sculpture group that would have stood in Alexandria.[815] Kyrieleis grouped the Bonn statuette with the victorious figure of the Istanbul group, dating them both to the late third century and offering the same identification as Euergetes.[816]

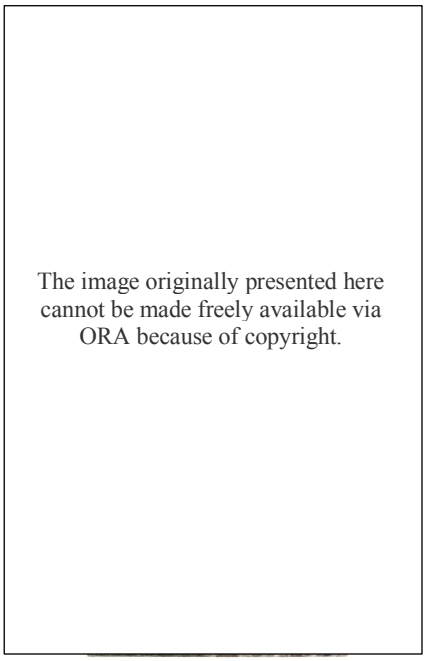
The 'Wrestler Group' depicts a youthful wrestler standing astride his opponent, who has fallen to one knee and supports himself by placing the left hand on the ground. The winning figure grasps the losing one by the right wrists, pulling the arm behind his back and causing him to dramatically contort his upper body. With the left hand the victor pushes his opponent's head toward the ground. The agonistic overtones of the work are accentuated by the difference in the visages of the two competitors. The victor is youthful, with a strongly idealized face. He is clean-shaven—except for his sideburns—with a neat short hairstyle composed of tight curls. He wears a headband with two wings

[812] Istanbul Arch. Mus. inv. 190. Foerster 1898, 178-183, pl. 11. Devambez 1937, 87-96. pls. 26-28; Charbonneaux 1953, 114-118, figs. 18, 19. Kyrieleis 1973, no. 1, pls. 45-48.
[813] Akademisches Kunstmuseum inv. C.301. H: 22 cm. Foerster 1914, 181, no. 12; Kyrieleis 1975, 170, no. C 15.
[814] Charbonneaux 1953, 118. For the list of replicas see Kyrieleis 1973, 133-135.
[815] Kyrieleis 1973.
[816] Kyrieleis 1975, 37.

and a central lotus leaf attached. His opponent is also young and clean-shaven but has longer, thicker, more unruly locks and wears a pained expression on his face.



Figs. 6.26. Detail of the head of a Ptolemy as Hermes-Thoth from the 'Wrestler Group'. From Antioch. Arch. Mus. Istanbul, inv. 190.



Figs. 6.27. Detail of the head of a Ptolemy as Hermes-Thoth. Akademisches Kunstmuseum, Bonn, inv. C 031

The statuette in Bonn wears a winged headband (only the left wing survives) decorated with a tall lotus leaf with a rounded tip and concave centre. The face exhibits strong portrait features. The cheeks are high, round and fleshy. The jawline is mostly hidden by a double chin. The mouth is very small, hardly wider than the nose, and slightly downturned. The forehead is flat and sloping. The brows are knitted above the nose, giving the figure a slightly worried expression. Again the hair is arranged in tight, short curls, with a group of four curls clustered at the front above the forehead and sideburns running down each cheek. The head tilts upward with a slight leftward turn. The chlamys is pinned over the right shoulder and covers the left, falling obliquely across

the chest. Most of the chlamys and the entire left arm are missing. The finely modelled torso is heavily muscled and the chest broad. The figure stands in a Polykleitan stance, with the left leg trailing slightly behind but also placed laterally to the left. This has the effect of reducing the degree to which the hips are tilted. In the profile view the forward placement of the hips is apparent, a body language typical of standing ruler portraits.[817]

Comparing the faces of the two statuettes side-by-side reveals many similarities but also some notable differences (Figs. 6.26, 6.27). One feature shared by both figures is a similar arrangement of the hair in front of the headband, in particular a cluster of curls that projects forward above the forehead. At the back, the Bonn statuette has a longer hairstyle. The eyes on the Istanbul statuette are narrower and set closer together, but the shape of nose on both figures is similar. The Istanbul statuette has a stronger chin and more defined jawline than the one in Bonn. The face of the Istanbul statuette is in general more triangular while the one in Bonn is rounder. Overall, the level of idealisation appears to be greater in the Istanbul statuette, making it appear more generically divine that the statuette in Bonn. Although there is what might be termed a 'family resemblance' and both statuettes exhibit portrait-like features that can be recognised as Ptolemaic, I am not fully convinced that they depict the same individual.

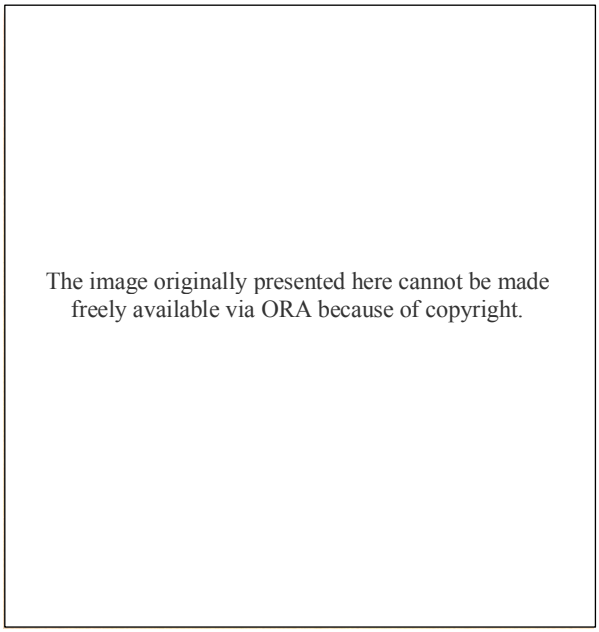


Fig. 6.28. Bronze vase in the shape of a bust of Hermes-Thoth. Egyptian Museum of Antiquities, Cairo, inv. no. 27740.

[817] Masséglia 2015, 23-26.

We can find representations of Hermes with the lotus leaf on other classes of objects from Egypt. A bronze vase in the shape of a Hermes-Thoth bust in Cairo wears a diadem with two wings and a lotus leaf attached (Fig. 6.28).[818] The hair is arranged in rows of tight globular curls that bunch up slightly at the centre of the forehead, creating a slight peak below the lotus leaf. The curls extend down the cheeks in front of the ears. A chlamys is worn pinned over the right shoulder and pulled diagonally across the chest to the left side. The round face has strong portrait features. Two short lateral furrows across the forehead and a knitting of the brow above the bridge of the nose are prominent. The nose itself is broad, the mouth small and slightly downturned. A dimple below the mouth accentuates the small chin. This head compares well to a gold octadrachm portrait of Ptolemy IV Philopator minted at Salamis in Cyprus (Fig. 6.29).[819] It is also quite close to the statuette in Bonn, especially in the modelling of the mouth and the bunching up of the hair under the lotus leaf.

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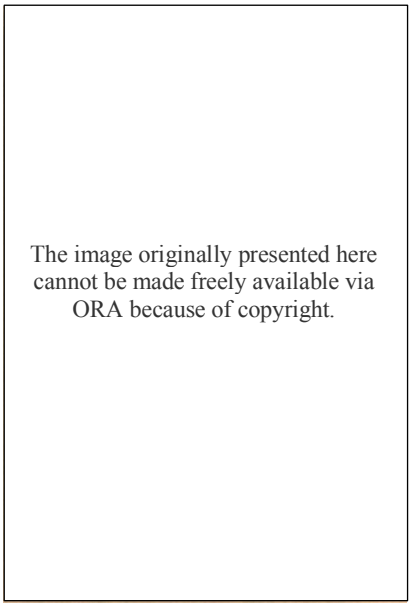
Fig. 6.29. Obverse of a gold octadrachm minted at Salamis, Cyprus depicting Ptolemy IV. C. 222-204 BC.

A bronze bust from Athribis formerly in the Fouquet collection shares similar features.[820] It has the same wide face and rounded jawline as the vase as well as a knitted and furrowed brow. The hair is rendered in looser, more voluminous curls, but the characteristic bunching of the curls under the lotus leaf is maintained.

[818] Edgar 1903, no. 27740, pl. VII.
[819] Kyrieleis 1975, 43, pl. 30, 3.
[820] Perdrizet 1911, 31, no. 42, pl. XVI (lower right).



6.30. Terracotta *aryballos* fragment in the shape of the head of Hermes-Thoth. Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria.

Many of the terracotta statuettes from Egypt with the lotus leaf attribute display portrait-like or genre features. An aryballos in the shape of a bust of Hermes from Samanoud (formerly in the Fouquet collection) shows the figure with short, curly hair and a winged diadem decorated with a rounded lotus leaf.[821] The well-defined, muscular chest, arms and neck are combined with a rounded face with heavy jaw, broad nose, small downturned mouth and thick knitted brows. A neck fragment from a similar aryballos in Alexandria shows the same figure, but with an even rounder face and more exaggerated features (Fig. 6.30).[822]

The attributes of Hermes-Thoth continued to be combined with individualised facial features in the repertoire of Roman Egypt. Facial features approach the point of caricature on two terracotta statuette heads. One is another former Fouquet object from Kôm Firin exhibiting the lotus leaf and wings on the head.[823] The face maintains its roundness, but the features are pinched in manner usually reserved for representations of satyrs, dwarfs or other genre characters. Another head in Copenhagen is preserved to the bust and shows the god wrapped in a garment with the right arm covered and held against the chest (Fig. 6.31).[824] On the left shoulder the caduceus is visible. A pair of tiny wings rest against the head and a large, rounded lotus leaf rises from the neat rows of tight curls.

[821] Perdrizet 1921, 103, no. 259, pl. LXII (lower left).
[822] Breccia 1930, 50, no. 217, pl. 30.
[823] Perdrizet 1921, 103, 258, pl. LXII (lower right).
[824] Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek Inv. 468. Fjeldhagen 1995, 107, no. 89.

The face exhibits similar pinched features, with a broad nose and bulging brow. Fjeldhagen assigned this figure to the second or third century AD.[825]



Fig. 6.31. Terracotta bust fragment of Hermes-Thoth. Second or third century AD. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, inv. 468.

The combination of portraits with the iconography of Hermes would have been a familiar sight for Romans. In the late first century BC, Augustus adapted the (predominantly) Ptolemaic practice of ruler representation with the divine attributes of Hermes. Though he was not depicted wearing the lotus leaf, as were the Ptolemaic kings, he is, for example, presented with a caduceus on a well-known fragmentary gem probably dating to the 20s BC.[826] He is also likened to Hermes in the first ode of Horace,[827] and many private images of Hermes appear to take on the physiognomy of the *princeps*.[828]

There is also significant evidence for merchants and freedmen assimilating attributes of Hermes into their own portraits. This evidence comes primarily from the funerary realm. A plaster mummy portrait from Balansourah depicts a young boy with the wings and central lotus leaf of Hermes-Thoth.[829] Numerous grave altars, reliefs and urns from the first and early second centuries AD show the deceased (often young boys) with the attributes of Hermes.[830]

[825] Fjeldhagen 1995, 107.
[826] Boardman 1968, 94, no. 19. Maderna 1988,
[827] Hor. *Carm.* I, 2, 41.
[828] Maderna 1988, 100-101.
[829] Edgar 1905, 61, no. 33198, pl. 27. Wrede 1981, no. 159, dating it to perhaps the second century AD.
[830] Wrede 1981, esp. 67-70.

When we examine the representations of Hermes-Thoth figures we appear to be confronted with a type that was readily used to incorporate portrait features. The practice of rulers and private individuals representing themselves in the guise of gods and goddesses is well attested in sculpture, particularly from the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[831] Many of these may not necessarily be portraits of specific individuals, but they exhibit portrait-like and individualising features —that is, they subvert the idealised classicism of most images of deities with an enlivening realism. Hellenistic small-scale sculptures that display the lotus leaf and the general compositional structure of the Hermes-Thoth type bear similar portrait features. The majority of these have been identified as Ptolemy III Euergetes. If, as seems likely, a series of small-scale Imperial period statuettes were based on a prototype from the Hellenistic period, could this prototype have borne the image of Ptolemy III or another Ptolemaic king? And was it subsequently transferred to the mass produced Hermes bronze statuettes that spread throughout the Empire?

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

Fig. 6.32. Marble statue fragment of a male figure, perhaps Hermes. From Alexandria. Hellenistic. H: 170 cm. Maritime Museum, Alexandria, inv. SCA 532.

Unfortunately, we have very few surviving statue bodies of any Hellenistic ruler portraits. In Egypt, hardstone portraits of rulers in the Egyptian style have survived somewhat better than their Hellenic-style counterparts, perhaps because the latter were

[831] See Wrede 1981; Maderna 1988; D'Ambra 1996.

made more often in bronze and subsequently melted down.[832] The more extensive use in Alexandria of the acrolithic technique for large-scale sculpture (due to a lack of native marble sources) also means that the bodies of Ptolemaic statues may have been made of more perishable materials such as wood and plaster.[833] This leaves us with a relatively large number of Ptolemaic heads but few bodies to go with them.

We have the opposite problem in the case of one tantalising, over life-size marble statue found in the underwater excavations of Alexandria's royal quarter (Fig. 6.32).[834] The statue is missing most of the right leg, the right arm, left forearm and, most unfortunately, the head. The weight is carried on the right leg and the position of the shoulder shows that the right arm was raised. There is a socket on the left side where the separately carved left arm would have been inserted so that it extended in front of the figure. The arrangement of the chlamys is close to that seen in the most common types of Hermes-Thoth statuettes: it is pinned over the right shoulder and draped over the left so that it falls diagonally across the chest. The left arm is held close to the side so that the line of the chlamys against the body is steeper than on most of the Hermes-Thoth figures. It is also a longer chlamys, one that falls to the calf. One curious feature of the statue is that the stone between the legs above the knees has not been cut away. This may have helped support it. There is also a socket in the neck where a head could have been attached, but the break of the neck appears to be jagged and not purposefully cut to fit a head. This socket may be a later addition made in order to fit the statue with a different head. A similar situation appears to exist for the right arm.

[832] See Smith 1996; Ashton 2001; Stanwick 2002 for Ptolemaic royal portraits in Egyptian style.
[833] Palagia 2007, 240-242.
[834] Maritime Museum of Alexandria inv. SCA 532. Preserved H: 170 cm. Goddio 2008, no. 454. Kiss 1998, 185-186.

The composition of the statue is close to the primary type of Hermes-Thoth statuettes that we have been examining. Z. Kiss has perceived the soft modelling of the torso as characteristic of the Hellenistic sculpture and dated the statue to the Ptolemaic period.[835] The statue has no attributes other than the chlamys, the arrangement of which makes its identification as Hermes possible but not certain. Nudity combined with a chlamys was also a costume frequently used by elite Hellenistic males in the third century.[836] If the head was indeed replaced at some point during the life of the statue, this may argue for it being a portrait statue whose face was more likely to be replaced than an image of the god. Based on existing information, we must also concede that it could in fact be Roman. The assertion of Kiss (followed by Goddio) that it could have represented Ptolemy III is much too optimistic,[837] but evidence of bronze statuettes depicting Ptolemaic rulers with the attributes of Hermes does leave the possibility open that this statue was also a Ptolemaic portrait statue.

Hermes, Thoth and the king

Although we cannot definitively identify specific Ptolemaic kings in many of the bronze statuettes that use the lotus leaf attribute, we can still recognise that the statuary prototype for the Hermes-Thoth type may have represented a Ptolemy. Based on the evidence from coins and sculptures, we can claim that the Lagids were the only Hellenistic dynasty to regularly employ the lotus leaf in their royal self-representation. The visual evidence examined thus far suggests to me that the lotus leaf need not be considered an attribute of Thoth—at least not until later in the Roman period when Antonine coins explicitly connect the Hermes-Thoth type to the ibis of Thoth.[838] Rather, the headband with a leaf was already a symbol associated in Greek art with victory—specifically athletic victory—

[835] Kiss 1998, 186.
[836] Cf. the 'Hero' relief from Smyrna. Masséglia 2015, 26 and fig. 2.41.
[837] Kiss 1998, 186; Goddio 2008, no. 454.
[838] See above, 60 and fig. 6.21.

and already an attribute of Hermes, god of the gymnasium. It was also a useful symbol for visually linking Hermes to the long-established religious and cultural significance of the lotus flower and thus to the traditional Egyptian pantheon. Representations of Hermes with the lotus leaf would have been understood by the bicultural and bilingual population of Alexandria as incorporating the spheres of influence and powers of his Egyptian counterpart Thoth, with whom he had been long assimilated. These were important qualities for projecting the ideologies of Ptolemaic kingship.

The king was expected to embody the ideal qualities of the ruler, those we find expressed in Hellenistic treatises on the subject of kingship.[839] The use of divine attributes and the explicit visual portrayal of the king's mediating relationship with divinity permitted the Lagid kings to shift between a range of royal qualities. Many of the aspects of Thoth related directly to the concept of kingship and may have played a significant role in the adoption of Hermes' attributes in official Ptolemaic portraiture. Thoth was revered as a keeper of cosmic order, as the source of proper ritual and as a righteous judge. He was also worshipped for his vital role in the mythical succession of Horus as the king of Egypt. As a god of wisdom, Thoth provided the king with a model for the peaceful rule of the kingdom, just as Horus provided the model for the king's military prowess.[840]

[839] See Smith 1988, 48ff.
[840] Lorber 2014, 214.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

The Ashmolean collection of Hellenistic and Roman bronze statuettes is not one open to facile interpretation. Records on the collection are uneven, access can be difficult and provenance is rarely known or reported. In addition, most of the statuettes, although figural, are rather unremarkable and not considered objects of high aesthetic or artistic value. However, it is in their banality that many of Ashmolean collection of bronzes statuettes have proven their value as objects worthy of study. When both the individual statuettes and the aggregation of the collection are understood as products of visual culture processes—both modern and ancient—and analysed against other evidence for such processes, a framework can be constructed for their interpretation.

The appended catalogue records the results of a detailed visual examination of the statuettes, many of which have been studied for the first time. As conceived, this catalogue builds upon established tradition in the field, adding the material in the Ashmolean Museum to the growing literature and digital tools that facilitate scholarly interrogation of the iconographical and figural types that constituted bronze statuette production in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[841] Many of the catalogue entries offer additional iconographic and historical interpretation of individual statuettes, including analysis of a previously unidentified modern imitation [**190**]. This catalogue, along with the main text of the thesis should prove to be of value not only to researchers investigating bronze statuettes, but also to scholars looking at the history of bronze statuette collecting and how it has been shaped by the modern reception of antiquity.

[841] See above, pp. 9-11.

Unassuming as many of them are, the bronze statuettes in the Ashmolean's collection played a critical role in the direction and development of the museum. C. D. E. Fortnum's collection of bronzes and the promise of their donation to the University of Oxford acted as a catalyst for the transformation of the museum from what had been widely viewed as a disorganised, inaccessible collection of bric-a-brac, into a modern museum of art and archaeology. Although Fortnum's Renaissance statuettes were the pride of his collection, the richness of the Greek, Roman and Italic bronzes substantively augmented the relatively obscure group of bronzes that had been given by earlier benefactors such as Chambers Hall and Greville Chester. Fortnum's gift provided a strong foundation upon which subsequent donations by J. D. and Marie Beazley and James and Brenda Bomford could build. Closer examination of object histories and the primary agents (collectors, keepers and scholars) responsible for the collection's growth has permitted a clearer picture of how the unique institutional histories of the Ashmolean and the University of Oxford affected the development of the collection of bronze statuettes.

The Ashmolean collection of bronzes shares several characteristics with other significant collections across Europe and North America. A comparison with some of these collections has shown that it is typical in its high proportion of Italic Herakles statuettes, and the prominence of representations of Hermes. This analysis permits an interpretation these subjects in the Ashmolean as representative of the popularity of these subjects for the Italic populations of Italy during the Hellenistic period and the for the Romans of the Imperial period, respectively. On the other hand, one prominent idiosyncrasy of the Ashmolean collection is the relatively high number of dwarf statuettes. A comparison of 'imperial' collections with 'regional' ones has shown that

dwarf statuettes are rarely found in the latter and did not form a major part of the repertoire of bronze statuettes where they were more likely to be recovered from regional archaeological investigations.[842] The accumulation of dwarf statuettes in 'imperial' collection reveals the agency of individual collectors in bringing dwarf statuettes from the areas of the classical world where they have been frequently found, such as Egypt and Campania, into museum collections.

At the same time, the content of collections is not only dependant on the products of Hellenistic and Roman reception of earlier forms, but also on modern receptions of classical imagery. Roman large-scale statues rediscovered during the Renaissance were replicated in bronze before any other medium.[843] A thriving industry of imitating ancient imagery in small-scale bronze had been in place in Italy and elsewhere since the fifteenth century. A close look at four mythological groups in the Ashmolean collection indicate that it was not only three-dimensional sculpture that was being translated into the statuette format, but also imagery derived from small-scale artefacts such as gems. These modern creations have also had a substantial influence on the development of bronze statuettes collections

Where provenance information for the Ashmolean statuettes exists, it consists mainly of unsubstantiated reports on place of purchase or acquisition. Therefore, to press a claim that parts of the Ashmolean collection represents a broadly indicative picture of the products being produced in small-scale bronze within Greek, Roman and Italic visual culture, it is necessary to compare the statuette types and subjects found in the Ashmolean

[842] A notable exception is the dwarf statuette found in a *lararium* at Augst, interprested as an import from the eastern empire. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 87.
[843] Haskell and Penny 1981, 93.

to statuettes found in secure archaeological contexts. Looking at both the physical and production contexts for bronze statuettes in antiquity and investigating their types and subjects permits a mental reconstruction of the kind of places where and processes in which the Ashmolean material—and other unprovenanced bronzes like them—might have been found in antiquity. Knowledge of these contexts informs the interpretation of how the Ashmolean bronzes may have been made, used and viewed by ancient populations. Examination of these contexts has allowed us to situate the Ashmolean bronzes with the broader archaeo-historical picture so that they can they can be effectively analysed as products of ancient visual culture processes at work in the Hellenistic and Roman period to produce—in small-scale format—statuette types based on earlier established models.

The case studies on dwarfs, Italic Herakles and Hermes-Thoth statuettes attempt to insert some of the Ashmolean statuettes into these processes. Selected because of their high level of representation in the Ashmolean collection, the studies reveal three ways in which we can think about the unprovenanced figures can be incorporated into wider perspectives on how the reception of classical forms inform visual culture processe. This can be done by examining how visual formulae are used specifically to create meaning within a type known only on a small-scale as with statuettes of dancing dwarfs. How statuette forms developed as the result of votive and cult practice in central Italy during the Hellenistic period informs an interpretation of the large number of Italic Herakles statuettes forming part of the Ashmolean collection as well that of many other collections. Finally, the varied depictions of Hermes-Thoth in the Ashmolean collection and the search for possible models in Ptolemaic Egypt underline how visual culture processed

have passed down Classical and early Hellenistic models through small-scale statuary to the point where even portrait-like renderings can become canonical.

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