

Still Questioning the Ideal: Possibilities for the Critical Curation of Classical Antiquities at the
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

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ABSTRACT

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Although Survey Museums are slowly becoming more receptive to the possibility of creating exhibitions using critical frameworks, Mediterranean archaeology collections within these institutions are overwhelmingly presented using a grand narrative of idealization of the Classical world. These exhibitions of the Classical world not only negate the diversity of realities of the Classical past, but also deny the existence of problematic discourses within the fields of art history and archaeology thereby contributing to the perception of a Western supremacy inside and outside of the museological context. This thesis examines art historical and archaeological discourses surrounding Mediterranean archaeology, and the impact of its presentation as art or artifact, historically and within the context of the Survey Museum, as a starting point for the curation of a new exhibition of Mediterranean Archaeology at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts due to open in the fall of 2019. This examination is then countered with an overview of relevant Critical Museological theory and Institutional Critique artistic practice in order to suggest a possible critical curatorial methodology for the display of Mediterranean archaeology. Using this curatorial methodology, the proposal for the new exhibition of the Mediterranean Archaeology collection at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts is presented, including all didactic panels, object labels and images.

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1 Introduction

Although the art of the Classical period has had a significant impact on the artistic production of the West, its influence has been shaped through systemic and institutional structures, created and manipulated by imperial and colonial intentions. By aligning the origins of Western art practices and production with the Classical past, the narrative of the ‘West’ has become associated with a meta-narrative of this period, supported through ancient literature and archeological evidence used to recreate the ‘reality’ of this past time and culture in museums, texts, film and the broader western imaginary. Exhibitions of Graeco-Roman artifacts in museums have historically contributed to a cultural hegemony in which the West is positioned as the heir of civilization.

Idealizing and appropriating discourses surrounding Graeco-Roman artifacts can be found in both art historical and archaeological fields. As the purveyors of objects and their meanings in the museum, the ways in which objects are treated in these fields directly influence their presentation in the museological context. Classical antiquities’ presence in both fine art museums and archaeological-type museums, highlights the conflicting nature of constructed divisions between ‘fine art’ and material culture. Nonetheless, this distinction continues to be made in the presentation of these objects, framing some as aesthetically important to a universalized conception of beauty and capitalist value based on the uniqueness of the object and its aura, while others are deemed important for the socio-political, contextual and historical information their authenticity provides. From Giorgio Vasari and Johann Joachim Winckelmann to Heinrich Schliemann and Sir Arthur Evans, the beginnings of Art History and Archaeology have commodified the Classical past as either an emblem of universal artistic accomplishment or a signifier of empirical science that supports the notion of the West as the chosen heir to the Classical past.

Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley explain how the commodification of the past through the presentation of artifacts occurs. They refer to the sculpture gallery method of display as being complicit in the “aestheticization of the artifact.”¹ Their critique of this type of display is that the

¹ Michael Shanks and Christopher Y. Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology: Theory and Practice*, Second Edition (London: Routledge, 2016), 72.

de-contextualization of the artifact, and its resulting aestheticization, remove it and elevate it from the everyday.² In the cases of both Vasari and Winckelmann, their experience of ancient Greek and Roman artifacts in the personal gallery context as symbols of wealth, power, knowledge, moral and political superiority informed their ‘histories’ of art, placing the Classical past in a position of idealized cultural perfection. In these hierarchized systems of artistic style, the highest honor is attributed to the representation of the human form, and its idealization. Beauty is conflated with the idealized human form and this attributed to specific historical and cultural developments such as the rise of the Roman Empire for Vasari, or notions of democracy in the case of Winckelmann. In this way, both Vasari and Winckelmann tie Ancient Greece and Rome to their own contemporary context while elevating and idealizing the past.

The romanticism of both Schliemann’s and Evans’ adventures and their mediatization in European and American newspapers of the time, allowed for ancient Greek history to be commodified³ and easily appropriated by a broader European public. Schliemann’s use of photography allowed for easy mediatization of his project and theories. Sir Arthur Evans equally romanticized and mediatized his discoveries at Knossos, through the use of myth and popular imagery. Like Schliemann, Evans ensured its positive reception as the predecessor of Western Europe by naming, claiming and appropriating through spectacle. Kathrin Maurer argues that the spatial essence of the spectacle created by Schliemann allowed for ancient Troy to become disengaged from the grand narrative of Classical archaeology.⁴ She writes, “All three media (Baedeker, the panorama, and photography) that Schliemann used portray history as a space rather than as a temporal process. Homer's world appeared in Schliemann's writing not so much in stories as in topographies, descriptions of space, and landscape. This historical space had the quality of a commodity shaped by the aesthetics of modern tourism.”⁵ Although the form of spectacle does allow for a spatial reconstruction of history as commodity, this may not completely dis-entrench it from a grand narrative. Johannes Siapkas and Lena Sjögren write that the idea of a grand narrative in Classical Archaeology is based on literary evidence,⁶ exactly what Schliemann based

² Shanks and Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, 73.

³ Kathrin Maurer, “Archeology as Spectacle: Heinrich Schliemann’s Media of Excavation,” *German Studies Review* 32, no. 2 (2009): 303–17.

⁴ *Ibid*, 314.

⁵ *Ibid*, 314.

⁶ Johannes Siapkas and Lena Sjögren, *Displaying the Ideals of Antiquity: The Petrified Gaze* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 16.

his excavations for Troy upon. Perhaps, a more likely conclusion, that considers both points, is that the commodification of the Ancient Aegean and its history through mediatization, allows for the easier consumption of a grand narrative as the objects and ideas become familiar to the populace at large, specifically in the museum context where the objects of the past become commodified and narrativized within a grand narrative of European cultural hegemony.

The popular reception of such archaeological histories has complicated archaeology's relationship with museology, the context that bridges the academic and the broader popular reception of archaeology and its finds. Within the academic sphere of archaeology, although the methodologies used by Schliemann and Evans have been heavily critiqued, the continued presentation of archaeological artifacts in survey museums is oftentimes decided by seemingly conflicting desires, that of 'art' and that of the 'artifact.' The expectation in the museum context is that the material culture designated to be 'artifacts' will be contextualized, whereas those designated 'art' are universal and do not require contextualization. The adherence to these two types of displays in the museological context has made progressive advances in the field of archaeology difficult to perceive.

Important to the context of this thesis, is Carol Duncan and Allan Wallach's categorization and analysis of the Universal Survey Museum. The Universal Survey Museum is the first to be identified with the idea of the public art museum and usually presents a broad range of art history while promoting civic and cultural claims to importance in most major cities.⁷ Duncan and Wallach argue that in the past, as now, "the museum's primary function is ideological. It is meant to impress upon those who use or pass through it, society's most revered beliefs and values."⁸ Historically, and, it could be argued, in the present, these values are chosen by society's most powerful, royal families, wealthy donors, government bodies through their purchase, donations and commissions of art for the museum. Duncan and Wallach argue that the presence of these values and beliefs within the museum grants them authority. The survey museum therefore perpetuates a self-legitimizing cycle of values, beliefs, citizenry and nationalism by ensuring that the public execute

⁷ Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum," *Art History* 3, no. 4 (1980): 452.

⁸ *Ibid*, 449.

the rituals and performances required within the walls of the museum while viewing the art inside it.⁹

Critical museology is central to this type of analysis and this thesis. Critical museology as a field is centered around the examination of museums and the various ways in which they work. More than museology, critical museology attempts to connect the ways in which the museum functions, produces knowledge and creates experiences to larger systems and structures of power and domination. Importantly, critical museology is just that, critical, of the authority, power and relation dynamics that are created within the institution itself.

Through the lens of critical museology, the relationship between galleries of Classical Antiquities and other geo-cultural galleries in the museum has been identified as unequal and preferential of Classical Antiquities, oftentimes placing these galleries and their works in contradiction to other cultures and their material culture. This contrast is presented to the visitor as the evolution of civilization, where the Classical Antiquities gallery resides at the summit.

Important to my own curatorial project at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts are those scholars within the field of critical museology who not only critique museums but who propose methodologies and methods that can be useful in dismantling some of the power structures that have historically existed within museums. Some of these authors worry that criticality of museums must be protected in some ways from the museums themselves,¹⁰ while others offer tangible curatorial methods for complicating the often-singular authoritative narrative of exhibitions.¹¹

My interest in the divide between theorizing and doing comes from the ultimate question of whether or not large survey museums are able to successfully present exhibitions in a critical and engaged fashion in a world where we are increasingly conscious of the structures and ways of doing within the museum which propagate problematic approaches to collecting, presenting and interpreting. It is this question that inspired the curatorial vision for the Mediterranean Archaeological collection at the Montreal Museum of Arts. As an intern and then consultant for

⁹ Duncan and Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum," 448-469.

¹⁰ Anthony Shelton, "Critical Museology: A Manifesto," *Museum Worlds Advances in Research* 1, no. 1 (2013): 18.

¹¹ Susan Vogel, "Always True to the Object, in Our Fashion," in *Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum*, ed. Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 653-62; Ivan Karp and Fred Wilson, "Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums," in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, 1996, 251-67.

the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts from fall 2018 until spring 2019, I was offered the opportunity to curate the *Mediterranean Archaeology* collection within a larger permanent re-installation project called “World Cultures and Togetherness,” opening late in 2019. The initial concept presented to me for this major re-installation project was the presentation of the five independent permanent archaeological collections, *Mediterranean Archaeology*, *Art of the Americas*, *Asian Art*, *African Art* and *Islamic/Middle Eastern Art* utilizing post-colonial, decolonizing and critical museological methodologies in order to promote an overall emphasis on inter-culturality. For me, the thought of a major museum embarking on this type of work in their permanent collections came as a happy surprise. Having already begun my thesis on this exact concept, working specifically on the collection of *Mediterranean Archaeology* at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, I was overjoyed at the opportunity to put my theories into action.

Using critical museological theory as the basis for the curatorial vision of the *Archaeology of the Mediterranean Basin* collection and reinstallation at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, within the context of the “World Cultures and Togetherness” permanent archaeological collections reinstallation, the finalized curation of this exhibition attempts to promote transparency and interrogation while dismantling idealized and singular views of the Classical past that have allowed for its easy appropriation by the West. Multiple methods and methodologies are utilized, signaling the relationship between critical museology and artistic practices of institutional critique, opening up the possibilities for producing engaging curatorial practice for permanent collections and galleries of canonical art.

2 History of Classical Antiquity in the Discourses of Art History

Historically, the discourses surrounding Classical Antiquities share what is referred to as a meta-narrative. This meta-narrative, constructed and contributed to by the Ancient Romans, art theory of the Italian Renaissance, eighteenth century neoclassicism, nineteenth and twentieth-century archaeology as well as political and ideological movements and systems such as fascism and North American democracies alike, has overwhelmingly used idealization, influencing the way it is presented to the public throughout Survey museums in the West.

Within the field of Art History, the Classical past has historically been held as the summum of the artistic hierarchy, whether it be the Roman period copy of a sculpture of Apollo by Polycleitus, Giorgio Vasari considering the Italian Renaissance and the rediscovery of Antiquity as the ‘golden age’ or Winckelmann’s evolutionary rise and decline model which led him to assert that “there is but one way for the moderns to become great, and perhaps unequalled; I mean, by imitating the ancients... especially the Greek arts.”¹²

The first instance of the appreciation of the Greek aesthetic came from their contemporaries, the ancient Romans, starting in the 5th century BCE with monumental architecture, all the way through to late Antiquity, with the transition into Christianity.¹³ The widespread adoption of the Greek aesthetic began with the influx of Greek works into Rome as spoils of war looted from various military and colonial expansions as a result of breakdowns in relations between the Roman Republic and Greek Poleis. Major gains for the Roman Republic were made during the Macedonian Wars and finally the Achaean war, which saw the Achaeans lose their independence and become two Roman provinces. Through the looting of Greek cities, masses of Greek art poured into Rome, as signifiers of military victory, new wealth and superiority. But rather than simply destroy the cultural property of a vanquished foe as a gesture of elimination, the possession, and then appropriation of the Greek aesthetic symbolized a supremacy of the Roman Republic and later the Empire, through the incorporation of their cultural and spiritual

¹² Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Winckelmann: Writings on Art*, ed. David Irwin (Phaidon, 1972), 61.

¹³ Rachel Kousser, “The Roman Reception of Greek Art and Architecture,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Art and Architecture*, 2014, 374.

identity into that of Rome's, which would now recontextualize it to suit a colonial and political purpose.

There is a distinct turn with this appropriation, which carries forward, in many respects to our own present day viewing of Classical antiquities. As Rachel Kousser explores, the Roman reception of Greek art necessitated de-contextualization of the original Greek works from sanctuaries and temples to their recontextualization as spoils of war and then as 'objets d'art': "[the Romans] were in other ways conditioned by the triumph to view Greek art in a strongly decontextualized manner. They saw objects in isolation, far from the rich visual displays of which they had originally formed a part; also absent were the cultural practices that had once made them meaningful, for instance the codified extravagance of the elite symposium or the pious observances of the civic shrine."¹⁴ The power of ownership alters the semiotic meaning of the objects, assigning them a new branch of meaning that corresponds to the military and political supremacy of the Roman Republic. The appropriation of Greek art by the Romans is a colonial act used in the creation of a cultural identity that claims ownership of Greek culture.

As the Greek works became part of the private and public collections of the Roman Republic, the taste for these works as collector's items grew, birthing an entire industry of Roman copies of Greek Classical and Hellenistic statuary, as well as a stylistic approach mimicking the Classical and Hellenistic artistic styles. In this context, 'authentic,' 'copy' or 'in the style of' was not of importance, rather collecting was based on the personal preference of the collector, subject matter and prestige of type. Certain sculptural types were popular and their copies were much in demand as demonstrated by the multiple copies of Praxiteles' *Venus of Cnidus* or Polycleitus' *Doryphorus* signed by their copyists.¹⁵

The popularity of Greek art re-contextualized to fit the Roman viewing model consisted of an isolation from the original cultural context. This generated theorizing on the subject of Greek art with the help of Classical and Hellenistic Greek texts. Possessing, viewing, discussing these works comparatively indicated a knowledge procured through privilege and power. Education in Greek philosophy, language and rhetoric allowed those Romans who already had the means to obtain the Greek-style works, whether through high position in the military due to wealth, or

¹⁴ Kousser, "The Roman Reception of Greek Art and Architecture," 378.

¹⁵ Ibid, 381.

hereditary wealth, to show off their knowledge and therefore status, by intellectual art theorization.¹⁶ The art theories focused on two main themes: the progress of the field toward naturalism and the contribution of individual master artists to this progress. Critical judgements were made through close analysis of the individual artists' distinctive styles, strengths and weaknesses, with a particular focus on biographical anecdotes.¹⁷ A mix of connoisseurship through comparative analysis culminated in the distinction of works thought to imitate the natural world most accurately.

As with future discourses surrounding Classical art, the idea of a chronological progression towards naturalism as the greatest artistic achievement was strongly connected to the idea of cultural and political power. Greek art was not only a symbol of military prowess, victory, colonial expansion and wealth, but of knowledge and higher education. Knowledge and higher education were connected by privilege and status whether through wealth or political or social status.

2.1 Giorgio Vasari

In the mid-sixteenth century, Giorgio Vasari equated the Italian Renaissance to a rebirth of a golden age of artistic genius which he connected to Classical antiquity in his book *The Lives of the Painters Sculptors and Architects* (1549-50). Vasari qualifies the artistic production of Ancient Rome and Renaissance Italy as perfection, writing:

But because after carrying men to the top of her wheel, either for amusement or out of regret Fortune usually returns them to the bottom, it came to pass that almost all of the barbarian nations in various parts of the world rose up against the Romans, and, as a result, not only did they bring down so great an empire in a brief time but they ruined everything, especially Rome itself. With Rome's fall the most excellent craftsmen, sculptors, painters, and architects were likewise destroyed, leaving their crafts and their very persons buried and submerged under the miserable ruins and the disasters which befell that most illustrious city... Once they have seen how art reached the summit of perfection after such humble beginnings, and how it had fallen into complete ruin from such a noble height (and consequently how the nature of this art resembles that of the others, which like human bodies, are born, grow up, become old and die), they will now be able to

¹⁶ Kousser, "The Roman Reception of Greek Art and Architecture," 383-385.

¹⁷ Ibid, 384.

recognize more easily the progress of art's rebirth and the state of perfection to which it has again ascended in our own times.¹⁸

From this excerpt of Vasari's work, we see that he places the beginning of perfected artistic production in ancient Rome and without identifying when he believes it to have reached perfection, claims a declination of quality from the time of the fall of Rome to Christendom.¹⁹ Vasari also acknowledges three areas of artistic practice in this treatise which contribute to future hierarchization in the arts. By naming sculpture, painting and architecture as *the arts*, Vasari negates the possibility of other mediums and ways of doing to be considered art.²⁰

Vasari explained progression and decline in the arts with a variety of periodization models best described by Alina Payne in her article "Vasari, Architecture, and the Origins of Historicizing Art," (2001). Payne's analysis and identification of Vasari's multiple models can contribute to our understanding of his, as well as future historicization of Classical antiquity within the broader scope of art history. She writes, "he draws simultaneously on a providential view of history (the salvation of art, its fall and redemption), on a cyclical one (of rise and fall, and recurrence of a Golden Age), a linear ascending one (the progress of art from tentative beginnings to climatic hero-figures), an organic one (the analogy with the three ages of man from birth to death, followed by re-birth or *rinascita*), a catastrophic one (ruptures caused by calamities), and so on."²¹ These models all possess a relational quality, connecting the artistic production in Italy during the Renaissance to Classical antiquity, allowing it to be narrativized and relativized through that connection.

Whether it be cyclical or linear, the fact that there is a domino-type effect to the narration of events, one leading into another, idealizes the story itself. Hayden White explains this outcome by connecting narrativity with the creation of meaning. White writes that the historical narrative "reveals to us a world that is putatively 'finished,' done with, over, and yet not dissolved, not falling apart. In this world, reality wears the mask of a meaning, the completeness and fullness of which we can only imagine, never experience. Insofar as historical stories can be completed, can

¹⁸ Giorgio Vasari, Julia Conaway Bondanella, and Peter E Bondanella, *Lives of the Artists (Oxford World's Classics)* (Oxford University Press, 1998), 4-6.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 5.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 4-6.

²¹ Alina Payne, "Vasari, Architecture, and the Origins of Historicizing Art," *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 40 (2001): 51-52.

be given narrative closure, can be shown to have had a plot all along, they give to reality the odor of the ideal.”²²

Vasari puts forward the notion that the rebirth of Classical art corresponds to three phases, sometimes likened to three phases of human life: childhood, adolescence and finally, adulthood. The symbolism indicating a maturation originating from, and returning to, a decline in death. The third phase, that of full artistic maturation and perfection according to Vasari, was inhabited by artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael.²³ Vasari describes in great detail “The School of Athens” by Raphael, going over a multitude of characters representing the sciences and philosophy from the Classical period, who share the scene with contemporaneous figures such as the architect Bramante, the Duke of Mantua and Raphael himself.²⁴ The presentation of Classical figures with contemporary Renaissance figures creates a connection between the two periods, each referencing the other.

Important to note is Vasari’s connection to the power structures and authority of his time, namely, Cosimo I de’ Medici. Vasari’s close relationship with Cosimo helped to solidify and propagate a taste for antiquities within the ruling class. The Medici ruler identified himself with the Roman emperor Augustus, relying on founding myths of the city of Florence dating to the second triumvirate.²⁵ In this way, ancient history and its material culture served to legitimize Cosimo’s political power and his rule over Florence and Tuscany.²⁶ Within Cosimo’s court, the collection of antiquities grew after his son Giovanni was made Cardinal in 1560,²⁷ and he had better access to Antiquities from Rome. This paired with the popularity of Vasari’s writing about the Italian Renaissance and Cosimo’s own collection²⁸ created a demand for Classical antiquities and the Italian Renaissance art and artists that modeled their works after the Classical period.

²² Hayden White, *The Content of the Form* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 21.

²³ Vasari, Bondanella, and Bondanella, *Lives of the Artists*, X.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 313.

²⁵ Andrea M Gáldy, “Spectacular Antiquities: Power and Display of Anticaglie at the Court of Cosimo I de’ Medici,” *Renaissance and Reformation* XXIX, no. 1 (2005): 45–46.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 46.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 51.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 52.

2.2 Johann Joachim Winckelmann

In the eighteenth century, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the German art historian, now popularly labelled ‘father’ of Classical archaeology, was in large part responsible for the idealization of Greco-Roman art and the neoclassical movement. His treatises on the subject of art from ancient Greece and Rome, which coincided with the neoclassical period in Europe, analyzed and explored these works meticulously and for their emotional resonance, revolutionizing the way Classical sculpture would be examined, while simultaneously contributing to the theory of progression and decline that Vasari had promoted.

One of the theories promoted in Winckelmann’s *The History of Ancient Art* (1764) was the notion of a connection between historical patterns and the artistic style produced by a particular culture in an evolutionary type model. In this sense, Winckelmann directly correlates the foundation of Athenian democracy with liberty and freedom and that, with artistic progression. Winckelmann writes “The thoughts of the whole people rose higher with freedom, just as a noble branch rises from a sound stock. As the mind of a man accustomed to reflection is usually more elevated in the broad fields, on the public highway, and on the summit of an edifice, than in an ordinary chamber, or in a confined space, so, also, the manner of thinking among the free Greeks must have been very different from that of nations living under more arbitrary forms of government.”²⁹ There is a conflation between Athenian democracy and the multiple governing systems at work in Greece during the Classical period. This is then joined to the notion of liberty, from the perspective of an eighteenth-century German man. Interestingly, but not surprisingly, Winckelmann does not reflect upon those that are not offered liberty and freedom through the Athenian democratic system, notably non-citizens, slaves and women. His liberty is a male citizen’s exclusively, reflecting the imperial and colonialist persuasions of the period in Europe.

One of the fundamental points in Winckelmann’s treatises is that the purpose of art is to create beauty, and that this can be realized only when everything (content, composition, execution) is subordinate to it. According to Winckelmann, this ultimate beauty, signaled through the representation of the human form, was only fully present in the sculptural works of the Classical period, which Winckelmann deemed to be the closest thing to the perfection of pure art. The

²⁹ Winckelmann, *Winckelmann: Writings on Art*, 115.

representation of the human form in a figurative idealized realism is attributed the highest honour in a hierarchical system of artistic style.

A case could be made that Winckelmann appropriates the ancient Greek concept of *kalos kagathos*, the notion of a virtuous mind being represented in the beautiful physical form, and that this element is a contribution to his elevation and idealization of the ancient Greeks in comparison to other ancient cultures. Winckelmann saw the stylistic treatment of the human subject by the Classical Greeks as indicative of ideological virtues that he himself held in high regard. This logic leads Winckelmann to proclaim the Classical Greeks as superior to other ancient cultures he treats in his writings. In *History of Ancient Art* (1764), Winckelmann distinguishes between four ancient cultural artistic traditions: The Egyptian, the Etruscan, the Greek and the Roman, and of these four he relegates Egyptian and Etruscan to an un-perfected archaic past, while elevating the Greek period as the ultimate achievement in artistic perfection. Winckelmann's theory used history to order style, identifying differences between different peoples of the ancient world through their art, using his own model of the evolution of ancient Greek art. In this way, Winckelmann correlates historical development with aesthetic stylization, proclaiming that what he saw as archaic stylization marked a cessation in historical and cultural development.³⁰ Winckelmann's assessment of artistic production from ancient cultures is based upon his subjective vision of beauty, history, liberty and freedom. Those cultures that do not share the same vision as the ancient Greeks and Winckelmann in these areas are placed lower on the hierarchical scale of cultural importance and treated as primitive.

Winckelmann's treatises on the subject of Classical antiquities coincided with the emergence of modern archaeology and the Grand Tours of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This tourism created the possibility for young wealthy French and British noblemen to travel to the locations their Classical education was making them study. Reading ancient texts from antiquity, these wealthy tourists were eager to collect objects that could decorate their estates and signal their knowledge of these ancient authors. Joan Cutu has argued that the Classical sculptures (copies and authentic works) collected by these young men, represented the shifting ideals of masculinity within the political spheres of the nobility and aristocracy in England throughout the

³⁰ Alex Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal: Winckelmann and the Origins of Art History* (Yale University Press, 2000), 34.

eighteenth century. Whether it be tempered benevolence, intellectual strength or a physical toughness,³¹ the fact that men of power and privilege chose to collect and display Classical sculpture as a representation of their desired political character to the outside world means that they were claiming a Classical cultural identity for a powerful, educated and economically privileged class and their ideologies.

Coutu writes that “ancient and modern texts and empirical engagement combined together to create a heady mix that resulted in a perfect ideal classical world.”³² If we believe Coutu’s argument, the aesthetic style of the Classical past was used to connect politically and economically powerful British men to an idealized version of the past as well as idealized version of their own character.

³¹ Joan Coutu, *Then and Now: Collecting and Classicism in Eighteenth-Century England* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill University Press, 2015), 217.

³² *Ibid*, 198.

3 History of Classical Antiquity in the Discourses of Archaeology

Two individuals have made a lasting impact on the discourse surrounding Classical and specifically Aegean archaeological discourse. Although their methods and conclusions have been heavily critiqued, Heinrich Schliemann's 1870 'discovery' of the Homeric city of Troy, as well as the Mycenaean civilization, and Sir Arthur Evans' 1900-1901 'discovery' of the Temple-Palace at Knossos, on the island of Crete and its ancient civilization, the Minoans, have made a lasting effect in the way we present the Classical past, namely through notions of spectacle, mythologization and their mediatization. By way of mythologizing their projects and discoveries, both Schliemann and Evans commodified the histories they were engaging with, making them into spectacles, which contributed to the popularization of these projects in Europe.³³ Through these methods, the history and discoveries of these bronze age Aegean cultures were Europeanized and became cultural artifacts and the adopted birthplaces of European cultural heritage.

3.1 Heinrich Schliemann and Troy

The adoption of Aegean archaeology as the archaeology of a broader European cultural heritage begins in its popularization by German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann in the nineteenth century. Schliemann popularized Aegean archaeology by being anti-academic³⁴ in his methodology, methods, and diffusion of his findings. To begin with, Schliemann based his search for the legendary town of Troy on the Homeric tale of the *Iliad*, taking the epic as a factual retelling of an historical battle in an actual geographic location. Problematic in Schliemann's methodology is his romantic attachment to the belief that 'Homer' was in fact a singular, supreme poet when in fact the epic of the *Iliad* comes from much earlier than when it was first written down (7th century BCE).³⁵ As an epic poem from the oral tradition, the work was sung by bards, each probably adjusting and manipulating the poem in order to best captivate their audiences. Realistically, we can propose two possible contexts. On the one hand, a singular poet named Homer transcribed a version of the epic oral poem hundreds of years after the actual military events of the *Iliad*

³³ Kathrin Maurer, "Archeology as Spectacle," 303–17; Ilse Schoep, "The Minoan 'Palace-Temple' Reconsidered: A Critical Assessment of the Spatial Concentration of Political, Religious and Economic Power in Bronze Age Crete," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 23, no. 2 (2010): 219–43.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 314.

³⁵ M L West, "The Invention of Homer," *The Classical Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (1999): 364.

happened. The other possibility is that multiple poets transcribed the oral epic poem, each including their own creative elements and flare, retelling a fictitious series of events in written form.³⁶

The tendency to use archaeological evidence as secondary to literary evidence remains problematic within Classical archaeology. The positivistic and teleological desire to ‘prove’ written history, has given primacy of place to a single type of evidence – the literary – narrowing considerably whose stories are allowed to become evidence of history, as well as promoting a singular interpretation of those events. To this point Johannes Siapkas and Lena Sjögren write, “the overall explanatory scheme in Classical Archaeology, the grand narrative as it were, is founded on the literary evidence. In contrast to this, elaborations on the material evidence are mostly concerned with establishing the correct place for the artifacts and artworks in this overall scheme.”³⁷ We can attribute this methodology to Schliemann’s work at Troy. Schliemann’s desire to authenticate the Homeric epic, which had become textual literary evidence at this point, blinded him from following the physical evidence. The physical evidence suggested that although the ruins that Schliemann uncovered at the site of Hisarlik, in Turkey, were that of a great city in antiquity, they were not of the “Homeric era” (725 -675 BCE), and predated Homeric Troy by several hundreds of years (1500-1000 BCE).³⁸

The commodification, and the resulting appropriation, of history through the process of mythologizing and the creation of spectacle can be seen in Schliemann’s treatment of the so-called ‘Helen’s Jewels.’ Although not of the correct date, these artifacts were named by Schliemann after the Homeric characters of the *Iliad*. The process of naming played an important role in mythologizing and popularizing Schliemann’s archaeological exploits in the minds of the populace because it claimed ownership of them, the myth and that cultural identity in a gesture of power and control. This process of appropriation had three separate, but not exclusive, functions. First, Schliemann named the archeological finds after the Homeric characters claiming the ‘treasures’ and jewels as Priam’s and Helen of Troy’s in the name of Homer and the ‘supreme poet genius’. This projects a literary story onto the objects, fulfilling Schliemann’s teleological methodology,

³⁶ West, “The Invention of Homer,” 364-382.

³⁷ Siapkas and Sjögren, *Displaying the Ideals of Antiquity: The Petrified Gaze*, 16.

³⁸ Troy VI has been identified as that most likely to be Homeric Troy (1500-1000 BCE), whereas Schliemann’s ruins were the earliest found at the site, those known as Troy I.

which places the Homeric version of the story as the historical account. Secondly, Sophia Schliemann physically wears the jewels, and has herself photographed as a contemporary representation of Helen of Troy, physically embodying the myth. Lastly, Schliemann and his young wife would steal/smuggle these artifacts out of Turkey, performing the ultimate act of appropriation. The mediatization of Schliemann's exploits through the photograph of Sophia Schliemann wearing 'Helen's Jewels' in newspapers of the day, popularized his theories to a larger European public. In these gestures, Schliemann names, claims and appropriates cultural artifacts and mythologies of ancient Troy. Schliemann and his wife are now the discoverers, as well as the embodiment of, these mythological/historical and cultural characters, appropriating the history and mythology through their gestures as well as legitimizing their own archaeological methodology.

3.2 Sir Arthur Evans and Minoan Crete

Similarly, the British archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans used mythology to popularize his theories surrounding the site of Knossos, Crete. Evans mythologized and appropriated the site through naming, like Schliemann, identifying it with the myth of King Minos and the minotaur. Through his interpretation, as well as production of archaeological evidence, Evans successfully commodified the Bronze age culture to fit his own idealized Europeanized vision. Much like Schliemann, Evans used tactics of appropriation to fulfill the teleological narrative of progress towards a Europeanized model of social stratification. By imposing and describing Minoan political, social and religious structures and systems as precursors to European kingship while denying links to Eastern societies, Evans, as Ilse Schoep writes, "was among the first to give Europe a prehistoric identity."³⁹

Named for the mythological King Minos and the Minotaur, the civilization of the Minoans on the island of Crete was uncovered by Sir Arthur Evans and his team in 1900. Evans developed and identified the social stratification model for Knossos and Minoan civilization as an intermediary between Eastern civilizations and Western European civilizations. Through the architecture and the material culture discovered at Knossos, Evans deduced a model of political, economic and social structure that broke ties with eastern models of that time and looked towards a European monarchical model. However, as we will explore, the reason for these deductions had more to do

³⁹ Schoep, "The Minoan 'Palace-Temple' Reconsidered," 222.

with Evans' own colonial outlook, forcing him to deny and even manufacture evidence in order to fulfill this narrative.

Shoep writes extensively on the reconsideration of Minoan social, political, religious, and economic structures through the re-reading of the archaeological evidence. In her article "The Minoan 'Palace-Temple' Reconsidered: A Critical Assessment of the Spatial Concentration of Political, Religious and Economic Power in Bronze Age Crete" (2010), Shoep delves into Evans' original consideration of the architectural complex at Knossos as a "Palace-Temple" model. This identification promotes the perception of a social stratification more similarly connected to the European kingship model than that of the "Oriental temple model"⁴⁰ to which it may have had significant connections.⁴¹ Evans' declaration of the architectural complex at Knossos as a "Palace-Temple" mark it as an intermediary between the "Eastern Oriental Temple" model and the "European Kingship" palace model,⁴² placing Cretan society on an evolutionary spectrum where the Eastern model is inferior to the Kingship model. On this spectrum, Cretan society is placed as having evolved beyond the Eastern model, and as the ancestor of European kingship making it the birthplace of European social, political, economic and religious models of interaction.

Delving into the reasons for Evans' insistence on this model, Shoep traces the Palace-Temple model to colonial politics, placing Evans in a context of both western European obsession with ancient Greece and his own views of Western superiority.⁴³ Schoep's point is that ideologies of western superiority had a significant influence on Evans and his interpretation of the evidence excavated at Knossos.

Connected to Evans' assessment of the complex at Knossos is his desire to connect Minoan culture to monotheistic belief systems, distancing it from eastern polytheistic belief systems. This is evidenced in his interpretation of a singular mother-goddess deity and a Priest-King figure at Knossos as opposed to the much more common polytheistic belief system for Bronze-age civilizations.⁴⁴ The Priest-King figure is highly critiqued, but nonetheless still promoted in popular archaeological discourse because of Evans' romantic and idealized reconstructions of Minoan

⁴⁰ Schoep, "The Minoan 'Palace-Temple' Reconsidered," 219.

⁴¹ Ibid, 219.

⁴² Ibid, 219.

⁴³ Ibid, 223.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 224.

material culture. The ‘Prince of the Lilies’ remains an important example of Evans’ vision of Minoan artistic heritage intertwining with popular European artistic styles of his times. Émile Gilliéron, a Swiss artist and archaeological draftsman hired by Evans (and by Schliemann for that matter) to work on reconstructions of the frescos at Knossos, has been heavily critiqued, along with Evans, for creating idealized imagery more than reconstructing found material. As Schoep and many others have pointed out, popular artistic styles of the period of Evans’ excavation of Knossos, such as Art Nouveau and Art Deco, are evident in the frescos re-constructed by Gilliéron, playing an important part in the popularization and reception of the Knossos myth.

The resemblance of Cretan material culture to contemporary art of the early twentieth century helped to fuel Evans’ assertion that Bronze age Crete was a distant relative of Europe, fueling the chasm between the colonial designations of art and artifact. To this effect, Schoep writes, “The attractive colours and naturalism used in Minoan material culture have also played a major role in the perpetuation of Minoan myth and have delighted generations of Minoan archaeologists and art historians. These are universally deemed worthy of the designation ‘art’ and its European character has been consistently emphasized. This is important because in European modernity, ‘art’ was considered a palpable measure and mark of cognitive advancement (or decline) on the scale of the individual or of an entire race.”⁴⁵ Artworks such as the ‘Prince of the Lilies’ fresco helped to commodify the material culture found at Knossos, making it easily accessible and consumable to a broad European public, furthering the myth created by Evans about Knossos, that it was indeed a birthplace of European culture.

Both Schliemann’s and Evans’ excavations are representative of how the discourses surrounding Mediterranean archaeology have been seeped in mythologizing and romanticism through the appropriation of material culture, which idealized the finders while Westernizing the history of those places and the objects found. Although heavily critiqued, these theories remain popular in archaeological discourse,⁴⁶ because of their commodified nature and their entrenchment in the history of archaeology itself, allowing for the continued appropriation of artifacts and history through the discourse of an idealized, shared Western cultural heritage. These examples fall into the category of “popular histories” that have influenced the modern perception of archaeology

⁴⁵ Schoep, “The Minoan ‘Palace-Temple’ Reconsidered,” 222-223.

⁴⁶ Janett Morgan, “Myth, Expectations and the Divide between Disciplines in the Study of Classical Greece,” in *Archaeology and Ancient History: Breaking Down the Boundaries*, 2004, 92.

evidenced in adventure films such as Indiana Jones, where a mysterious ancient civilization is discovered by the singular archaeologist hero.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Bruce G. Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 631.

4 Display Strategies of Classical Antiquities

Through the analysis of displays of Classical Antiquities in survey museums in the West, scholars have identified how both art historical and archaeological discourses have made their way into the display of artifacts. Each of these display strategies work to position the modern Western world in a linear, evolutionary trajectory, as the direct ancestor to Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, whether it be in terms of the development of an aesthetic progression or the advancement of political, colonial and nationalist rhetoric.⁴⁸ Through the lenses of narratology and critical museology, the relationship between galleries of Classical Antiquities and other geo-cultural galleries in the museum has been identified as unequal and preferential of Classical Antiquities, oftentimes placing these galleries and their works in contra-distinction to other cultures and their material culture. This contrast is presented to the visitor as the evolution of civilization, where the Classical Antiquities gallery resides at the summit.

Mieke Bal argues in “Telling, Showing, Showing Off” (1992) that the presentation of objects in anthropological museums and art museums is different, and consequently affects the meaning of the content they present.⁴⁹ Bal analyses the display strategies at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in relation to those of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and argues that within the art museum, the art object is isolated and valued as a symbol of higher intellectual achievement, singular and outside of history (or context), whereas in the anthropological museum, objects are details, tools used to improve the perception of ‘naturalness’ in the displays.⁵⁰

Bal looks primarily at the anthropological museum model, using the art museum as a contrasting point, but her analysis reflects the archaeological discourse often presented in art museums of material culture from the Classical period that is not considered ‘fine art.’ Within the anthropological museum, the rise to civilization is the theme wherein the Ancient Greeks are placed at the summit, thus concluding the temporal look back at the mechanics of how ‘we’ became

⁴⁸ Duncan and Wallach, “The Universal Survey Museum,” 449; Tony Bennett, “The Exhibitionary Complex,” in *Thinking about Exhibitions* (Routledge, 2005), 71–93.

⁴⁹ Mieke Bal, “Telling, Showing, Showing Off,” *Critical Inquiry*, no. 18 (Spring 1992): 556–559.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 559.

civilized. Bal writes “By emphasizing the Greeks’ ascendance in the culture in which the museum functions, the addressee is marked as belonging to the Western white hegemonic culture.”⁵¹

Similarly, Carol Duncan and Allan Wallach analyse the survey museum as a ritual temple, using the Louvre as their example in their article “The Universal Survey Museum” (1980). Through this art museum, Duncan and Wallach trace the use of Roman triumphal and temple architecture paired with the presentation of geo-cultural galleries and their material culture in a narrativized and guided fashion, casting them as triumphal spoils. These all lead to the presentation of Classical art at the end, top or beginning of these galleries, reinforcing notions of ownership and hegemony created through the use of Roman triumphal architecture. Through these programmed experiences, these museums “claim the heritage of the classical tradition for contemporary society and equate that tradition with the very notion of civilization itself. In this type of museum, the visitor moves through a programmed experience that casts him in the role of an ideal citizen – a member of an idealized ‘public’ and heir to an ideal, civilized past.”⁵²

Because of the West’s appropriation of the Classical past, all objects from this period are present in Survey museums. The mode of their display is determinate upon the object being presented. Objects considered fine art are presented as proof of sameness through a universal aesthetic truth, through an art historical mode of presentation. Those objects considered to be related to the everyday, are presented as another type of proof, specimens collected to provide reinforcement to our own ‘naturalness,’ as Bal writes.⁵³ Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley explore the difference between the presentation of artifacts in art historical and archeological displays as well, seeing art historical displays in terms of privileging the “aestheticization of the artifact,”⁵⁴ whereas the archaeological displays emphasize the “artifact as information.”⁵⁵ In the context of Classical Antiquities, each mode of presentation, when encountered in the museum, works as a tool of empirical knowledge that solidifies the Classical period as the ideal of the Western world both culturally and politically.

⁵¹ Bal, “Telling, Showing, Showing Off,” 572.

⁵² Duncan and Wallach, “The Universal Survey Museum,” 451- 452.

⁵³ Bal, “Telling, Showing, Showing Off,” 559.

⁵⁴ Shanks and Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, 72.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 74.

4.1 'Fine' Arts Display Strategies: The Aestheticization of the Artifact

An example of a fine arts display strategy for Classical art is the sculpture garden/gallery. This format represents a method of display that has been used from the Roman period through to present-day display in survey museums. The separation of sculpture from other material culture and its presentation with minimal contextual information has contributed enormously to the divide between what is considered fine art and those considered archaeological objects, as well as to an essentialist perception of what constitutes an antiquity. In this type of display, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Roman Sculpture court or the British Museum's Greek and Roman sculpture gallery, minimal information is given about the object's historical context. The sculpture is presented individually, on a pedestal usually, in a room filled with other sculptures presented similarly. Name of the artist or school is given, if known, subject or name of the sculpture, and place of fabrication and dates. The object is supposed to be seen as a work of universally accepted aesthetic beauty without the need of contextualization.

In essence, this opens the artifact up to the possibility of appropriation. Examples of this type of appropriation through the sculpture garden/gallery mode of presentation pre-date the museum. Joan Coutu, Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny have researched the collecting and display of Classical sculpture in private collections in Europe between the sixteenth century and the twentieth century noting the appropriation of Classical sculpture to reflect the collectors' political, cultural and social ideals. The displays were used to demonstrate to visitors, colleagues, visiting artists and friends, adherence to the ideologies and aesthetic taste of the collector's time.

Coutu posits that in these display contexts, it is not so much the relationship of the object to its own historical context, but rather its relation to its collector's identity that is on display. She acknowledges a shift in display methods from casts and copies to the desire to collect and display authentic originals in a chronological display,⁵⁶ and connects this to a shift from philological to empirical ideologies in the mid-nineteenth century that pre-figures the museum context. For Coutu, this change in collection and display practices corresponds to the modern education of a generation of Grand Tour-ists (a mix of ancient texts, Post-Restoration authors, aesthetic texts, and empirical

⁵⁶ Coutu, *Then and Now*, 198.

observation).⁵⁷ The mix of their education, and the ruins of Italy directly after the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748), “prompted the imagination, and, even though the fragments at the site may have been undistinguished, they functioned semiotically as signs of the whole,”⁵⁸ in this case Classical Rome and Greece.

Within the discussion of the display methods of Classical sculpture between 1500 and 1900, Haskell and Penny explore the trend of juxtaposing contemporaneous sculpture with antique pieces.⁵⁹ Specifically, they refer to Renaissance sculpture being juxtaposed with Classical sculpture in sculpture galleries and gardens. Without contextual information, these objects were often confused. This juxtaposition and the ensuing confusion further connected the artistic production of the Classical past to ideals of the contemporary periods. While this may not be problematic (it could be argued that it is impossible to present artifacts through any lens other than our own contemporary understanding of them), the lack of contextualization of works in this manner allows for the commodification of the past. The commodification of the Classical past is what has allowed it to be appropriated and mythologized by groups who then impose their own semiotic meaning on to it, creating a master-narrative that serves to streamline, singularize and negate diversity.

The sculpture gallery contributes to the “aestheticization of the artifact,” described by Shanks and Tilley, where through the de-contextualizing the artifact the past is commodified. When displayed in this fashion Shanks and Tilley write “The artifact is displayed in splendid remoteness from the prosaic, from the exigencies of day-to-day life. The concrete and historically variable practice of production and consumption is collapsed into the 'aesthetic', an isolatable and universal human experience. Instead of abstract objectivity, the abstract experience of the aesthetic becomes the exchange-value of the artifact, which is again raised to the status of a solitary fetish, a fetish of immanent 'humanity.' Now the formal identity of artifacts in terms of objectivity becomes a formal identity according to spiritual truth, universal values expressed in the exceptional artifact. History is again unified. History freezes in the ideological light of the aesthetic

⁵⁷ Coutu, *Then and Now*, 198.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 199.

⁵⁹ Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 5.

artifact, celebrated and exalted, elevated above every, day life.”⁶⁰ Shanks and Tilley’s interpretation of the sculpture garden/gallery method of display reminds us that the aestheticized artifact hides not only its own history of production, trade, and exchange through multiple economic markets, but it simultaneously de-bases those objects considered to be everyday objects, as being less valuable in a context where “so-called” universal beauty sits atop the hierarchy of value. The de-contextualization in the presentation of the “aesthetic artifact” commodifies it, allowing it to be appropriated. Although not all museums recreate the sculptural gallery, a similar effect is achieved when Classical sculpture is segregated in the geo-cultural gallery, displayed only with other sculptures.

4.2 Archaeological Display Strategies: The Artifact as Information

In contrast to the aestheticization of the artifact in the art gallery, the archaeological display strategy privileges technical and contextual information, often through the presentation of everyday objects. These objects, such as oil lamps, hair pins, coins, everyday pottery and others, do not demonstrate an ultimate universal truth or aesthetic achievement that transcends history, but rather, indicate historical presence. Simply put, the coins presented in the archaeological fashion with contextual information lets the viewer know that people used money, in this year, in this place and this is how they made coins then. This type of presentation can be problematic as well. Shanks and Tilley refer to it as the “artifact as information.”⁶¹

The “artifact as information” reduces the artifact’s value to its social value at the point of time in which it was created or used, neglecting the value of the artifact outside of this very specific period. Shanks and Tilley write that this display “condenses past social practice and experience into information, information tied to the chronological narrative. Information - the fact - is presented as the dominant form in which social practice is stored news.”⁶² They continue “the authenticating, romantic presence of the museum object is a restricted, one-dimensional notion of presence which reduces the dialectic of presence and absence. It suggests that the time of the artifact can be localized, that the artifact belongs to the past, to a moment in time when someone made and used it. This is the romance of the object. Time is thus ultimately abstracted and reduced

⁶⁰ Shanks and Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, 73.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 74.

⁶² *Ibid*, 74.

to a derivative of space, time comes to be composed of ultimately timeless moments on a continuum.”⁶³ The artifact can be seen, processed and compartmentalized as an authentication of presence in the past only. This type of display denies the meaning of an object outside of its original context, whether it be as a museum object, a collector’s possession and investment, an element of an archaeological study, or someone’s craft. The object’s relationship to all of these people, systems and structures is negated. It becomes singular in its meaning and the public’s interpretation of it.

The value presented to the public in the “artifact as information” or archaeological type of display is directly related to the objects’ archaeological value as specimens which, through comparative analysis, archaeologists identify dates, places and materials used. Unfortunately, the theories and reasons for these comparative analyses, which could tie into larger questions of socio-economic, cultural and political histories, is rarely presented to the museum visitor, further reinforcing their un-importance and their one-dimensionality. Because of the scale of these objects, their un-pristine condition due to heavy use and the fact that they do not report a heroic moment of the past immediately visible to the viewer or relatable through textual literary evidence, they are considered unmonumental and are therefore often presented in multiples to make up for their perceived lack of importance. This type of display has a descriptive, comparative and factual emphasis, reflecting the ‘scientific’ element in the discourse of Classical archaeology.

The pursuit of factual evidence of presence in the Classical past is set within a methodology that prioritizes literary texts as the primary evidence, placing material culture as secondary evidence that proves the claims of the former.⁶⁴ Within the study of Classical Archeology, as we have seen with Schliemann and the ‘discovery’ of Troy, literary evidence has historically served as the point of departure, as well as the end of much archaeological research. Siapkas and Sjögren write that “there is a fascination with the powerful individuals who are identified in the ancient literary texts. The focus on the ‘great men of history,’ whether politicians, generals or artists, can on a theoretical level be explained by a naive positivism that aims to adhere to the facts. Secondly, the archaeological excavations in classical archaeological activities have been centered on important public, political and religious centres. This reinforces the impression that Classical

⁶³ Shanks and Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, 75-76.

⁶⁴ Siapkas and Sjögren, *Displaying the Ideals of Antiquity*, 16.

Archaeology presents an idealized image of antiquity.”⁶⁵ The hierarchization of literary evidence within Classical archaeology legitimizes the histories of the privileged and elite, specifically those of the “great men of history” and those of large public sites further negating the importance of the everyday and the rural.⁶⁶

Both art historical and archaeological modes of display for Classical antiquities found in museums have coded these artifacts to be signifiers of the West, whether through the elevation of the aesthetic or the ‘objectivity’ of the scientific. Both modes of display present an appropriated version of the past that idealizes artefact from the Classical past through a negation of the diversity of histories and the elevation of a Western notion of aesthetic beauty to a universalized one.

⁶⁵ Siapkas and Sjögren, *Displaying the Ideals of Antiquity*, 16.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 17.

5 Critical Museologies

Scholars such as Tony Bennett, Carol Duncan and Allan Wallach have been critical of the power dynamics present in museums. Specifically, they have argued in various ways that the presentation of material culture from around the world in large museums can veer towards nationalistic, political, and hegemonic narratives. Bennett uses the example of major exhibitions such as the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London of 1851 to argue that the one of the museum's chief tactics is the production of spectacle. Bennett argues that the context of the museum was, and can be, used to entice the public to self-regulate their behaviour by the heightened awareness of visibility that the visitor experiences. In this instance, the public visiting the museum is not only looking at what is on display but are themselves a spectacle by way of their presence within the museum. The period of Bennett's example is important as it represents a time of particularly harsh social inequality but also movement within the social structures of England during the Industrial Revolution and colonization. According to Bennett, events such as the Great Exhibition of London 1851 opened up collections, sharing 'culture' with the masses and convincing them that by participating in exhibitions, they are in fact receiving and participating in democracy, leaving them less critical of what they were seeing. This vulnerability is manipulated by the state, exhibiting narratives, which demonstrate a linear path of progress leading directly to the present moment, furthering public sentiment that the actions of the past are justifiably in the path of evolution. The ability of the museological context to impart civic lessons to the public is Bennett's chief concern. He writes, "such lessons consisted not in a display of power which, in seeking to terrorize, positioned the people on the other side of power as its potential recipients but sought rather to place the people - conceived as a nationalized citizenry - on this side of power, both its subject and its beneficiary. To identify power, to see it as, if not directly theirs, then indirectly so, a force regulated and channelled by society's ruling groups but for the good of all: this was the rhetoric of power embodied in the exhibitionary complex - a power made manifest not in its ability to inflict pain but by its ability to organize and co-ordinate an order of things and to produce a place for the people in relation to that order."⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Tony Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," 67.

Similarly, Carol Duncan and Allan Wallach have argued that the survey museum is a “structured ritual space - an ideologically active environment,”⁶⁸ which typically remains invisible to visitors but is nonetheless powerful enough to direct the messages visitors understand during their visits. As an “ideologically active environment” it is my opinion that museums should engage in self-reflexive exhibition methodologies and strategies, attempting to make visible some of the ways in which objects and their meanings are presented. There is debate surrounding the usefulness of criticality within the museum. Some argue that critical museology would be corrupted if implemented into museum structures and systems, essentially becoming less effective. Other scholars and curators find ways of using critical museological theory in tangible ways within the museum.

An important example of the first group is Anthony Shelton, who wrote “Critical Museology: A Manifesto” in 2013. Shelton defines the parameters of Critical Museology but warns of its use as an operational tool within museums.⁶⁹ Instead, he proposes four epistemological positions and seven methodological interdictions to his methodology.⁷⁰ The epistemological positions are statements used to break the authority of the form of an exhibition, while the seven interdictions serve as warnings and guidelines in order to create and maintain the effectiveness of critical museology as a discipline. Shelton’s epistemological positions are the following: History does not exist outside the human experience; the position of collector has been privileged by institutions; the objects in the museum act as signifiers, but also as signified, and lastly, globalization has rendered singular, universalist interpretations of meaning between object and culture or society impossible.⁷¹

Shelton’s seven interdictions examine notions of reflexivity, the co-dependent relationship between museography and museology, the dangers of defining and institutionalizing a ‘we’ which automatically defines an ‘other,’ self-criticality, supporting healing instead of destructive resistance, acknowledging the validity of different representations, and the need to develop critical museology so that it can be applied to the varying models and incarnations of ‘the museum.’ However, among these interdictions, Shelton warns that critical museology cannot be

⁶⁸ Duncan and Wallach, “The Universal Survey Museum,” 451.

⁶⁹ Shelton, “Critical Museology,” 18.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 9.

⁷¹ Ibid, 8-13.

turned into “an operational tool or provide an alternative strategic mission for museums, though it needs to encourage institutions to adopt more experimental practices, champion openness and transparency, and support critical community engagement”.⁷²

Bruce W. Ferguson identifies the form of the exhibition as a “speech utterance” emanating from, and as a part of, the character of the institution. Ferguson writes “the exhibition is more a representation of the institution... a narrative constructed by them which may or may not have much to do with the object itself”⁷³ He continues to write, “the ways in which art is talked about, understood and debated are largely determined through the medium of exhibitions - through the exhibition as a complex representation of institutional, social and, paradoxically, often personal values, simultaneously. And the exhibition’s representativity then is an exemplary identification of the direct political tendencies (democratic, nationalist, feminist, regionalist, postcolonial, or whatever) on offer.”⁷⁴ Ferguson’s point is that the exhibition reveals values and identity of the institution, as well as the difficult negotiations that occur between curators, visitor expectations, conventional disciplinary discourses, and the market contexts within which museums must operate.

The idea of an ethical or moral character being applied to the museum is difficult for some visitors to come to terms with. Many still see the museum as a place of ‘objective’ knowledge. Hilde S. Hein’s examination of the moral and ethical character of museums emphasizes the complexity and multiplicity there can be among the “vested-interest gate-keepers” that Ferguson refers to.⁷⁵ Hein explores the various groups to which the museum’s ethical standards should be responsible, demonstrating the improbability of satisfying donor, visitor, member of object community, future generations, board of directors, objects themselves, etc. Although this may imply a pessimist outcome for any attempt at a conscious, ethical museological practice, Hein argues that museums should be places where ethics and morals are in plain view. Because of elements that are intrinsic to the museum such as intentionality, consciousness, value, reality and

⁷² Shelton, “Critical Museology,” 18.

⁷³ Bruce W Ferguson, “Exhibition Rhetorics: Material Speech and Utter Sense,” in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W Ferguson, and Nairne. Sandy (London and New York: Routledge London and New York, 1996), 175.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 180.

⁷⁵ Hilde S. Hein, *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 88-107.

simulation of reality, affect, agency and power, the museum can, and must, possess an ethical and moral responsibility of some sort, however improbable it may be to satisfy the diverse group of people and things connected to the museum.⁷⁶ It cannot be an objective entity.

But there are some obvious dangers inherent in this methodology as well. Which of these groups of people will be the ones to shape and decide the narrative and “speech utterance”? Whose ethics and morals will be presented as a new universal truth? Is it the single star curator as the “arbiter of taste”⁷⁷ as Debora J. Meijers has investigated with relation to ahistorical exhibitions? The generous donor-figure whose financial interests are benefitted by their generosity? The ideological or political group whose importance has risen in a recent political climate? Or the board of directors and finance departments whose interest may be connected to the profitability of the museum? As Hein rightly expresses, “moral character does not imply consciousness, but rather the capacity to create meaning,” whatever meaning that may be.⁷⁸ In essence, the creation of meaning has been the business of the museum. The driving force behind Critical Museology is the desire to make transparent the processes through which meaning has been ascribed to objects, and then to visitors, through the frame of the museum.

5.1 Exhibiting the problem: Potential Methods for Critical Curatorship

The discussion around making the frame of the museum transparent has a lot of potential as a methodology for curators within large institutions. This strategy has been proposed as a way of mediating some of the multiple points of view or meanings that objects can have with, and for, different groups in the often-universalizing context of the survey museum. Ivan Karp and Corinne Kratz have proposed an “Interrogative Museum”⁷⁹ model which revolves around the idea of collaboration and community access. Karp and Kratz focus on actions such as giving back to the community that provided the materials (willingly or otherwise), as well as turning the curatorial focus inwards. By giving back to the source communities in a type of reciprocal relationship, while analyzing the museum’s own process as curatorial methodology, there can be an acknowledgement

⁷⁶ Hein, *The Museum in Transition*, 88-107.

⁷⁷ Debora J. Meijers, “The Museum and the ‘Ahistorical’ Exhibition,” in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 10.

⁷⁸ Hein, *The Museum in Transition*, 103.

⁷⁹ Ivan Karp and Corinne A. Kratz, “The Interrogative Museum,” in *Museums as Process: Translating Local and Global Knowledges*, ed. Raymond Silverman (Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2015), 279–98.

of multiple and different knowledge sharing systems, and the possibility of learning through all of them.

Particularly interesting in this model is the notion of “exhibit the problem, not the solution.”⁸⁰ This notion embraces some of the ethos of art practices coming out of Institutional Critique, where artists such as James Luna, Fred Wilson and Andrea Fraser (among many others) have used the museum against itself in order to make clear the ways in which museological practices can be problematic. In their practices, some of the final works are almost indistinguishable from a ‘regular’ museum experience (either exhibit, exhibition, or guided tour). The confrontation with the problem (the moment when the viewer realizes it is an artwork, and not just a ‘regular’ museum experience) comes when the museological process begins to become visible. Artists practicing Institutional Critique utilize the same subject, and often times the same strategies of research, while looking to expose the ways in which museums are connected to larger socio-political-economic structures of power. There is definitely overlap and while most Institutional Critique may be considered a part of a Critical museology, not all of Critical museology is Institutional Critique.

James Luna’s *Artifact Piece* (1986) (Appendix 1) performed at the San Diego Museum of Man (and again in 1990 for *The Decade Show* in New York) and Fred Wilson’s “Mining the Museum” (1992-1993) (Appendix 2; 3; 4) exhibition, using the archives and resources of the Maryland Historical Society, are good examples of how to create multiple meanings through the use of juxtaposition and confrontation between objects and their viewers. Importantly to this thesis, in these two examples the objects and/or display strategies were already present in the museum, just used in different ways. In both of these examples, the objects and bodies (present and not present) are tools used in order to open up a discussion around institutional racism, the objectification of culture in the museum. The juxtaposition, by its unexpected and confrontational nature, forces the viewer to acknowledge the usual lack of this type of dialogue in the museological context, bringing the processes of doing and presenting in the museum under scrutiny. Importantly to this thesis, these juxtapositions reveal how the “exhibitionary complex,” as Bennett calls it, has an authoritative power to legitimize, and deny, narratives and lived realities.

⁸⁰ Karp and Kratz, “The Interrogative Museum,” 281.

In a co-authored paper with curator Fred Wilson and Ivan Karp contemplate the following quote by Institutional Critique artist Hans Haacke. Haacke wrote in his 1983 article “Museums, Managers of Consciousness” that “the sophistication required to promote a particular interpretation of the world is potentially also available to question that interpretation and to offer other versions.”⁸¹ The dialogue presented surrounding the duality of this affirmation is exciting and hopeful for the future of museums. The dynamic between the Institutional Critique artists, curators and the Critical Museology theorist is important, and one I wish to highlight in this thesis. Too often there exists a divide between those who work in museums and those who critique museums. This divide is carved between those in academia and those working in museums. Sometimes, the Institutional Critique artist can be the negotiator between these two areas. All the more important then to have dialogue between these groups (among others) in order to move forward within the institution as the theory evolves. Curators such as Wilson and Susan Vogel,⁸² among others, have shown us that exhibitions can be curated in ways that disrupt established narratives and ways of doing, through the juxtaposition of objects, multiplicity in the interpretive texts and community consultation. If the institution of the museum is one that we are dedicated to maintaining, as I think we should, it is essential that the problematics of its form and processes be discussed, theorized and adapted through collaborative, community and interdisciplinary discussion and then represented through an exhibition’s curation.

5.2 Curating Classical Antiquities Critically

The following is the presentation of all objects I chose, as well as the didactic panels and labels that I wrote for the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts from and for the “Archaeology of the Mediterranean Basin” collection and gallery in the context of the 2019 re-installation of the “World Cultures” collections. As of the termination of this thesis (August 2019), the exhibition is in its final stages of preparation. These collections are to be presented each in separate galleries but curated through a universal thematic framework. The framework consists of six main themes, which were to be developed into sub-categories relevant to the particular cultures, time periods

⁸¹ Hans Haacke quoted in Karp and Wilson, “Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums,” in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 261.

⁸² Vogel, “Always True to the Object, in Our Fashion,” 653-662.

and specifics of the collections. These main themes were developed by the team of curators – including myself – at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts who were engaged in the “World Cultures and Togetherness” project. The main themes are “Consuming Culture,” “Body,” “Beliefs,” “Memory,” “Nature and Ecology,” and “Society.” The themes are purposefully broad, allowing for each curator to interpret them more freely in relation to their specific collection. The universal thematic framework serves as an interpretation tool for visitors, allowing them to connect spheres of ideas and ideologies, as well as objects and their uses from one gallery to another. Working from this framework, and the over one thousand objects in the collection of Mediterranean Archaeology, I created the following sub-categories, some shared with the other curators and their galleries, which correspond to the objects listed on this diagram (Appendix 5). The sub-categories are as follows:

Consuming Culture
Collections and Collectors
Time Travelling Objects
Products of Globalization
Body
Constructing the Classical Ideal
Beliefs
Performing
Transforming
Relating
Memory
Accompanying the Dead
Containing the Body
Remembrance and Legacy
Nature and Ecology
Materials
Relationships with Nature
Society
Luxury
Social Order
Power and Politics

Table 1 Archaeology of the Mediterranean Basin: Exhibition Thematics

From the beginning of the conceptualization for the new Mediterranean Archaeology gallery in the Survey Museum that is the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, I relied on Critical Museology to frame my decisions. With the knowledge of how discourses surrounding the Classical past have contributed to ideologies of a Western, white male superiority through the erasure of diversity and women’s narratives in its display, the development of categories and fields

such as art history and archaeology and hierarchies within them, as well as within the museum itself, I actively sought out objects I felt could be used as tools to open up discussion around these areas. Primary areas of interest to me were feminist readings of objects and women's realities in the Classical past, the ways in which the West has adopted the notion of an idealized Classical past, the diversity and strength of cultures within the Graeco-Roman world and the reciprocal cultural and economic exchanges between them, as well as problematizing the authoritative voice of the museum and practices of collecting.

My intention was to show that there are multiple ways to look at an object. Although contextualization is important in the presentation of objects in the museum, as explored earlier in this thesis, I was not so much interested in re-creating the past as I was in placing these objects within different discussions about the past as well as our understanding of that past through the present. To this point, I was often comforted and influenced by the words of Shanks and Tilley, who write "Meaning is not simply present in the artifact but is in a sense also absent. Meaning is not identical to itself; the artifactual past exhibits a surplus over exact meaning. Meaning is produced in the material practice of reasoning in the present, which is, of course, in no way identical with the past."⁸³

Taking from Karp and Kratz's interrogative approach, I chose to ask questions of, or present conflicting points of view with regard to certain objects, making visible the processes behind the formation of knowledge about the past while breaking with the standard authoritative voice of the museum. As such, many of the didactic panels are about the way in which we have historically created meaning around the objects in question, as well as the objects themselves. This is the case in the labels for the astragals (1200.2010; 1201.2010; 1202.2010), the *Collectors and Collections* panel and the *Gendered and Segregated Space, and the Domestic* panel. This reflexive approach is championed by Critical Museological theory but not often seen in didactic paneling in Survey Museums, which often present information as definitive knowledge. In this way, I hoped to connect the public to the subject in question, asking them to relate to and engage with the material and the ways in which it is interpreted, rather than simply consuming it.

⁸³ Shanks and Tilley, *Re-Constructing Archaeology*, 76.

Some of the methods employed by Institutional Critique artists, such as juxtaposition, were used to break with standard narratives about the Classical Past. The use of such juxtaposition in the *Power in Politics* section was, I feel, particularly successful. A coin representing Agrippina the Younger with her son, the Emperor Nero (2008.122), as equals is inserted between two marble heads of the emperors Severus Alexander (1968.1600) and Gnaeus/Cnaeus Domitius Corbulo or of Caius Cassius Longinus (1974.55), disrupting not only hierarchies of art and material culture but also inserting female power figures into the ‘great’ men of history narrative. This effective tool of disruption may be the most poignant example of an instance of discomfort experienced by members of various departments of the museum. The proposal was met with some apprehension in the scenography department because of the difficulty of showing objects that were not of the same scale, together. A similar opinion was expressed in the section *Constructing the Classical Ideal*, where it was thought that the *Apollo Chiggi* should not be surrounded by smaller pottery that alluded to the importance of physical fitness and its connection to the concept of kalos kagathos, but rather be presented with other large marble statuary.

An opportunity arose when the museum received the loan from a private donor of a work by artist Yinka Shonibare. Shonibare’s work *Pan* (2018), a statue of the god Pan, in the Graeco-Roman marble sculptural style, sitting on a pedestal, is covered in Dutch wax fabric and has a globe for a head. The work relates specifically to notions of post-coloniality, cultural appropriation and globalization. Utilizing the moment of this new acquisition, I felt its placement in the Mediterranean Archaeology gallery could provide a meaningful and direct confrontation by juxtaposition it with the *Apollo Chiggi*. This direct confrontation with the *Apollo Chiggi*, a Roman copy of a Greek original, would have been a powerful reply to idealizing discourses that promote the Classical Past as a singular, purist culture. Although initially excited about the proposal, ultimately the juxtaposition was felt to be too jarring

Objects were purposefully chosen from a plethora of geographical locations in order to present the variety and cultural differences within what is often times amalgamated in the imaginary as a singular Graeco-Roman culture. Particular objects allowed for discussion around hybridity and intercultural exchange, such as the gold agate earrings from Anatolia (2014.267). Other sections, such as *Products of Globalization*, allowed me to showcase different pottery styles from various locations while explaining the importance of exchange in the Ancient Mediterranean, breaking down notions of Graeco-Roman purity while emphasizing some of the everyday pottery

for its own stylistic and design characteristics, blurring the distinction between fine arts and material culture. Introducing viewers to the importance of find location was ultimately the reason for the adoption of the category *Time Travellers*, which allowed me to discuss how objects from antiquity arrive in the museum. Using objects that were found in locations other than where they were produced opened up the possibility of introducing questions of provenance and cultural and historical ownership.

Not all objects and sections or categories were pointedly critical. Keeping in mind that the museum wants visitors to learn but does not want to bombard them with heavy material, some categories were intentionally kept less critical. For object groupings such as *Glass*, my intent was to choose objects that represented a variety of locations and periods, as much as was possible from within the museum's existing collection, in order to show variety as opposed to adoption of a singular style.

In the following section of this thesis are the didactic panels, interpretation panels and dry labels with the accompanying objects I selected for the exhibition. The texts and object selections and groupings are presented as conceived for the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts reinstallation of the collection of Mediterranean Archaeology. Some contemporary works were chosen by the museum to be placed in the gallery in order to show a contemporary influence or connection. As I did not choose these objects, I have not included texts for them.

6 “Archaeology of the Mediterranean Basin”

*“World Cultures and Togetherness” Reinstallation
Project, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, (opening Fall 2019)*

-Panels and object groupings-

6.1 Re-orientation Panel

Antiquities from the Ancient Mediterranean, specifically those from Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire have become a staple in most Western Fine Arts Museums. As a temple to Western artistic production, the Western Fine Arts Museum has historically positioned these objects as relics in an archeology of the Western past, framing and comparing everything that has come before as running up to it, and everything afterwards as the result of, the artistic, philosophical and scientific achievements of these periods. But this is misleading at best. Scholars have theorized for several decades now about the museum’s involvement in the idealization of these periods, and of their objects and artworks. In the West, the Classical tradition has often been presented to us as, civilization itself, excluding other culture’s ways of doing and being. The exhibition presented here of archeological objects from the Ancient Mediterranean Basin does not seek to idealize ancient Greece and Rome as the inherited ideological past of the West, but rather explore the multiplicity, diversity and sometimes contradictory realities of that past and our perception of it.

6.2 Consuming Cultures

6.2.1 Collections et Collectors: Demers and Regnault:

The objects we see in the collections of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers and Paule Regnault have been collected in several phases, through several collectors or dealers (also collectors!) before ending up in the museum. Unlike Greco-Roman statuary, another popular collector's item in the seventeenth century, the oil lamps represent small, everyday utilitarian objects signifying an interest in the archeological and anthropological questions of the ancient world, such as “how did the people of the ancient Mediterranean basin produce light? With what

type of tools and which fuels?” We can also examine these objects in relation to their typologies: shapes, designs and moulds, materials. Looking at the collection all together allows us to compare and notice that the fuel preferred and accessible to most of the Mediterranean basin was the all-important olive oil. These observations are linked to the production and use of the lamps in their own time, but what do they say about the act of collecting itself?

6.2.1.1 Object grouping: Demers



Middle Ages
TUNISIA

Oil Lamp with Handle

9th-15th c.

Wheel-turned and pinched terracotta, lead glaze 4.7 x 10.1 x 9.7 cm

Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.658



Punic
TUNISIA

Oil Lamp

3rd-2nd c. B.C.

Wheel-turned terracotta

3.9 x 7.9 x 5.4 cm

Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.659



Roman Empire
TUNISIA

Oil Lamp

3rd c. A.D.

Moulded terracotta

4.9 x 12.9 x 9.4 cm

Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.661



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
3rd c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
4.8 x 11.2 x 8.2 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.662



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
2nd half of 4th c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
4.8 x 11.6 x 7.5 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.663



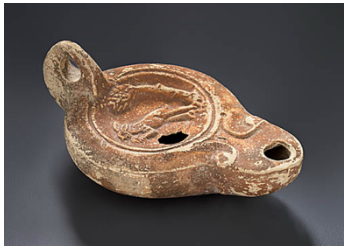
Late Republican period-Early Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
Late 1st c. B.C.-early 1st c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
2.2 x 9.1 x 6.4 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.664



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
1st half of 2nd c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
5.8 x 12.2 x 9.4 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.665



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
1st half of 1st c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
3.3 x 11.1 x 7.8 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.666



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
Mid-1st c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
4 x 9.8 x 5.9 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.667



Punic
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
3rd-2nd c. B.C.
Moulded and pinched terracotta
5.1 cm (h.), 6.1 cm (diam.)
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.670



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
Mid-2nd c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
5.5 x 12.3 x 8.7 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.671



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
Mid-2nd c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
4.2 x 9.7 x 7.2 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.672



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Oil Lamp
Mid-1st c. A.D.
Moulded terracotta
5.4 x 11.2 x 8.2 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.673

6.2.1.2 *Object grouping: Regnault*



EGYPT
Wheel-made lamp
2nd half 4th c., possibly 1st half of 3rd c. B.C.
Terracotta
3.8 x 6.4 x 9.2 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.171



EGYPT
Hellenistic period
Wheel-made Ptolemaic Jug-lamp
3rd-2nd c. B.C.
Terracotta
5.2 x 6.1 x 7.6 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.172



EGYPT
Hellenistic period
Moulded lamp with lugs
Late 2nd-1st c. B.C.
Terracotta
3.3 x 7.8 x 10.1 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.173



Roman Empire
EGYPT
Miniature mould-made lamp (votive?)
Mid-2nd c.-mid-3rd c. A.D.
Terracotta
2.6 x 4.5 x 7 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.175



Roman Empire
EGYPT
Frog Lamp, "Corn" Type, Mould-made
3rd-4th c. A.D.
Terracotta
3.4 x 7.9 x 10 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.176



EGYPT
Female bust, lamp handle
Probably 2nd c. A.D.
Terracotta
6.9 x 3.9 x 3 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.182

6.2.2 Time Travellers

As museum visitors, we have become accustomed to being able to time travel the world through the objects we see in museums, however, collecting ancient objects for their aesthetic or historical value is a controversial practice. Before the development of the public museum, the majority of collecting was done by an economic elite who owned an object of material culture from another time for personal pleasure and financial investment. This continues today, and the objects collected through the taste of a very few become the collection of the public museum.

Questions of provenance, cultural and historical ownership, as well as the archeological process, have raised some important issues within the museum world. The collecting of artifacts from the Graeco-Roman periods is particularly relevant in this discussion. They have been considered by some to be the cultural heritage of the entire Western hemisphere and even the whole democratic world because of Ancient Greece's ties to the creation of an initial democratic political system, western medicine and western philosophical thought. As symbols of these adopted ways of thinking, collecting statuary or pottery from the Classical and Hellenistic periods became popular as a manner of signifying one's educated status in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. These objects placement in a museum are a far cry from their original context.



Possibly TARSUS in CILICIA, MINOR ASIA or
NORTHERN SYRIA

Found in Egypt

Skyphos with ring handles

2nd half of 1st c. B.C.-1st c. A.D.

Pottery with moulded vegetal decoration, green and yellow
glaze

4.3 cm (h.), 11.3 cm (diam. Including handles)

Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan

1945.B.6



Apulia
Found in Egypt
Guttus
Probably 2nd half of the 4th c. B.C.-possibly early 3rd c. B.C. Pottery, black-glazed and moulded decoration (Gorgon's head)
7.3 x 11.1 x 12.1 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.185



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Amphora
2nd-3rd c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
22.5 x 19 x 14.6 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.649

This amphora from modern-day Tunisia dates to the 2nd or 3rd century AD. Its ancient owner has had an inscription engraved into the neck of the vessel that reads either “I am the pourer” or “I belong to Fuscus” in Latin. This object, maybe even more than others in the exhibit, asks us to reflect about the personal history of the objects we find in museums. This simple vessel carries with it a message from its ancient owner, reminding us that the antiquities bought and sold, collected and donated, are not static but rather part of a living history. It is their presentation as objects outside of their context in the museum that can create of them objects of a commodified past. The engraving on this amphora helps us in some ways to connect that past with our present.

6.2.3 Products of Globalization: Trade and pottery

Trade around and within the Ancient Mediterranean existed from the Bronze Age. Exchange networks existed between Egypt, Asia Minor, Crete, Cyprus the Cyclades and the Greek mainland in these periods. Between the 11th and the 8th centuries (the Dark Ages) these networks declined, and trade was carried out by the Phoenicians only. Colonization and population movements of the 8th century saw trade increase again and soon specialized trading sites for merchants from all over the Mediterranean world were created. Trade networks, Colonial expansion and population movements made the ancient Mediterranean world a diverse and intercultural place. Trade was an essential part of the diversification of the Ancient Mediterranean. Through the exposure of people to products and goods from outside their own territories, hybridization, code-switching and appropriation occurred, discounting any ideology that promotes the Ancient Mediterranean as pure, Western and ‘white.’



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Covered Cooking Pot
1st-3rd c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
19.6 cm (h.), 18.2 cm (diam.)
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.652.1-2



Punic
TUNISIA
Amphora
4th-3rd c. B.C.
Wheel-turned pottery
34.2 cm (h.), 17 cm
(diam.)
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and
Mrs. Ginette Demers
2018.9

This shipping amphora from ancient Carthage would have held liquids or grains for shipment overseas. The vessel's slender pointed bottom was created specifically to stand upright in a wooden rack on a ship. Carthage became the richest city in the ancient Mediterranean through the colonial trade economy of the Phoenicians, who would colonize much of the western Mediterranean.



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Bottle in a "Basket"
1st-3rd c. A.D.
Wheel-turned and incised pottery
27.2 x 14.5 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.648



Punic
TUNISIA
Kantharos (Drinking Cup)
4th-3rd c. B.C.
Wheel-turned pottery, black glaze
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
9.4 x 14.8 x 10.5 cm
2017.639



Punic
TUNISIA
Askos
4th c. B.C.
Wheel-turned pottery, black glaze
9 x 12.3 x 9 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2018.5



CORINTH, GREECE
Unknown artist close to the Erlenmeyer Painter
Active about 600-575 B.C.
Alabastron (Perfume Jar)
Rooster, goose-necked water bird and rosettes Pottery,
painted and incised decoration
17.5 cm (h.), 9 cm (diam.)
Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan
1925.Cb.1



CORINTH, GREECE

Herzegovina Painter

Active 575-550 B.C.

Alabastron (Perfume Jar)

Bucranion, goose-necked water birds and rosettes Pottery,
painted and incised decoration

20.2 cm (h.), 9.7 cm (diam.)

Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan

1925.Cb.2



ETRURIA, ITALY

Attributed to the Bobuda Painter

Active about 560-540 B.C.

Alabastron, Etrusco-Corinthian Style

Face-to-face beasts with single head and rosettes Pottery,
painted and incised decoration

16.7 cm (h.), 7.9 cm (diam.)

Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan

1925.Cb.3



ETRURIA, ITALY

Attributed to the Feoli Painter

Active about 600-560 B.C.

Alabastron, Etrusco-Corinthian Style

Bird flanked by two face-to-face lions

Pottery, painted and incised decoration

18.6 cm (h.), 8.7 cm (diam.)

Gift of Miss Mabel Molson

1932.Cb.1



CORINTH, GREECE

Globular aryballos

Face-to-face panthers and rosettes

About 600 B.C.

Terracotta, painted and incised decoration

6.1 cm (h.), 6.1 cm (diam.)

Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan

1938.Cb.3



CORINTH, GREECE

Related to the Painter of Corinth MP-6

Kotyle (drinking cup)

Upper register: fantastic birds and sirens; lower register:

goats, panthers and ram

1st quarter of 6th c. B.C.

Pottery, painted and incised decoration

15.8 x 29.4 x 21 cm

Purchase, William Gilman Cheney Bequest

1959.Cb.3



RHODES, GREECE

Late Bronze Age, Helladic IIA:2 (14th c. B.C.)

Amphoroid krater, spout added to form an ewer

Pottery with red painted decoration (bands and running spiral)

21.5 cm (h.), 21.8 cm (diam.)

Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan

1918.Ca.1



Mycenaean period

GREECE

Askos

Late 2nd millennium B.C.

Painted pottery

Gift of Claude Paradis

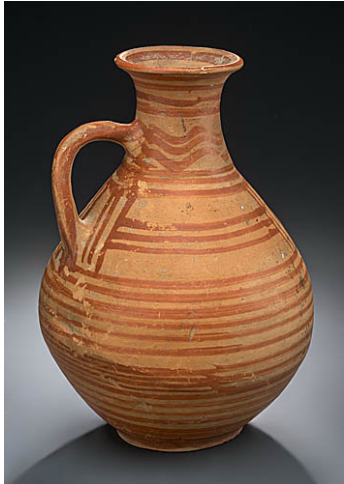
17.4 cm (h.), 17.8 cm (diam.)

2016.198



CYPRUS
Barrel-shaped Jug
1050-950 B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
30 x 27.5 x 23 cm
2016.205

This barrel jug was made in Cyprus during what archaeologists identify as the Cypro-geometric period I. Its shape and decoration make it typical of the production of that period. This particular shape is evidence of influence from the Levant, where the globular jug shape and the flask shape were imported from. The popularity of the Levantine globular jug in Cyprus explains the Cypriot appropriation and adaptation of it into the barrel-shaped jug. The geometric pattern painted on this particular barrel jug emphasizes its particular shape.



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA
Jug with Geometric Decoration
8th-7th c. B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
20.7 cm (h.), 14.7 cm (diam.)
2016.195



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA
Krater
Early 7th c. B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
23.1 cm (h.), 20.8 cm (diam.)
2016.200



GREECE, CORINTH
Kothon
6th c. B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
4.7 x 18.5 x 15.5 cm
2016.206



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA
Askos in the Daunian style
5th-4th c. B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
13.2 x 20.8 x 16.7 cm
2016.190



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA
Canosan-style Large Kantharos (Drinking Cup)
5th-4th c. B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
20.5 x 37.5 x 28.7 cm
2016.192



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA
Askos in the Daunian style
4th c. B.C.
Painted pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
13.5 cm (h.), 11.8 cm (diam.)
2016.197



SOUTH ITALY, APULIA
Hellenistic period
Bowl with Lid
3rd c. B.C.
Pottery, painted decoration ("Gnathian" style)
10.1 cm (h.), 12.5 cm (diam.)
Gift of Lisa Newman Greenspan in memory of David Beryl
Greenspan
2013.652.1-2



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Cup
1st-2nd c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
8.4 cm (h.), 8 cm (diam.)
2017.641



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Lagynos
2nd-3rd c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
13.5 cm (h.), 14 cm (diam.)
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.655



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Bowl
2nd-3rd c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
4 cm (h.), 24.4 cm (diam.)
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2017.657



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Square-rimmed Bowl
4th c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
4 x 12.2 x 12.2 cm
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2018.3



Roman Empire
TUNISIA
Studded Cup
1st c. A.D.
Wheel-turned pottery
6.5 cm (h.), 9 cm (diam.)
Gift of Dr. Jocelyn and Mrs. Ginette Demers
2018.8



EGYPT
Hellenistic period
Poculum (bowl)
3rd c. B.C.
Black-glazed pottery
3.3 cm (h.), 11.5 cm (diam.)
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.186



Roman Empire
NORTH AFRICA (TUNISIA?)
Askos or Guttus
2nd-3rd c. A.D.
Pottery
Gift of Claude Paradis
19.5 x 15.5 x 8 cm
2016.383



AEGEAN AREA (CENTRAL GREECE or ASIA MINOR)
Classical period
Fish Plate
1st half of 4th c. B.C.
Pottery, dull black glaze
2.7 cm (h.), 13.8 cm (diam.)
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent
1962.Cb.3

6.3 Body

6.3.1 Constructing the Classical Ideal

Greek and Roman sculpture has played an important role in the construction of a Classical Ideal in the Western imaginary. Over the last 2500 years, the Ancient Greek ideal of beauty has influenced and been appropriated multiple times to connect with the ideals of the culture and people that were using them. In ancient Greece, the ideal of male beauty was heavily connected to soundness of mind and a noble character through the concept of kalos kagathos. Kalos kagathos combined both outward physical appearance and inner psycho-social characteristics of those with higher social status. The connection between physical beauty and character was reused by the Romans who appropriated the physicality of Greek statuary to propagandize political leaders,

imbuing representations of their person with the ideals best suited to their purpose. This particular vision of beauty has been adopted in the West as being universal, in no small part because of 18th century art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who declared that the purpose of art was to create beauty and then equated the highest form of art/beauty with statuary from Classical Greece. We can now see that the adoption of a singular type of beauty, and artistic hierarchy based on that beauty, is not universal at all, and has limited our acceptance of the multiplicity that can be found in conceptions of beauty and art, from all over the world.



ROMAN EMPIRE

Statue of "Chigi Apollo"

After a Greek original (about 370 B.C.), possibly in the style of the Polyclitus school (?)

2nd quarter of 2nd c. A.D.

Parian marble

136 x 56 x 35.5 cm

Purchase, the Museum Campaign 1988-1993 Fund, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' Volunteer Association Fund and anonymous gift 2003.44.1-5

This representation of the Apollo Chigi type is a Roman copy of an earlier Greek sculpture, possibly modeled from the school of Polycleitus. The Roman adoption of Greek statuary meant that for years Romans were hiring contemporary Greek artists, collecting ancient Greek sculpture and making copies of Classical Greek sculpture. In this context, authenticity in art did not possess the same value as it does in the commercial art market of today. The importance was rather, to show your own ideals through the types of statuary you collected and displayed. As tastes, ideals and morals changed through the years, collecting and displays of Classical sculpture reflected those changes. Identity-driven collections of sculpture became collections of authentic originals representing relics of the ancient past.



SOUTHERN ITALY or SICILY
Hellenistic period
Female Head
3rd-2nd c. B.C.
Terracotta, moulded
21 x 14.7 x 9.5 cm
Gift of Mrs. Winthrop Brainerd
1928.Cb.1



ROMAN EMPIRE

Roman copy of a Greek original, possibly carved by Silanion (390-370 B.C.)

Bust of Socrates

Marble

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP51.2003



Joanne Tod

Born in Montreal in 1953

Orientation

1988

Oil on canvas

Gift of the Lazare family collection in honour of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' 150th anniversary

213.5 x 305.5 cm

2010.568



ATTICA, GREECE
Edinburgh Painter
Active about 505-485 B.C.
Black-figure on white ground lekythos
Athletes and Trainers
Pottery, painted and incised decoration
27.5 cm (h.), 10 cm (diam.)
Purchase, gift of Miss Mabel Molson
1925.Cb.5



ETRURIA, ITALY
Red-figure kylix
5th c. B.C.
Pottery
7.5 x 32.5 cm
Gift of Mrs. Charles Stuart McEuen
1940.Cb.1



ATTICA, GREECE

Unknown artist close to the Telos Painter

1st third of 4th c. B.C.

Red-figure bell krater

Nike crowns an athlete victorious in the Panathenaic Games; others bring the prize, an amphora full of oil; watched by Hermes (?) and the athlete's trainer

Pottery

24.7 x 26.7 x 24.6 cm

Purchase

1944.Cb.2



Roman Empire

ROME

Male Torso

2nd c. A.D., Roman copy of a 5th c. B.C. Greek original

Marble

Gift of Elwood B. Hosmer

1941.Cb.1

6.4 Beliefs

6.4.1 Wine

Wine had a rich mythological, economic and everyday impact on the lives of those living in the Ancient Mediterranean. The production of wine has recently been dated as early as 6000 BCE in the Neolithic period between Eastern Europe and Western Asia in the Caucasus region. Through the proliferation and establishment of trade routes throughout the Mediterranean the cultivation and consumption of wine spread from the Black Sea, to North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. By the Classical period, the use of wine in rituals and everyday activities could be found around

the Mediterranean basin. In this way, wine and its making and cultivation is a great example of cultural colonization from the Caucasus region to the whole of the Mediterranean basin.

Dionysus (Bacchus) was the god of wine representing the powerfully creative yet volatile nature that can be found in the human spirit. He is considered to be the god of revelry, creativity, instinct or impulse, and ecstasy as well as madness, violence and savagery. Dionysus is a reminder of the highs and lows the ancient Greeks associated with chaos, anarchy and a world with a lack of self-control. Grouping into one individual the seemingly opposing character traits of ecstatic and blissful abandon on one hand, and savagely brutal violence on the other, Dionysus has been a subject of interest for modern philosophers such as Friedrich Nietzsche. Nietzsche saw Dionysus as the representation of what he called the 'tragic disposition.' In Nietzsche's theory it is through this 'Dionysian affirmation of life' whereby the negative is seen as a necessary component of the true and beautiful. Nietzsche believed that only by cultivating our own tragic disposition, like Dionysus, could we reach the true capacity to achieve human greatness.

6.4.1.1 Wine as Festival:



ATTICA, GREECE

Unknown artist near to the Nikoxenos Painter

Found at Vulci, Etruria, Central Italy

Black-figure hydria

Dionysus and two satyrs playing lyres and a goat

Late 6th c. B.C.

Pottery, painted and incised decoration

41 x 38 x 30.5 cm

Purchase, gift of Harry A. Norton

1939.Cb.1



ATTICA, GREECE

Leningrad Painter

2nd quarter of 5th c. B.C.

Red-figure column krater

On one side: three men celebrating the komos (festival honouring Dionysus);
on the other: three youths

Pottery

45.3 x 45 x 38 cm

Purchase

1946.Cb.2

The Komos procession is a good example of the lack of order and impulsiveness present in the dual nature of humans. The Komos, pictured here, was a ritualistic procession performed by drunken revelers without any script or leader.



ROMAN EMPIRE

**Attachment for a Fulcrum (Armrest of a Kliné [Couch])
in the Form of the Bust of a Satyr or Silenus**

Late 2nd c. B.C.-2nd c. A.D.

Bronze

7.1 x 4.8 x 2.4 cm

Gift of Lisa Newman Greenspan in memory of David Beryl
Greenspan

2013.655



ATTICA, GREECE
Black-figure skyphos (drinking cup) of "eye cup" type
Two large eyes with vine tendrils
Early 5th c. B.C.
Pottery, painted and incised decoration
7.5 cm (h.), 13 cm (diam.)
Purchase
1937.Cb.2

This drinking cup, called a skyphos, is of a common type known as an ‘eye cup.’ The decoration is meant to look like a mask when it is held up and drunk out of. Scholars have mainly argued that its significance is apotropaic, to ward off evil. Many of these ‘eye cups’ have been found in Etrurian graves, outside of their Athenian symposium context revealing the ways in which people of the Ancient world adopted and appropriated different materials and goods from other cultures to suit their own cultural needs.

6.4.1.2 Wine as Libation

Performing a libation was a simple gesture denoting reverence to the Gods. This gesture was often done by pouring a mixture of water and wine (as well as other things such as honey or olive oil) as an offering to the Gods and then the invocation of a prayer. As a simple performance of piety to calm and appease the gods, it was enacted in many everyday ritualistic contexts. Other types of libations such as apotropaic libations, were considered to ward off evil or harm and these would have been enacted before war, a voyage or a peace pact.



ATHENS, GREECE
Attributed to the Orchard Painter
Red-figure Hydria
Libation scene
470-460 B.C. Pottery
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP18.2003



Richard Milette
Born in L'Assomption, Quebec, in 1960
Trahison
From the series "Des mots et des images"
1996
Ceramic
Gift of Richard Milette
38.8 x 40.5 x 30.3 cm
2011.226



ATHENS, GREECE
Close to the Chicago Painter
Red-figure Hydria
Scene of farewell with libation in the presence of Nike (Victory) 460 B.C.
Pottery
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP19.2003



ATHENS, GREECE
Red-figure stamnos (wine or oil jar)
Libation scene with Nike (Victory) and Demeter (?)
460 B.C.
Pottery
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP16.2003



ATTICA, GREECE
Painted by Hermonax
Active 475-450 B.C.
Red-figure Lekythos
Pottery, painted decoration
30.7 cm (h.), 10.9 cm (diam.)
Gift of Lisa Newman Greenspan in memory of David Beryl
Greenspan
2013.651



ATTICA, GREECE
Black-figure lekythos
Dionysus as a horseman, maenads and satyrs 2nd half of
6th c. B.C.
Pottery, painted and incised decoration
20.9 cm (h.), 8.6 cm (diam.)
Purchase, Miss Mabel Molson Fund
1925.Cb.4

6.4.2 Myths



ATTICA, GREECE

Painter of the Leagros Group

Late 6th c. B.C.

Black-figure Amphora

On one side: Hephaistos, Leto, Apollo and Artemis (with a doe); on the other: Dionysus Surrounded by Maenads and Satyrs

Pottery, painted and incised decoration

37.5 cm (h.), 25.5 cm (diam.)

Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest

1962.Cb.2



ATTICA, GREECE

Attributed to the Leagros Group

Black-figure hydria

Battle of Greeks and Amazons; on belly, a group of gods (from right to left, Dionysos, Athena, Apollon, and one uncertain female)

Late 6th-early 5th c. B.C.

Terracotta

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP10.2003

6.4.3 Janus

Janus is one of the oldest Gods from the Roman pantheon and was thought to preside over all beginnings and ends, boundaries, and transitions. Accordingly, the month of January is named after them. The god is typically represented as bifrons and later on, quadrifrons demonstrating their ability to look into the past while seeing the future. Although Janus is considered a Roman god, scholars have been able to connect Janus to Etruscan Gods such as Culsans and Terms heavily associated with the position as mediator of worlds, like the Greek God Hermes. The temple of Janus in Rome was opened in times of war and closed when there was peace in the empire.



Roman Republic
ITALY (?)
Bifrontal Hermes
possibly Janus (the deity of
doorways)
1st c. B.C.
Marble
35 x 21.5 x 27 cm
Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan
1950.51.Cb.4

This particular statue could be a Janus, with a face on one side looking to the past while the other is gazing into the future, or the representation of two deities, symbolizing duality as well as complimentary qualities. This bifrons most certainly stood upon a square shaped pillar of stone, making it a *double Herm*. Herms were used as boundary markers with an apotropaic value, thought to keep safe those that passed before it. In later years, they would be collected as decorative sculpture for Roman gardens and homes. In Cicero's letters to Atticus in 66 BC, the orator praises the *double herm* with the heads of Minerva (Greek: Athena) and Mercury (Greek: Hermes), called a *Hermathena*, he has put in his study, writing that the presence of Mercury in a classroom is typical and that Minerva holds a special place to him. The faces on this statue have yet to be identified. Who do you think they could be?



SYRIA
Vase with Janiform (Back-to-back) Heads
3rd c. A.D.
Mould-blown glass
9.1 cm (h.), 4.8 cm (diam.)
Gift of Harry A. Norton
1953.Dg.57



Seth Randal
Born in Hempstead, New York, in 1957
Archaica
1997
Cast pâte de cristal, copper
54.6 x 20.3 x 30.5 cm
Gift, Anna and Joe Mendel Collection
2007.149

6.5 Memory

6.5.1 Remembrance and Legacy

Although funerary practices differed slightly throughout the Ancient Mediterranean world, they were often practiced as a multi-dimensional performance that including chest-beating, hair-pulling, wailing, music, feasts and processions. In the Greek context, death and the funeral were performed in three stages; the Prothesis (the laying out of the body), the Ekphora (the funeral procession of the body) and the Interment of the body. In the Roman context death masks were

made, and those of the dead's ancestors were worn during the Pompa, a dynamic performance, which for elite Roman men may have concluded at the Forum with a eulogy performed for male family members only.

The performative quality of these processions, rituals and gestures during and after death contributed to the aggrandizement of the deceased, their ancestors and their descendants. Julius Caesar and Caesar Augustus, very famously appropriated a mythological descendancy in order to legitimate an ancestral claim to power. This type of aggrandizement was utilized as political propaganda, linking them with the Goddess Venus, her son Aeneas, founder of the Roman world in Roman myth as well as the God Mars and his son, Romulus, the founder of the city of Rome.



ATHENS, GREECE

Black-figure Bail-oinochos

Thracian horsemen

Early 5th c. B.C.

Pottery

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée
national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP12.2003

This vessel, known as a bail-oinochos, depicts five Thracian men on horseback, participating in the Ekphora (the funeral procession of the body) of an aristocratic person. This vessel shape is

extremely rare and this particular one from the Diniacopoulos collection is one of only seven known in the world. This vessel type is thought to be specific to the Athenian funerary context.



ATHENS, GREECE

Middle Geometric period

Amphora with geometric decoration

1st half of 8th c. B.C.

Pottery

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP2.2003



Etruscan

ITALY

Lid of Cista (Cinerary Urn)

3rd c. B.C.

Terracotta, moulded

32 x 52.7 x 33 cm

Gift of Sidney Carter

1935.Cb.1



ATHENS, GREECE

Funerary stele

Relief of woman dead in childbirth facing a female relative holding the orphan child

Early 4th c. B.C.

Marble

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP41.2003

Funerary monuments, such as this grave stele, can be important documents that allow us to see groups of the population historically less written about. Citizen women, children, freedmen and freedwomen had grave markers and the images and inscriptions ordered by their families allow for insight into the family structure, as well as touching personal information. In this example, we see the deceased (seated) with another woman standing in front of her with a baby in her arms. This leads us to believe the cause of death is childbirth. Some research has suggested that these scenes are not exactly what they may seem to be. In other examples of funerary stele from Athens in the 4th century BCE, apparent mother and child scenes are actually idealized representations of other family members such as a grandmother holding her baby grandchild, or a big sister with her baby brother.

6.5.2 Accompanying the Dead



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA

Messapian-style Trozella

5th-4th c. B.C.

Painted pottery

Gift of Claude Paradis

27.8 x 24 x 20.5 cm

2016.194



ATHENS, GREECE

Attributed to the Kleophon Painter

Red-figure panathenaic amphora

Hermes leading a dead youth to Charon, the Ferryman of the Dead 430 B.C.

Pottery

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP25.2003



Graeco-Roman Culture

Astragal

Bronze

Gift in memory of David Ross and Anne-Marie Roigt Ross,
from Ronald, Leslie, Eric, and Francine Ross

2.6 x 2.3 x 3.5 cm

1200.2010



Graeco-Roman Culture

Astragal

Bronze

2 x 1.7 x 2.9 cm

Gift in memory of David Ross and Anne-Marie Roigt Ross,
from Ronald, Leslie, Eric, and Francine Ross

1201.2010



Graeco-Roman Culture

Astragal

Bronze

Gift in memory of David Ross and Anne-Marie Roigt Ross,
from Ronald, Leslie, Eric, and Francine Ross

2.2 x 1.8 x 3.3 cm

1202.2010

Astragals or knucklebones were a game played much like dice or jacks. The games played with these pieces, named for the tiny bones found in the ankle or hock of any number of husbandried animals from cattle, goats, sheep or pigs were extremely popular with adults and youth alike. Examples can be found in oral epic such as Homer's Iliad and the Odyssey, figurative pottery, temples and graves. In the funerary context, it is interesting to note that findings are as early as the Iron age transition in Italy. Its presence in the funerary context complicates our understanding of this object as it can be found in the hundreds surrounding or draped over the body. The examples are sometimes modified by sanding or perforation. Their presence in both the graves of children and adults has added to the confusion, disallowing any singular or individualized classification of the object, whether toy or amuleta, protective device for the underworld.

6.5.3 Containing the Body:



ROMAN EMPIRE
GERMANY
Urn
Late 1st-2nd c. A.D.
Blown glass
32.2 cm (h.), 22.5 cm (diam.)
Gift of Harry A. Norton
1953.Dg.71



Roman Empire
LEVANT
Produced in Tyre, Roman Province of Syria (mod.
Lebanon)
Sarcophagus
Decoration: Corinthian columns, kantharoi, sphinxes,
bucrania, etc. 1st half of 3rd c. A.D.
Lead, repoussé decoration
57 x 167 x 43 cm
Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest
1964.Ea.1



CENTURIPE, SICILY
Hellenistic period
Funerary urn with lid
On the lid: portrait of a woman (the deceased); around the
body: a Dionysiac Scene
Pottery, polychrome-painted decoration
70.50 (h.), 34.5 cm (diam.)
Purchase, special replacement fund
1974.Cb.1

6.6 Nature and Ecology

6.6.1 Glass

Commercial networks between bronze Age Kingdoms in Greece and the Near East brought glasswares into the Greek world in the 15th century BCE. Political and social instabilities of the iron age dried up production of glasswares in the Eastern Mediterranean, but we see a resurgence as of the 8th century. Shapes such as the aryballoi and alabastra, which had their clay and alabaster counterparts, were popular in the production of this period. They would usually hold oils or perfume. Glass remained a luxury item until the Pax Romana (31 BCE-14 BCE) when it was produced in industrial quantities and exported without fear of piracy throughout the Roman Empire. Glassware had multiple usages, from tableware to mosaic pieces, perfume bottles and cosmetic tubes to lamps.



ASIA MINOR (?)

Bottle

1st-early 2nd c. A.D.

Blown glass

25.5 cm (h.), 17.3 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.103



NEAR EAST

Unguentarium

3rd-4th c. A.D.

Blown glass

11.8 x 3.2 cm

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.128



ROMAN EMPIRE

SYRIA

Flask

4th-6th c. A.D.

Blown glass

10.7 cm (h.), 7 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.132



ROMAN EMPIRE

MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Urn or Bucket

4th-5th c. A.D.

Blown glass

9 cm (h.), 9.7 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.139



NEAR EAST or MESOPOTAMIA

Flask

6th-8th c. A.D.

Blown glass

8.5 x 7.5 cm

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.145



NEAR EAST or MESOPOTAMIA

Zoomorphic Vase

6th-8th c. A.D.

Blown glass

9.5 x 12.1 cm

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.147



UNCERTAIN ORIGIN

Flask in shape of a seed pod

3rd-4th c. A.D.

Glass

3.7 cm (w.), .8 cm (d.), 0.9-1.1 cm (mouth)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.165



AEGEAN AREA (?)

Jug

5th c. B.C.

Core-formed glass, combed decoration

11.8 cm (h.), 7 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.4



ROMAN EMPIRE
MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Flask

1st c. A.D.
Blown marbled glass
10.2 cm (h.), 8.3 cm (diam.)
Gift of Harry A. Norton
1953.Dg.44



EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Alabastron (Perfume Jar)

5th c. B.C.
Core-formed glass, combed decoration
10.2 cm (h.), 3.2 cm (diam.)
Gift of Harry A. Norton
1953.Dg.5



PHOENICIA, SIDON

Flask

1st c. A.D.
Mould-blown glass
7.3 cm (h.), 3.4 cm (diam.)
Gift of Harry A. Norton
1953.Dg.50



ROMAN EMPIRE

Flask

1st-early 2nd c. A.D.

Mould-blown glass

7.1 cm (h.), 2.1 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.56



JERUSALEM (?), ISRAEL

Palaeochristian period

Flask

About 6th-7th c. A.D.

Mould-blown amber glass, heavy iridescence, creamy pitting

15.5 x 10.5 x 7.5 cm

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.61



ROMAN EMPIRE
MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Jug

Late 1st-early 2nd c. A.D.

Blown glass

14 cm (h.), 8.7 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.70



ROMAN EMPIRE
MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Lens-shaped flask

4th-7th c. A.D.

Blown glass

19.2 x 13.7 x 3.2 cm

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.78



ROMAN EMPIRE
MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Jug

4th-5th c. A.D.

Mould-blown glass

17 cm (h.), 12.2 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.85



ROMAN EMPIRE
GERMANY

Pitcher with Trefoil Mouth

Late 2nd-early 3rd c. A.D.

Blown glass, snake-thread decoration

13.7 cm (h.), 7.7 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.86



ROMAN EMPIRE

Beaker

1st-3rd c. A.D.

Blown glass

10.8 cm (h.), 6.5 cm (diam.)

Gift of Harry A. Norton

1953.Dg.90



NEAR EAST (?)

Bottle

1st-3rd c. A.D.

Blown glass

36.1 x 8.8 cm

Gift of Helen Norton

1961.Dg.3



NEAR EAST
Flask
3rd-4th c. A.D.
Blown glass
11 x 7.2 cm
Gift of Mrs. George D. Pratt
1932.Cc.1a



Roman Empire
ITALY
Ointment Flask
Glass
39.4 x 6 cm
Gift of Mrs. George D. Pratt
1932.Cc.6



JERUSALEM (?), ISRAEL
Palaeochristian period
Jug Flask
5th-7th c. A.D.
Transparent greenish glass
20.3 cm (h.)
Gift of Harry A. Norton
1953.Dg.62



Roman Empire
EGYPT
Flask
3rd-5th c. A.D.
Glass
20.8 x 8.6 x 7.1 cm
Gift of Paule Regnault
2003.200

6.6.2 Mosaic

Mosaics and mosaicist were in high demand in the Ancient Mediterranean world. Popularized by the Greeks with the pebble mosaic technique around the 5th century BCE, the artform evolved with the use of the tessera-technique. Using minuscule triangle or cube shapes of coloured glass mosaics moved from the floor, to the walls, and allowed for greater colour exploration by the mosaicist. The medium of mosaic was adopted by early Christian art, which made of it the leading pictorial artform in Byzantium from the 4th century to the 14th century.



Paleochristian
NORTHWESTERN SYRIA
Fragment of a Paleochristian Floor Mosaic
Late 5th-early 6th c. A.D.
Stone, cement
Anonymous gift
90 x 112.5 x 6 cm (approx.)
2010.719

6.6.3 Relationships with Nature

The people of the Ancient Mediterranean had a relationship with nature that was intertwined with their belief systems. Many natural elements were anthropomorphised into gods and goddesses such as the god Poseidon who controlled the sea, earthquakes and storms, or Demeter, goddess of the harvest and fertility of the earth. Gods and goddesses could also transform into animal form, interacting with the human world in disguise. Zeus is known for raping, seducing and kidnapping women in the guise of different animals.

For philosophers of Antiquity, the exploration of the natural world and the cosmos was an area of intense study and speculation. Aristotle in particular, has had a long-standing influence on the philosophical frameworks of the west. His philosophical methodology was empirical in nature, promoting observation in nature.



BOIOTIA, GREECE

Protome Painter

Lekane

3rd quarter 6th c.

Pottery

6.5 cm (h.), 33 cm (diam.) Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan
1953.Cb.1

6.7 Society

6.7.1 Epic storytelling and nationhood

Epics are a genre of storytelling that has maintained popularity from Ancient times to the present day. Examples of Epic storytelling can be found around the Ancient Mediterranean basin and include: the Epic of Gilgamesh dated to as early as the 22nd century BCE in Ancient Mesopotamia; The Iliad and The Odyssey from Ancient Ionia in present-day Turkey attributed to Homer, composed in the 8th century BCE; and Virgil's Aeneid which presents its audience with the foundation story of Rome, produced 11 years after the fact and supposedly commissioned by the Emperor Augustus in 29 BCE. These epics were composed in poetic verse, and in some cases composed orally. The epic literary genre presents a hero's psychological or physical journey

through various episodes which the narrative uses to emphasize or challenge cultural, political and societal values.



ATTICA, GREECE
Circle of the Antimenes painter
Black-figure kalpis/hydria
Aeneas and Anchises escaping from Troy in company with three other persons
1st quarter of 5th c. B.C.
Pottery, painted and incised decoration
25.7 cm (h.), 24.1 cm (diam.)
Gift of Miss Mabel Molson
1933.Cb.1



ATHENS, GREECE
Attributed to the Theseus Painter
Fragmentary black-figure lekythos
Priam ransoms the body of his son Hector from Achilles
About 500 B.C.
Pottery
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP9.2003



ATTICA, GREECE
Black-figure Skyphos
Theseus slaying the Minotaur before two female onlookers(Ariadne?) Late 6th c. B.C.
Pottery, painted and incised decoration
8 cm (h.), 19 cm (diam.)
Purchase
1929.Cb.1

6.7.2 Power in Politics

Institutionalized politics and seats of political power in both Greece and Rome during Antiquity were dominated by men. Although they held citizenship, women did not participate

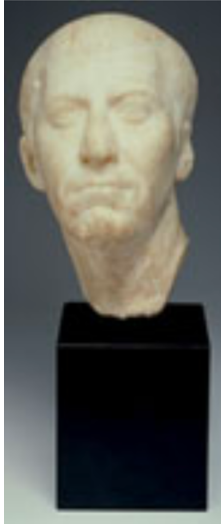
directly in the democracy of Athens or in the Roman Senate. However, legitimacy of power, in the Julio-Claudian Dynasty during the Roman Empire specifically, was upheld through women. Augustus, the first Emperor of Rome, and the ultimate figure of emulation for subsequent emperors, had no sons of his own to make his heir. Marriages and adoptions within the extended family were enacted in order to produce possible heirs for Augustus, always relying on the women of his family to carry the power that came from the bloodline of Augustus to the chosen husband or child. Some of the women of the Julio-Claudian dynasty seem to have understood the power they held, as evidenced by the actions of Agrippina the Younger. As the great-granddaughter of Augustus, Agrippina the Younger took advantage of her bloodline in order to secure her son, Nero, as emperor. Through a marriage to her own uncle, his death, and the bypassing of his natural son, Agrippina the Younger made her son Nero the Emperor of Rome. Her prominent position on coins, statuary and other material culture of the time indicates she was seen as an equal with her son, the Emperor.



Roman Empire
ROME
Portrait of the Emperor Severus Alexander (222-235 A.D.) as a Youth (type II)
Marble
26.5 x 18 x 21 cm (without base)
Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest
1968.1600



Roman Empire (27 B.C.E – 476 A.D.)
ROME, ITALY
Coin with the Heads of Nero and His Mother, Agrippina
55 A.D.
Gold
Gift of Andrea and Peter McConnell
1.9 cm (diam.)
2008.122



Roman Empire

ROME

**Portrait of Gnaeus/Cnaeus Domitius Corbulo or of
Caius Cassius Longinus**

2nd half of 1st c. A.D.

Marble

27.5 x 18 x 23 cm (without base)

Purchase, Special Replacement Fund

1974.55



ETRUSCAN CULTURE

Archaic period

Figurine of a Warrior

6th c. B.C.

Bronze

12 x 5 x 5.5 cm

Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan

1960.Dm.1

This bronze figure is most likely Etruscan, representing a warrior or a god of war. The figure is missing a spear that would be held in the right hand and the breast-plate decoration is reminiscent of armour typically made of bronze in the 5th century. The figure, probably a votive object to be offered as a gift in a temple or sanctuary, retains the very particular stylistic qualities of Etruscan bronze artistic production, even though commerce would have brought goods and craftspeople from Greece and farther, into Etruria.



Graeco-Roman Culture

Arrowhead

Bronze

Gift in memory of David Ross and Anne-Marie Roigt Ross,
from Ronald, Leslie, Eric, and Francine Ross

4.8 x 1.4 x 0.9 cm

1190.2010



ETRUSCAN CULTURE

Figurine of a Warrior

5th c. B.C. (?)

Bronze

7.3 x 3.6 x 2.6 cm

Gift of Francis McLennan, K.C.

1921.Cc.2



CYPRUS

Rider

About 600 B.C.

Terracotta, polychrome decoration

18 x 12.5 x 5.6 cm

Gift of Jean des Gagniers

2006.47



Etruscan
ITALY
Cista (Cinerary Urn)
3rd c. B.C.
Terracotta, moulded
33.5 x 47.5 x 28 cm
Gift of Sidney Carter
1935.Cb.2

6.7.3 Luxury

Jewellery production, styles and techniques were borrowed from places all over the Mediterranean, Near East, Egypt and Central Asia. As new techniques in gold and metal working emerged, styles changed with them creating a reciprocal system of influence. A great example of intercultural borrowing comes from examples in this exhibition, where technique and style were influenced by production in the Near East. Classical and Hellenistic jewellery styles may have influenced jewellery makers as far as Central Asia, where archaeological digs have uncovered examples that share Greek and Roman iconography and typology. The trade networks of the Ancient world allowed for materials, and finished products to move around influencing those who came in contact with them and their makers creating new styles for those with enough money to wear them.



ROMAN CULTURE
Penannular brooch
1st c. B.C.-5th-6th c. A.D. Silver
2.5 cm (diam.)
Gift of E. Machell Cox
1930.Ds.12



ROMAN EMPIRE

Fibula

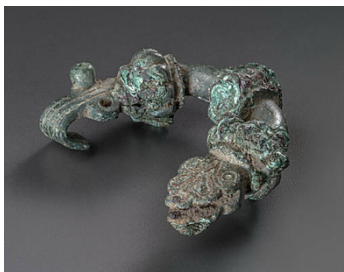
4th c. A.D.

Bronze

8.7 x 6.3 x 3 cm

Gift of Lisa Newman Greenspan in memory of David Beryl Greenspan

2013.658



ASIA MINOR

Small fibula

Late 5th-early 4th c. B.C.

Bronze

1.3 x 3.7 x 3 cm

Anonymous gift

Ed.2004.24



GREEK CULTURE

Bracelets

Ends decorated with ram's heads in collars

Mid-5th c. B.C.

Silver, gold

a: 6.96 cm, b: 6.81 cm

Purchase, gift of Miss Mabel Molson

1953.Db.4a-b



CENTRAL or SOUTHERN GREECE

Serpent Bracelet

6th c. B.C.

Bronze

1.7 cm (h.), 5.6 cm (diam.)

Anonymous gift

2004.121



APULIA, ITALY
Deruta Group, circle of the "Darius-Underworld" workshop
Women's heads and palmettes
345-330 B.C.
Pottery, painted decoration
5.3 cm (h.), 10 cm (diam.)
Gift of Walter S. Primley
1948.Cc.3



ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA
Earring
6th-7th c. A.D.
Gold
Gift of Andrea and Peter McConnell
3.6 x 2.7 x 0.3 cm
2008.124



ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA
Earring
6th-7th c. A.D.
Gold
Gift of Andrea and Peter McConnell
4.1 x 3 x 0.3 cm
2008.125



Roman Empire
ANATOLIA, TURKEY
Earring
3rd c. A.D.
Gold, agates (?)
Gift in memory of David Ross and
Anne-Marie Roigt Ross, from
Ronald, Leslie, Eric, and Francine
Ross
4 x 1.9 x 1.4 cm
2014.267

This pair of earrings is made up of a main gold rosette with three dangling pendants holding emeralds. This particular style became popular in the Roman world and the Eastern Mediterranean around the middle of the 1st century CE. and remained fashionable until the 4th century CE. This example shows definite influence from the Near East. The use of multiple coloured gemstones paired with the technique of *opus interrasile* (openwork) are both features that can be traced to the Near East. Jewellery was considered part of the daily Roman costume, although, sometimes connected to frivolity and excess. As part of women's own property, any rhetoric surrounding jewellery as frivolity was very much their business. This was demonstrated during the Second Punic war when legislation restricting the amount of gold a woman could wear went into effect, known as the *lex Oppia*. These restrictions were meant to force women to hand over their excess gold to the state to help finance the war effort. Once the war ended, Roman women protested, successfully repealing the law and bringing luxurious jewellery back into daily life for those who could afford it.



ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA

Ring

2nd-3rd c. A.D.

Gold, engraved stone (intaglio)

2.4 x 2.1 x 0.9 cm

Gift of Andrea and Peter McConnell

2008.119



ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA

Ring

2nd-3rd c. A.D.

Gold, engraved stone (intaglio)

3 x 2.3 x 1.2 cm

Gift of Andrea and Peter McConnell

2008.121



ANTIOCH or ALEXANDRIA

Ring

2nd-3rd c. A.D.

Gold, engraved stone (intaglio)

2.9 x 2 x 1.5 cm

Gift of Andrea and Peter McConnell

2008.126



Roman Empire

ANATOLIA, TURKEY

Cameo Earring

3rd c. A.D.

Gold, onyx

Gift in memory of David Ross and Anne-Marie Roigt Ross,
from Ronald, Leslie, Eric, and Francine Ross

1.9 x 1.4 x 0.9 cm

2014.265

6.7.4 Courting, Sex and Power Dynamics



Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP14.2003



ATTICA, GREECE
Attributed to the CHC Group
Black-figure skyphos
Late 6th-early 5th c. B.C.
Terracotta
Diniacopoulos Collection of the
Musée national des beaux-arts du
Québec
DEP5.2003

The scenes on these two pots represent the courting process in a pederastic relationship in Ancient Greece. Pederasty was a method used in ancient Greece to ensure education and development of adolescent boys through connection with an older man. The elder man was seen as a purveyor of wisdom, a protector and a connection to the civic and social duties the boy would have to learn in order to become an active and integral part of society as an adult. These relationships were often sexual, and the connection between the boy and the man was seen as a thing of beauty. A boy would have received gifts of a rabbit or a cock, as seen in these scenes, from the older man wishing to court. Once the boy had chosen his *erastes*, their relationship would last until the boy reached a certain developmental threshold. Sexuality by the Ancient Greeks was not seen on the same terms as today. The debate surrounding the moral ethics of pederasty lives on in the academic world, where some equate pederasty with paedophilia, and others prefer to examine the practice through the contextualization of the past.

6.7.5 Women and Music

The relationship between music and women in the Ancient Mediterranean basin is strong, whether it be secular or related to religious activities. Poetry was sung, accompanied by a lyre, and constitutes one of the great examples of women's own thoughts in their own words, of the time. We know of poetry from women such as Sappho of Mytilene (6th century BCE), Corinna of Thebes (5th century BCE), Praxilla of Sicyon (5th century BCE), Telesilla of Argos (5th century BCE) and Erinna (4th century BCE) amongst others. Learning how to play an instrument such as the lyre and reciting poetry with other girls and women, seems to have been widely accepted within the domestic, although girls did not attend school. The aulos is also associated with slave women, thought to be professional players, hired to perform during symposia, all-male drinking parties. One of the aspects of social life allowed to citizen women in Ancient Greece was religious duties, another space where their musicality could flourish.



CYPRUS
Woman Holding a Tambourine
5th c. B.C.
Limestone
42.9 x 12.3 x 6.5 cm
Purchase, the Museum Campaign 1988-1993 Fund
2006.53



GREECE or MAGNA GRAECIA
Hellenistic period
Veiled Female Dancer
4th-1st c. B.C.
Terracotta
17 x 7.1 x 5 cm
Gift of Lisa Newman Greenspan in memory of David Beryl
Greenspan
2013.663



ROMAN EMPIRE
PROVINCE OF SYRIA
Bust of Aphrodite (?) holding cymbals
3rd-4th c. A.D.
Marble
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-
arts du Québec
DEP46.2003



Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-
arts du Québec
DEP15.2003



ATTICA, GREECE
Close to the Cambridge 72 Painter
Red-figure stemmed Plate
Youth Playing Lyre
About 430-420 B.C. Pottery
7 cm (h.), 19.1 cm (diam.)
Adaline Van Horne Bequest
1944.Cb.3

6.7.6 Goddesses, Monsters and Heroines

Heroes, Gods, and monsters in the mythology of ancient Greece and Rome provided explanations for and were signifiers of social and cultural norms, just as they are in today's storytelling. Both the belief systems of the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as their creative literature and cultural production supported the idea of women in the roles of Goddesses, monsters and heroines. Attributed to these mythological personas are often a mix of characteristics that either challenge or emphasize culturally constructed notions of gender.



ATTICA, GREECE
Black-figure hydria
Battle between Athena and the
giant Enceladus
About 560-530 B.C.
Pottery, painted and incised
decoration
34.2 cm (h.), 37 cm (diam.)
Gift of F. Cleveland Morgan
1957.Cb.1

Athena is portrayed as the goddess of skillful and strategic war, wisdom, the arts, justice, weaving and purity, and of course the city of Athens. Her association with attributes such as war and wisdom traditionally considered masculine qualities by the Greeks, complicates constructed gender binaries. Athena disrupts the gender binary by appearing as man in human form to Odysseus in Homer's *The Odyssey*. Her ability to cross over and be successful in the realm of men is through the denial of her own femininity and sexuality. Chastity as a virtue was considered to be only applicable to women, and by remaining adamantly chaste, Athena denies what were considered negative feminine qualities, such as sexual desire, and is considered of impeccable character.

The god Hephaestus attempted to rape Athena but was not able to penetrate the Goddess. Her successful defence of her virginity was seen as proof of her impeccable character. The responsibility of staying chaste is put solely on Athena's shoulders even in non-consensual situations. The importance of Athena's virginity in her character composition reflects the social perception that a woman's sexuality is directly connected to her value, a perception we continue to struggle against today.



ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT

Mirror

Head of Medusa in relief on back

3rd c. B.C.

Bronze

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP53.2003



ATTICA, GREECE

"C" Painter

Active 575-550 B.C.

Black-figure cup, "Siana" type

Exterior: warriors in combat, horsemen (on back); interior, siren Pottery, painted and incised decoration

13.4 x 33.5 x 24.7 cm

Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest

1959.Cb.2



ATHENS, GREECE

Attributed to the CHC Group

Black-figure skyphos

Scene of Amazons pushing a chariot

Late 6th-early 5th c. B.C.

Pottery

Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

DEP6.2003

Representations of the Amazons, the warrior women said to be related to the Scythians and the Sarmatians, were very popular in Ancient Greek mythology and iconography. Depictions of the Amazonomachy, a mythological battle between Greeks and the Amazons has been interpreted as symbolic of Greece's ethnocentric views and believed superiority to those that they considered to be 'Others.' As warrior women who had thumbed their noses at marriage and the Greek *polis* they represented a resistance to the ideals of the time. Not so much the opposite of Greeks, they served instead to define Greekness by displaying the things you shouldn't do or be as a respectable Greek.

6.7.7 Gendered and Segregated Space, and the Domestic:

The family household has been a topic of contention in the world of Mediterranean Archaeology, specifically, the notion of gendered spaces. In ancient Greek literary texts, gender segregation is proposed as the ideal that every household should abide by. Many scholars in the

past, and some still, promoted the idea of the *gynaikonitis*, or women's quarters, which would assure women's seclusion within the home. However, examination of the archaeological evidence does not support this theory as completely as some of the ancient authors would have us believe and bypasses the implications of varying socio-economic groups. Written by male elites, these ancient texts most likely reflect the ideals of a small fraction of interested groups and imposed by even fewer, as opposed to the generalized practice of a general public. Important to include to this conversation is the position held by slaves in the household and how their unpaid labour within the sphere of the domestic might have been the only way that those of the higher classes could abide by ideals of gendered seclusion. The debate around gendered domestic space in the Ancient Mediterranean reminds us that we shouldn't take everything we read in ancient texts at face value, and that when trying to understand the past, a multitude of theories and avenues are available to us, each with different and sometimes conflicting results.



Possibly TARANTO, ITALY

Group of Ephedrismos

Young Woman with Eros on Her Shoulder

1st half of 2nd c. B.C.

Terracotta, moulded

34.5 x 14 x 10.5 cm

Purchase, gift of Gerald Benjamin in honour of his wife Cynthia
2003.66

This figurine represents an *ephedrismos* scene, a popular childhood game. *Ephedrismos* was a mixture of lawn bowling and piggybacking rolled into one. This figurine depicts the moment where the girl has failed to overturn the larger stone with her pebble and must carry the winner on her back. In this depiction the winner of the game is *Eros*, the god of love. Eros' presence in this common scene-type, could signify marriage and the girl's possible betrothal.



MAGNA GRAECIA, possibly CANOSA
Hellenistic period

Standing Female Figure Holding a Jug

3rd c. B.C.

Terracotta

23.6 x 8.9 x 8.4 cm

Gift of Lisa Newman Greenspan in memory of David Beryl
Greenspan

2013.662



SOUTHERN ITALY, APULIA

Kalathos in the Daunian style

4th c. B.C.

Painted pottery

Gift of Claude Paradis

18.5 cm (h.), 24.5 cm (diam.)

2016.207

The *Kalathos* was a basket or painted pottery associated with the act of spinning and weaving wool. It has been interpreted widely as a signifier of industriousness, respectability and virtuosity in women and is often seen in representations of adornment scenes of weddings. As a gendered object it signifies the sphere of women.



ATHENS, GREECE
Red-figure lebes gamikos
Giving of wedding presents
430 B.C.
Pottery
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP24.2003



ATHENS, GREECE
Kertch style
Red-figure kalyx krater
Eros between two women carrying chests Mid-4th c. B.C.
Pottery
Diniacopoulos Collection of the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec
DEP27.2003

Marriage was the expected future for most girls. The importance placed on creating children that were citizens of the *polis* (city state) was enhanced when Pericles enacted citizenship laws in 451 BCE in Athens. This law deemed that citizenship could only be imparted on the offspring of two Athenian citizens, drastically changing the way marriage was regulated by the state. Previously, marriages between citizens and non-citizens was common, and the children produced

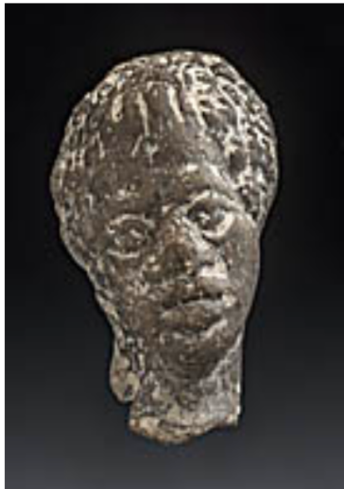
from that marriage would be considered citizens as long as one parent was a citizen. We get conflicting visions of what marriage was like. Legally and socially, marriage was a contract between two families, a transaction that included a dowry, with the purpose of creating offspring. Girls were married off in their adolescence to men in their late twenties and thirties usually. Scenes that represent the adornment of the bride, such as on this Kalyx Krater, are common and allow us a view of what marriage preparations were enacted. Gifts from other women are offered to the bride from other women. The presence of Eros, the god of love, romanticizes the notion of marriage in these scenes. His presence projects romance and the notion of love into the marriage arrangement.

6.7.8 Diversity in the Ancient Mediterranean

Greek and Roman writers described sub-Saharan Africans as "Aethiopes" referring to what the Greeks had called Aethiopia, the region of Upper Nubia. The term itself carried no social implications, igniting contemporary debates and scholarship around the idea of whether or not racism existed in antiquity. There were no laws in either Greece or Rome forbidding interracial marriages or preventing people from holding high social or political office because of the colour of their skin. In the examples exhibited here, we have different interpretations of the Aethiopes type. The objectification of physical traits on the oil lamp are reminiscent of the caricaturization of black Americans in North American material culture of the past two centuries, whereas the sculpture of the girl is rendered with care and thoughtfulness which complicates our understanding of how people represented themselves and others. Although it seems that the concept of race that has generated racism in our time (from the African slave trade, for example) may not have existed in Antiquity, we can remark that ethnocentrism did exist in varying degrees. One belief held by Hippocrates was that of 'environmental determinism' in which entire societies were ascribed physical and intellectual characteristics based on the geographic and climatic elements of their territories. This theory was a contributing factor in the legitimization of colonialism and racism throughout modern and contemporary eras.



Roman Empire
EGYPT
Oil Lamp in the Shape of a Nubian Face
1st-2nd c. A.D.
Terracotta
Gift of Claude Paradis
4.4 x 8 x 6.5 cm
2016.379



Roman Empire
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION (?)
Head from a Nubian Statuette
2nd c. B.C.-4th c. A.D. (?)
Terracotta
Gift of Claude Paradis
5 x 3.2 x 3.8 cm
2016.380

7 Conclusion

Through my curatorial journey of the re-installation of the permanent collection of *Mediterranean Archaeology* at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, I was able to put some critical museological theory to the test. Some of that theory is present in the object choices, display and textual information written for the gallery space. Some are not. The reality of the large museological institution is that the collaborative conceptual work that curators embark upon amongst themselves, with artists and communities is forced to work, to a large degree, within the existing structures of the museum, particularly for permanent collections. These structures represent the ways of doing that the museum has developed in order create exhibitions that speak to the expectations and demands of multiple groups such as the public, boards of trustees, curators, collections management, academia, financial sponsors, lending communities and government bodies, to name just a few. In order make the museum an enticing entertainment and educational destination, survey museums in particular are in the business of producing large exhibitions in consecutive waves of programming. Each exhibition is created using the structures and systems set firmly in place that ensure the museums ability to repeatedly produce these blockbuster exhibitions. As Ruth Phillips writes, “exhibitions are complex theatrical assemblages that exist for defined periods in real time and space, and they are experienced by visitors on many different levels. The individual shape and style of each exhibition is created through a unique alchemy of storyline, object selection, written texts, design elements, colour, light, sound, educational programming, publications, graphic branding, a marketing campaign, and a souvenir shop.”⁸⁴ All of these elements come together to create the final product that is the exhibition, based on the expectations and demands of those groups mentioned above.

Within the large survey museum that is the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, there are multiple departments and levels of approval and collaboration for a reinstallation program such as the “World Cultures and Togetherness” project. This project began with the curators and the director of the museum discussing ways to re-present the permanent archaeological collections in a more dynamic and engaging way. Once a concept and ideals were decided upon, in this case the

⁸⁴ Ruth B. Phillips, “Moment of Truth: *The Spirit Sings* as critical Event and the Exhibition Inside It,” in *Museum Pieces: Towards the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 52.

idea of inter-culturalism, criticality and decolonizing, the exhibition project then fanned out to touch the relevant departments whose role is to act as essential support to the materialization of this vision. Once the conceptualization of the exhibition is finalized, the various departments are brought in to produce their part, answering predominantly to the Director. The decision maker, an authority ultimately held by a singular figure, approves each department's project development. Within the development of an exhibition this process may be relatively standard, however within the context of the "World Cultures and Togetherness" project where the aspirations for a theoretical platform in critical museology and decolonizing methodologies was the desired outcome, the standard museological practice can run in opposition to the ultimate goal.

My experience reflects in many ways the arguments of Bruce W. Ferguson and Anthony Shelton who both write about the difficulty of implementing critical museological theory into the museum because of the systems and structures of the institution itself.⁸⁵ This is not necessarily the objective of those working in the museum, but rather the structural and systemic demands of such a large and multi-departmental machine that runs smoothest when utilizing the mechanics put in place originally. Small steps outside the box are permitted, yet the systemic modifications required to actually embark on a program of change throughout the museum are sometimes met with resistance because of the enormity of the task required for their implementation and the challenge they create to certain "vested-interest gate-keepers" as Bruce W. Ferguson describes.⁸⁶ The steps outside the box that are allowed reflect more of a temporary experimentation in display or stylization of exhibition, and although those changes are important, when they are not backed up by a thorough internal understanding of the change in practice, they are condemned to be thought of as a temporary stylistic change, as opposed to a critical systemic one.

Because of the deconstructive, detail-oriented and simultaneously wholistic nature of critical museology, it is important that all the departments of the museum participate in the visualization process and therefore, hold a responsibility and some level of accountability in the outcome of the exhibition. This requires that a generalized understanding of some of the problematic elements of the museum as an institution of culture and knowledge be offered to the employees of every department and at every level, including those at the highest level of power

⁸⁵ Shelton, "Critical Museology"; Ferguson, "Exhibition Rhetorics."

⁸⁶ Ferguson, "Exhibition Rhetorics," 181.

and authority. In order to do this, the museum must admit to the existence of some of its problematic aspects and have an open discussion with those who work within the institution, as well as communities outside of it.

Terms such as ‘intercultural,’ ‘diversity,’ ‘decolonial’ and ‘critical’ have become marketing tools, flash words that allow the museum to connect itself to a growing consciousness and questioning of colonial structures of power. The MMFA’s move towards a critical, intercultural presentation of cultural collections is exciting, yet the inconsistencies within that criticality are telling. Can an exhibition of Graeco-Roman artifacts be considered critical if categories of art and artifact remain unchallenged and even reinforced through the display of statuary on a physical pedestal, elevated above all other works as a signifier of universal beauty? Can we promote the diversity and interculturality of an exhibition when there is a conflation between multiculturalism and interculturality from decision makers? The marketing of exhibitions with these misnomers can seem hypocritical if the realities of the inner workings of the museum do not align with them.

In contrast, I argue for a collaborative exhibition development model that connects the theory with those in all departments from the very beginning and that de-centralizes decision making power from a singular authority. Critical and decolonial change in the museum must not be seen solely as a temporary marketing venture, but rather an examination of systems of power from within. Not every system need be put on its head, but rather the approach to systems of doing must be revised in order to establish their relationship to power dynamics that promote a singular way of seeing, experiencing and doing.

To this point, the display of permanent collections is a crucial area where museums can engage with critical change. The display of those works collected over decades, often decided by the taste and values of those “vested-interest gate-keepers”⁸⁷ based on and contributing to a canon of aesthetics, are those collections that require the most transparency in their presentation. The exhibition “World Cultures and Togetherness” represents a turn in the right direction, specifically from my own work on the *Archaeology of the Mediterranean Basin* gallery where there was a conscious effort to relate the past to the present through transparency and criticality. However,

⁸⁷ Ferguson, "Exhibition Rhetorics," 181.

until critical museology finds its way meaningfully into the museum's vocabulary on a habitual basis, that change will be less than thorough.

8 Bibliography

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9 Appendix 1

Artifact Piece (1986) James Luna, San Diego Museum of Man
and The Decade Show, New York (1990)



10 Appendix 2

“Cabinetmaking 1820-1960” in *Mining The Museum* (1992),
Fred Wilson, The Maryland Historical Society



Cabinetmaking 1820–1960



11 Appendix 3

“Metalwork 1793-1880” in *Mining The Museum* (1992), Fred Wilson, The Maryland Historical Society

Metalwork 1793–1880



Silver Service

Pitchers, steins, and goblets
Baltimore repoussé style, c. 1830–80

Iron Slave Shackles

c. 1793–1872

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12 Appendix 4

“Modes of Transport 1770-1910” in *Mining The Museum* (1992), Fred Wilson, The Maryland Historical Society

Modes of Transport 1770–1910



Model of Baltimore Clipper

Of type converted to slavers (rigged as brig) after War of 1812

Maryland in 1750

Painting by Frank B. Mayer, c. 1856

Sedan Chair

Used by Governor Eden of Maryland, c. 1770

Baby Carriage

c. 1880, with Ku Klux Klan hood, c. 1900
Donated anonymously,

13 Appendix 5

Mediterranean Archaeology Gallery: Thematic structure

