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FORGOTTEN AND UNKNOWN – CLASSICAL BRONZES FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF FINLAND

LEENA PIETILÄ-CASTRÉN

Over recent decades, archaeology – and particularly classical archaeology – has come to appreciate its responsibility to address the cultural impact of antiquarianism and uncontrolled collecting. Efforts to redress the connected wrongs often mean studying forgotten collections and learning more about the motivations behind the collecting. The worst-case scenario would be to totally neglect such objects and ignore their effects on our views of ancient culture and the value we place on artefacts from other societies. This brief study is a contribution towards redressing the situation in Finland, which had its own period of antiquarian collecting and currently houses a large collection of forgotten artefacts in its museum storerooms. Placing both the collections and the collectors in their proper contexts will hopefully add both to their value and our understanding.

The catalogue of the National Museum of Finland contains extensive entries for a variety of Graeco-Roman antiquities, but while the vases and terracottas have received scholarly attention, an overall study of the finds is still lacking. To address this oversight a selection of eleven bronze figurines and six bronze vessels or their fragments were studied for this article.¹ The artefacts were brought to Finland over a period of roughly one hundred years beginning already in the 1850's, and their provenances were only reported in a summary fashion, if at all. Consequently, we must approach these long-forgotten objects as examples of Finnish antiquities collecting. The following overview of their

¹ Weapons, mirrors, and personal items, such as fibulae, pendants, and belt buckles, as well as the bronze items of the Near-Eastern collection (KM 6100) purchased by Prof. Arthur Hjelt in 1911, were not included in this study.

provenance, identification, and destinies was based on both archival material and visual examination, and the observations on their iconography, shapes, and construction techniques rely on parallels in the research literature, which has been constantly increasing alongside the growing interest in ancient bronzes, for figurines and vessels alike. Considering the objects' tenuous histories, even the minutest clue regarding the place of acquisition was deemed noteworthy, as was any information about the purchaser's or donator's possible interest in ancient culture.²

In ancient times, bronze figurines depicting gods and heroes, and later also mortals, were part of private life and personal religiosity. They were small and light enough to carry while travelling, which often saw them taken far from their places of origin.³ It is usually possible to distinguish the basic iconographic types of these objects, but figurines called "pseudoantique", "made in the manner of the antique", or "dubitanda" were also common and sometimes complicate identification,⁴ as we are dealing with objects of great popularity both during the antiquity and again since the Renaissance. Furthermore, there are considerable variances in the plethora of known bronze figurines, depending both on the skills of the craftsman as well as the preferences and buying power of the purchaser.⁵ Bronze vessels were also made to be used over long periods, and were often passed on over generations and treasured as luxury items. In a similar manner to the figurines, they could also move significant distances along with their owners, thus making them resistant to strict chronologies.⁶ Both illustrating and complicating this picture somewhat, faithful replicas *all'antica* of the most sought-after examples are still produced today and offered for sale at museum shops and auctions.

² About the research perspectives on ancient bronzes and the need for a comprehensive database, see Franken 2015B, 125, 129.

³ Ritter 1994, 333–335.

⁴ The terms used e.g. by Comstock – Vermeule 1971, 185, and Franken 2015A, 281. Questions of authenticity since the 16th century are discussed by Favaretto 2000, 79–83, and by Colonna 1970, 194–195.

⁵ Ritter 1994, 337. In votive contexts the specific alloys of the figurines may also have been of some secondary importance, Biella 2017, 488.

⁶ Bolla – Castoldi 2016, 121–122, 141.

The Strengberg Figurines

The first of the minor bronzes we will consider are linked to the shipowner, tobacco manufacturer, and alderman Philip Ulric Strengberg (1805–1872), who lived in Jakobstad on the west coast of Finland. While he was an alderman, he donated two allegedly Etruscan bronze figurines to the Swedish-speaking school of the Wasa Gymnasium, which had temporarily moved to Jakobstad after the Great Fire in 1852. In its new location the school's collection of antiquities started to grow, eventually also including material from Troy and Pompeii,⁷ and many of the donors were local shipowners. It would have been natural for Strengberg's captains, sailors, and merchants to bring him mementoes from the faraway countries they visited, as he was a well-known and esteemed citizen; he is not known to have travelled abroad himself. As he was an alderman from 1837 to 1858,⁸ the date of the original donation would fall in the 1850's. Later, some items from the school's ethnographical collection were given to the Ostrobothnian Museum; but without any further details – the cover letter having been lost – only the reference to the two Etruscan bronze figurines remain.⁹ In 1982 the two bronzes were transferred to the National Museum, and some confusion over the name of the original donor arose during the process.¹⁰

The first Strengberg-figurine (KM 21445:2, Fig. 1) depicts a sparingly moulded naked male, solid cast, with a dark green patina and a height of 8.6 cm. He stands with his weight on his right foot, the right leg is broken at the calf. His left leg is forward, and likewise broken at the ankle. The outstretched arms are also broken. His navel and nipples are indicated by stamped incised circles. The two rings visible in the heavy neck may indicate a separately cast head,

⁷ Krook 1949, 252–253.

⁸ Hoffman 2009, 859.

⁹ The catalogue entry for the donation (80080:1–299) to the Ostrobothnian Museum does not contain any information on the figurines. Instead, there is an undated supplementary list of some 490 items, including “2 etruskiska statyer. Brons. 2 avgjutningar av bronsföremål. Följebrev.” I am indebted to research officer Maaria Gråsten from the Provincial Archives of Vasa and amanuensis Kimmo Vatanen from the Ostrobothnian Museum for the painstaking research they carried out for me in 2015 and 2021.

¹⁰ The name was entered in the main catalogue as “rådman Stromberg”, but in the handwritten tag of KM 21445:1–2 (Verif. Diar. 28.4.1982) it reads “2 st. metallbilder. Skänkta af rådman Strengberg i Jakobstad”.

which is large for the body. The face is heart-shaped; the mouth and lips were rendered with a pressed point or chisel, the small nose is straight, and the eyes are depicted as holes. His hair is wound around a fillet that is represented as a roll surrounding the face, and the curly locks are rendered by shallow grooves at the back of his skull. Parallels for the pose and hairstyle, even if portrayed in a more sophisticated manner, are known since the Early Classical period, such as a small bronze head of a youth at the Acropolis Museum, dated to ca. 460 BC.¹¹ The type is called an athlete or kouros, and recalls the large-scale statues set up at Greek sanctuaries and cemeteries. The posture of the arms of our figurine could be meant to portray physical activity, such as throwing a discus,¹² although the act does not depict the precise moment of throwing, but rather preparing for it. The figurine may also be related to the simplified bronze figurines of assaulting warriors.¹³ The unshaped musculature is not typical of the Early Classical prototypes, and the anatomical details, rendered with a pressed circular stamp, are reminiscent of Italiote production of the mid-Hellenistic period, ca. 275–150 BC.¹⁴



Fig. 1.

¹¹ Inv. 6590. Mattusch 1988, 94–95. Mattusch 2012, 11, fig. 5.

¹² As a variety of the Etruscan types from the Late Archaic period onwards, see Richardson 1983, 206, pl. 143, figs 477–478, and Boucher 1976, 22, pl. 20, figs. 19–20.

¹³ For parallels from the northeastern Italy, Cassola Guida 1989, 42–45, figs. 10–11.

¹⁴ Zampieri 1986, 74–75, no. 22. Richardson 1983, 280–281, no 17, pl. 193, fig. 652, about this type of decoration as a Late Archaic feature on textiles, and Comstock – Vermeule 1971, 174–175, nos. 202–206, as Archaic or later.

The other figurine, an advancing naked male (KM 21445:1, Fig. 2), is also of solid cast, with a dark green patina, and 9.6 cm of height. The right leg is broken off at the knee and both hands are missing. His left calf is shapely, and the penis and pectorals are outlined. Both arms are extended, the right elbow is raised, and the left is draped with a lion skin. The neck is long, the face is heart-shaped with a linear mouth, clearly marked nose, and slanting eyes; his hair is cropped. Under his left sole there are remains of a tenon for fastening the figurine on a base, now missing. The figurine of the attacking or striding warrior type is especially connected to Hercules, as suggested here by the lion skin; the missing right hand may have originally held a club.¹⁵



Fig. 2.

The type has consequently been called *Hercules Promachos*, *Etruscan Hercules*, or *Striding Hercules*, whose long standing iconography has been known from the fifth century BC to the end of the Republican period, even extending to the Italiote-Etruscan milieu and Gaul.¹⁶ Iconographically our figurine refers back to more finely finished models, but the blurred facial features and careless tooling make it a product of later workmanship of the II century BC to the I century AD. Given their similarities and likely function, the two Strengberg figurines may have come from the same archaeological context, perhaps of a votive nature.

¹⁵ The iconographic variety of Hercules was extensive, Biella 2017, 491–500, figs. 3–6.

¹⁶ Below KM14560:818c p. 165 and KM 18375:5 p. 183. Terribile 2000, 67, nos. 57–58.

The Ignatius Bronzes

In 1868 K. F. Ignatius donated five bronze objects to the Historical-Ethnographical Museum of the University in Helsinki.¹⁷ He had obtained them from nearby Rome the year before while attending an international congress on statistics. It is not known whether the bronzes – two figurines, one detached handle, and two keys – were purchased, or even discovered by him, or perhaps given to him by an Italian friend. The historian Dr. Karl Ferdinand Ignatius (1837–1909) was active in many fields of the society, first as the amanuensis of the Historical-Ethnographical Museum in 1860–1872, then as a civil servant in the Main Office of Statistics since 1865, becoming its head in 1868–1885, a committee member of the Society for Culture and Education in 1873–1887, the chairman of the Finnish Antiquarian Society in 1875–1885, and eventually a senator in 1885–1900 and 1905–1908.¹⁸ Ignatius was also a connoisseur of ancient culture. To finance his studies, he tutored in ancient Greek and used to read two hundred lines of Homer's epic poems daily for his own pleasure. Later in life, he recited the *Odyssey* as a bed-side story for his children.¹⁹ His interest in ancient culture also included the Roman world, as is shown by the booklet on ancient Pompeii he wrote in 1882,²⁰ soon after another official journey to Italy; in this text he covered ancient Pompeian society, its life, and monuments in an absorbing and expert manner. Against this background it is unsurprising that Ignatius instantly entrusted the bronzes to the museum for greater benefit instead of keeping them by himself.²¹

Ignatius' bronze figurine of a naked male (KM 14560:818c, Fig. 3) is solid cast with a yellowish green patina, and 5.8 cm in height. He stands with his weight on his right foot and the left foot slightly advanced. On the collarbone there is a knot marked with incised lines, and an animal skin is draped over his left forearm, in which he holds a longish object. He stretches out his right arm,

¹⁷ KM14560:818a-d; Färling 1875, 153, no. 20.

¹⁸ Luther 2004, 271.

¹⁹ Bergholm 1944, 32, 96, 110.

²⁰ K. F. Ignatius 1882. *Ett besök i Pompeji. Reseminne*, Helsingfors. Bergholm 1944, 159.

²¹ Färling 1875, 334. Even if the information is meagre, it certainly is correct as the individual who wrote it down was Ignatius' cousin Fredrik Ignatius Färling, who assisted at the Museum in 1867–1875, Talvio 2016, 57.

holding another longish object in his hand. His face is round, with an oblong opening for the mouth, the nose is snub, and the eyes are depicted as small dots. One part of the animal skin is drawn over the head, and hemispherical elements cover his ears. At the backside his buttocks and spine are marked by tooling, and the animal skin stretches diagonally over his upper back. The figurine stands easily balanced on his own feet, without a base. This is another Hercules, with his well-known attributes: the bow, a gift from Apollo, and the club – or what is left of it – carved by him from an olive-tree during his first labour against the Nemean lion, as well as the trophy from that fight, the leonté. The forepaws are tied into a knot resting on his collarbone, and the lion's head covers his head, hood-like, with the prominent ears.²²



Fig. 3.

Hercules was a favoured divinity in ancient Rome and the surrounding area, *i.e.* the site of our figurine's 19th century acquisition. Important temples to Hercules in Latium include those in Tibur, Lanuvium, Ostia, Cora, and further east in Alba Fucens, and in the Forum Boarium in the heart of Rome.

²² There is an immense variety of Hercules with leonté, *e.g.* Colonna 1970, 145–156, nos. 435–478 from the Sabellic area in Central Italy. Another bronze figurine with all three of his attributes, Mitten – Doeringer 1967, 179, no. 183.

The second Ignatius bronze is a male head (KM 14560:818b, Fig. 4), ca. 4.0 cm in height including the tenon. It is unfortunate that this object has gone missing and is known only from a photograph taken before the exhibition *Antiquitas* in 1971.²³ In the existing photo the head is depicted in profile with a thickish neck and a small part of the shoulder, and seems to be overweight, with a rather weak chin. The lips, smallish straight nose, and slightly bulbous eyeball with brows are carefully outlined. The ear disappears inside the sideburn, the forehead locks are reverse comma-shaped and marked with grooves. This is a miniature portrait of a Julio-Claudian Emperor, with the characteristic hair style of Nero, depicted with a sinuous wave pattern of locks over the forehead, as is known from his portraits of the later period datable to ca. 60.²⁴ The hairstyle is consistent with Suetonius' description of his hair as *coma in gradus formata*.²⁵ The enlarged eyes are considered a feature characteristic of the regional products of Italy and the western Roman world.²⁶ This little Nero could be the pommel of a small knife, with other known parallels often being shaped as animals, hands, or female heads, and known especially from western Switzerland, along the Rhine, and England, often from military camps.²⁷



Fig. 4.

²³ This bronze is one of the very few objects identifiable from the catalogue (without pictures) of the exhibition. It was presented without dimensions or date as a miniature head with the hairstyle of a Roman male, Ericsson 1971, 77, no. 214.

²⁴ Kleiner 1992, 138, no. 112. Pollini 2002, 4–5, 61–62, figs. 105–106. Opper 2021, 84, fig. 59.

²⁵ Suet. *Nero* 51.

²⁶ Pollini 2002, 22.

²⁷ Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 32–34 + n. 93. A small weight would have required a loop on top of the head, of which there is no sign, Bonaccorsi 2016, 33, no. 10 + n. 87. As to the miniature scale of our head, a bronze bust of Claudius(?) offers a parallel, with its height of 4.5 cm, as does a head of Antoninus Pius(?) with a height of 3.0 cm, Babelon – Blanchet 1895, 363, no. 832 and 376, no. 858.

The third of Ignatius' bronzes is a vertical handle (KM 14560:818d, Fig. 5) in the shape of a male figure leaning slightly back, with arms shaped like wings. It once belonged to a one-handed pitcher-type vessel with a mouth diameter of ca. 6.3 cm. It was cast with a mould, its patina is turquoise, and its height is 5.3 cm. The figurine's feet are poised on a trapezoidal convex plate, and the legs are tightly held together. The knee-length tunic is unbelted, with a vertical drapery on the left side, exposing



Fig. 5.

the right shoulder. His face is round, with very small mouth and lips delicately shaped, and a small narrow nose, round eyeballs, and grooved eyebrows; the hair is short and decorated with a wreath. The upper feathers of the outstretched arm-wings conform with the rim of the vessel, while lower feathers are shaped more naturally as three sets of feathers, the shortest arching like a volute. The delicately shaped male figure held his head above the rim, his upper limbs shaped as wings may symbolize his trade as an acrobat. A comparable handle with a schematic human figure and identical attachment comes from Sopiana, modern Pécs, in Roman Pannonia, datable to the I – II centuries AD,²⁸ and a few are known from Austria and in museum collections in northern Italy.²⁹ Human figures were a

²⁸ Radnóti 1938, pl. 53, no. 6. In the first century Pompeian products the undecorated versions of inferior attachments were usually leaf-shaped or triangular. About the different parts of bronze vessels as products of specialized workshops, Tassinari 2018, 84.

²⁹ Castoldi 2004, 432, no. 433.

long-standing subject for handles, but this precise type seems to refer to local or regional production near the north-eastern Alps. Ignatius' bronzes may come from a single context, perhaps the settlement of a former military man or an itinerant merchant.

Bronzes from the Collection Millon

The bronzes examined above may have been random purchases, however the acquisition of prehistoric and Gallo-Roman objects at the auction of the Collection Millon in Paris in 1923 was authorized by the Antell Commission in Helsinki. The mandate of the Swedish agent Olov Janse was to obtain some typically French antiquities for the National Museum.³⁰ The person behind the Collection Millon was Henry-Ernest Millon born in Yonne and a lawyer by profession. He worked as a judge in the court of first instance in Chalon-sur-Saône, and later at the court of appeal in Dijon.³¹ After his daily duties, he dedicated his life to the archaeology of the nearby areas in Burgundy, and was a corresponding member of the Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France.³² When the railway from Louhans to Chalon-sur-Saône was built in 1869–1870, he is known to have turned up by the riverbanks after the working hours, and often picked up objects that others had declined to take. In the end, his vitrines held a heterogeneous collection of material spanning from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages, with silver treasures displayed by modest iron objects.³³ His collection was published by Joseph Déchelette *et alii* in 1913.

The Millon bronzes have the advantage of supplying at least elementary information about their places of discovery in the Département de Saône-et-Loire in east-central France, as seven of them were allegedly unearthed in Le Petit Creusot, one in Gigny-sur-Saône in 1869, and one in Louhans. Le Petit Creusot is a locality near the modern city of Chalon-sur-Saône by the shore of the Saône, the right tributary of the river Rhône. The Roman merchants referred

³⁰ KM 8248:1–105. Pietilä-Castrén 2007, 83 + ns. 166–168. The focus was obviously on prehistoric material, which was abundant in the Collection Millon.

³¹ Déchelette 1913, VI.

³² At least in the years 1884–1899, *Bulletin* 1899, 19.

³³ Déchelette 1913, 155–157, fig. 23.

to by Caesar in his Gallic Wars,³⁴ had of old visited the main port of the Celtic tribe of the Aedui, which had abundant traces of the La Tène culture; Roman Cabillonum, the future Chalon-sur-Saône, arose at a short distance northward at an important crossroads,³⁵ and was known for its local bronze workshop.³⁶ The two other sites, Gigny-sur-Saône and Louhans, were also intimately connected to waterways and thus open both to traffic and different cultural connections.³⁷

The Millon figurines reflect in essence the religious beliefs of the society of the Roman Cabillonum, and may come from burials, one or two lararia, if not from local shrines as votive offerings. The first of them depicts a standing naked male (KM 8248:64, Fig. 6) of 4.3 cm height, with a greenish-brown patina. It is solid cast, except the partly hollow left thigh due to a miscast. His head, right hand, and the thumb and index finger of the left hand are missing, and both legs are cut off above the knees. The flattish figurine stands with his weight on his right foot, pushing the pelvis to the right. The genitals, flat stomach, navel, and pectorals are clearly



Fig. 6.

³⁴ Caesar *Gall.* 7,42,5 & 90,7.

³⁵ The locality of La Benne-la-Faux is now considered as the original port of the Aedui, Billoin – Bonnamour – Mouton – Videau 2009, 263, 266, fig. 3, 277.

³⁶ Boucher 1976, 131, 227.

³⁷ The former lies some seventeen kilometres downstream from Cabillonum, while the latter by the Seille, the left tributary of Saône, is ca. forty kilometres south-east of Cabillonum.

marked. The right arm is straight and extended, and the left arm is less extended with a disproportionately large palm. At the backside, two longish wisps of hair curve on the shoulder blades. The body is muscular and fit. The S-curve of the posture goes back to the fourth century BC, and ultimately to the Praxitelian statues of Apollo in line with the long locks of hair, one of his characteristics. The possibly missing attribute, a lyre, a bow, or a branch of laurel, would have been a separate piece of bronze and attached to the palm, thus explaining its large size. In his *Gallic Wars*, Caesar reported that Apollo was a popular Gallic divinity believed to avert diseases.³⁸ The simple bronze figurines may have been vague reminiscences of ancient masterpieces, but it is much in doubt whether local sculptors were even aware of the precedents, or else were simply making popular copies with local overtones.³⁹ The flatness and spare modelling place our figurine in the later phases of the production, to the I – II centuries AD.

The second Millon figurine is a draped male (KM 8248:65, Fig. 7), intact and solid cast with a brown patina, 6.6 cm in height. This laminous (Th 0.3–0.7 cm) figurine stands with his weight on both feet, slightly apart and seen as the mere tips of the shoes. Under the footwear there is a tenon for fastening the figurine to its base, now missing. The robe is draped diagonally from the right waist over the left shoulder, leaving part of the torso bare. The arms are tightly held against the body, while the right forearm is stretched out, and he holds an umbilical offering bowl in his hand. The shaping of the left arm is blurred, and the fist is fused with the object by the waist. In the upper body the drapery is marked with two diagonal arches decorated with shallow grooves. The face is oval, the mouth horizontal, the nose small and arching, and the eyeballs large with protruding brows, all shaped with a chisel. He wears three schematically rendered leaves on his head. At the back the longish hair, marked with five incised lines, reaches to the shoulder blades. This popular type of a male votary was created in Hellenistic central Italy, produced in varying quality, and often connected with the cult of Dionysos-Bacchus on account of the leafy wreath, identified as ivy.⁴⁰ The object

³⁸ Caesar, *Gall.* 6,16–17. The popularity of Apollo is also attested by his many local epithets, Jufer – Luginbühl 2001, 12, 95–96.

³⁹ Ritter 1994, 336. Similar poses of votaries are known from the area of Lyon, Boucher 1970, 165, no. 173. For a list and map of naked types of Apollo discovered in the Gallic area, Boucher 1976, 130–131, 374–375.

⁴⁰ Zampieri 1986, 89–90, nos. 32–33. Faider-Feytmans 1979, 80–81, pl. 45, no. 72.

in his left hand is an *acerra*, a sacrificial incense box.⁴¹ This type of a figurine remained popular in the western Empire for a long time,⁴² with the chronology extending into Late Imperial times.⁴³ The later examples were sometimes shaped in laminous style, as is the case with our figurine.

The third Millon bronze is a male helmeted head (KM 8248:61, Fig. 8), hollow cast, with a brown patina, 5.2 cm in height. The head has a short and thick neck and is covered with a round helmet. All the facial features are carefully marked: the small mouth with full lips is slightly open, the tip of the small nose is bent downwards, the eyes are large, with pupils marked as dimples, and the eyebrows are prominent. The forehead is slightly furrowed. The crown of the helmet is decorated with an incised grapevine, with tendrils and grapes growing into opposite directions, and above the forehead and by the temples there is an arching and unbroken groove. At the nape, the longish brim turns slightly up, and the strap under the chin is fixed on both sides to the small sidepieces of the helmet. The head stands, as it is now, without support. This is a head of a charioteer, with the characteristic headgear, a tight-fitting racing cap



Fig. 7.

⁴¹ More of *acerra*, Bentz 1992, 119–120, cat. 32.1.2, pl. 42, fig. 238, also 76, cat. 10.11, pl. 20, fig. 102.

⁴² Boucher 1970, 102–103, nos. 90–92, dated to the 3rd–2nd centuries BC. Boucher 1976, 32, pl. 6, fig. 31. The cult of Bacchus is also attested in epigraphic evidence in the territory of the Aedui, Jufer – Luginbühl 2001, 76.

⁴³ Bentz 1992, 125, no. 33.5.3, pl. 44, fig. 250, and 128–129, no. 33.7.5–6, pl. 45, figs. 260–261. Terribile 2000, 71, no. 68.



Fig. 8.

made either of leather or metal. There is a close parallel in a miniature bronze bust from Tournai in Flanders, Belgium, originally considered to be an applique of a piece of furniture, and later used as weight.⁴⁴ Another miniature parallel is the bronze bust of a charioteer that made an appearance in Rome in the 1890's, but is currently known only from a photo.⁴⁵ Similar helmets used by charioteers can be seen in the Macors or Circus Games floor mosaic from Ainay, not so far from the place of discovery of our miniature head in Le Petit Creusot, and dated to the II century AD.⁴⁶ Our bronze head's hollow structure may indicate that it was originally fastened on a wooden stick as a dedication in a shrine.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Dated to ca. 100 AD and decorated with incised volutes, Faider-Feytmans 1979, 138–139, pl. 101, no. 249.

⁴⁵ Bell 2019, 36, fig. 2.

⁴⁶ It is on display in the Gallo-Roman Museum of Lyon. The same type of helmet is shown in Roman funerary reliefs of charioteers, e.g. Kleiner 1992, 236, fig. 201. Bell 2008, 397, fig. 4.

⁴⁷ Bell 2019, 35–37.



Fig. 9.

The fourth Millon bronze is an intact hand (KM 8248:62, Fig. 9), solid cast, with a brownish black patina, 4.6 cm in height. It consists of the wrist and palm of a right hand with all of digits extended, and sinews and nails clearly marked. There is an angular tenon in the wrist. Small votive hands of bronze, with either a hole or a tenon for attaching them to a pole or a base, were associated with the worship of Jupiter Heliopolitanus whose cult remained popular in the eastern Empire, or Sabazios, and Jupiter Dolichenus,⁴⁸ whose cults covered the whole Empire. In the cult of Sabazios the hands of two fingers, the *anularis* and *digitus minimus*, are folded into the palm and copiously decorated with insects, animals, and various objects,⁴⁹ while votive hands with extended and parted fingers are characteristic of the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus.⁵⁰ The cult flourished

⁴⁸ Berndt 2018, 153–156.

⁴⁹ Vermaseren 1983, e.g. 18–19, nos. 42–47, pl. 35–39.

⁵⁰ Hørig – Schwertheim 1987, 44. The open position of the fingers excludes the possibility of the hand belonging to a charioteer holding a set of reins, and thus being connected to the helmeted male head above.

ca. 130 – 230, fading by 300, in the northern frontiers of Hadrian's wall, along the German limes, and along the Rhine and Danube valleys.⁵¹ The Dolichean hands were commonly made of bronze, were mostly life-size, and symbolized the heavenly power of the divinity in whose hands lay the well-being of his worshippers.⁵² This well-crafted miniature hand with its delicate fingers could refer to a young person's hand, or an adult female hand with a parallel from Argilly,⁵³ relatively near Le Petit Creusot. Our hand is most probably an *ex voto* to Jupiter Dolichenus,⁵⁴ as a symbol of private devotion, and may come from a domestic shrine. The missing base or attachment would have been either rectangular or a torus resembling a bracelet, the latter being the more usual in the known examples. In Roman Gaul the evidence regarding the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus is sparse and sporadic. It seems to have reached the area either from the south, through the waterways up the rivers Rhône and Saône, or along the Rhine valley.⁵⁵

The fifth Millon bronze figurine represents a naked boy (KM 8248:63, Fig. 10), cut off at the knees, the right forearm, and the left upper arm. It is solid cast, with a brownish green patina, and a height of 7.3 cm. He stands with his weight on his left foot, the right leg advanced. His upper body and his head are turned slightly to the right. His right arm is raised, while the left is stretched out. The face is chubby, the mouth is marked as an incised line turned downwards, the nose is only faintly depicted, and the eyes are two irregular holes. A very stylized knot of hair is tied on top of his head, while the rest of the hair frames his face and is marked by two vertical lines at the back of his skull. Stumps of wings on somewhat different levels are attached to his shoulder blades, and marked, as are the buttocks, with shallow grooves impressed with a flat chisel. This type of

⁵¹ Collar 2011, 217, 219, map 1, 227.

⁵² Hørig – Schwertheim 1987, 44–46.

⁵³ Hørig – Schwertheim 1987, 365–366, no. 398.

⁵⁴ For the votive gifts, Coulon 2006, 198.

⁵⁵ Statuettes depicting Jupiter Dolichenus from further south along the banks of the Rhône at Mas-Desports, and from Marseille, Hørig – Schwertheim 1987, 363–368, nos. 595–603. Collar 2011, 233, 242. Boucher 1973, 142, nos. 220–221. An undecorated hand with *anularis* and *digitus minimus* slightly bent comes from Corseul in the northern part of Gallia Lugdunensis, and is considered by Vermaseren 1983, 17–18, no. 41, pl. 34, a hand of Jupiter Sabazius. As it is plain and without decorations it should perhaps rather be classified as that of Jupiter Dolichenus.

depiction of a child is Amor or Eros, referred to as Lampadophoros, and was popular over an extensive area from the Hellenistic to the Roman periods. He was depicted running, sometimes even flying,⁵⁶ and his attributes were an apple and a torch, the former tying him to the cult of Aphrodite, the latter to the cult of the dead as Hypnos.⁵⁷ This muddled figure is the result of serial production with a very worn mould, if not a surmoulage in a local workshop, with comparable schematic bronzes coming from Roman Gaul and Germania.⁵⁸ Several examples of the winged Amor are in the collections of the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Lyon, not far from the alleged place of acquisition of our figurine, one of which might be in effect its antecedent.⁵⁹ The figurine is datable to the II – III centuries AD.

In his *Natural History*, Pliny provides us with information on metallurgy in Gaul, including a possible explanation for the modest quality of some of our figurines: “Bronze resembling the Campanian is produced in many parts of Italy and the provinces, but there they add only eight pounds of lead and do additional smelting with charcoal because of their shortage of wood. The difference produced by this is noticed especially in Gaul, where the metal is smelted between stones heated red hot, as



Fig. 10.

⁵⁶ Comstock – Vermeule 1971, 96, no. 102. Boucher 1976, 209, pl. 73, fig. 357 and Ritter 1994, 338–340, nos. 1–2 as representatives of the basic type.

⁵⁷ Cassola Guida 1989, 96.

⁵⁸ Bolla 1997, 50–51, pl. 10, no. 20. Ritter 1994, nos. 3–4. Boucher – Tassinari 1976, 31–32, no. 23.

⁵⁹ Boucher 1973, 1–6, esp. 4, no. 7.

this roasting scorches it and renders it black and friable. Moreover, they only smelt it again once whereas to repeat this several times contributes a great deal to the quality.”⁶⁰

The sixth Millon bronze is a feline head (KM 8248:66, Fig. 11) from Le Petit Creusot. It is hollow cast, with a green patina, and a height of 3.1 cm. The feline face with arching frontal bones is depicted with a carefully rendered



Fig. 11.

mouth, muzzle, and eyes with both upper and lower lids; the pupils are round and marked with small dots. The erect ears, with rounded tips, are pierced at the base; two more holes were supposed to be punched through on the upper edges, but the one on the right ear only partly pierced the metal, while the left is only a slight indentation. There is a torus-like element on the front of the neck. Cat heads were usually connected to seated animals, as in the manifestation of the ancient Egyptian female divinity Bastet from the city of Bubastis in the Delta. The cat was believed to have apotropaic qualities, and was a topic of a long history, appearing as magic statues throughout the Late, Ptolemaic and Roman periods.⁶¹ The cat was linked to Isis in Egyptian cults abroad,⁶² and was popular in all social classes in the urban milieu of Gallia Narbonensis, approximately the modern southeast

⁶⁰ Plin. *nat.* 34,20 in Rackham's 1952 translation. About the metalworking techniques and alloys, Rolley 1986, 22–30.

⁶¹ Malek 2006, 73, 79, 93.

⁶² Malek 2006, 106.

of France, and along the Rhône northwards to the area of Roman Lugdunum, modern Lyon.⁶³ The torus-like element on the neck, on which the head now stands well balanced, may be part of a base, while also referring to the original collar. The pierced ears were initially adorned with earrings of gold or silver. The date of this bronze head is from the Late Hellenistic to the Early Imperial times.

In addition to the figurines, three vessels were also included in the Finnish set of Millon bronzes. From Le Petit Creusot comes a spouted pitcher (KM 8248:22, Fig. 12) with a hammered body and mouth, and a moulded base and vertical handle. Its height is 17.0/17.4 cm,⁶⁴ and the patina is green. The pitcher has a continuous smooth profile, the ring-foot is very low, and the concave base is decorated with four concentric circles around an umbilicus.⁶⁵ The oval body has its broadest point in the middle, the neck is slightly flaring, and the simple

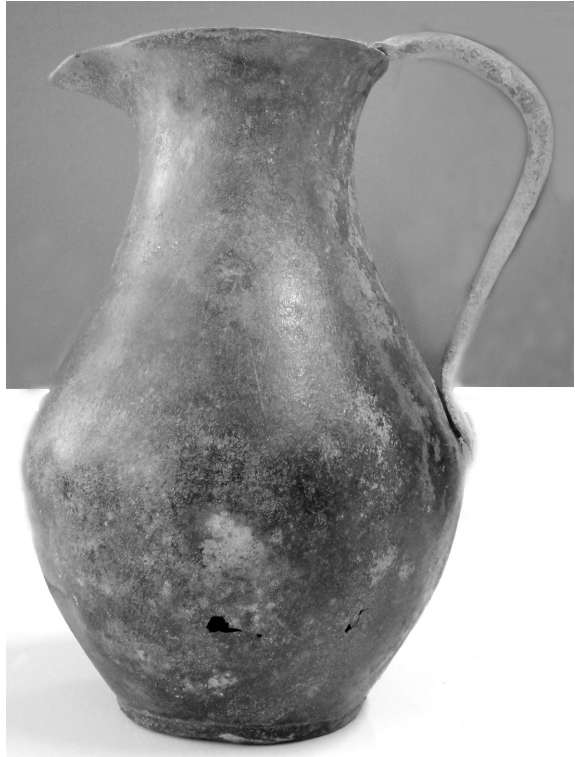


Fig. 12.

⁶³ Bricault 2009, 145–146.

⁶⁴ With handle 17.9 cm; other measurements D base 6.5, D body max 11.0, D mouth 6.2/7.0, weight 607.8.

⁶⁵ About the technique of throwing such circles with a lathe, Formigli 2000, 27, 149–150, fig. 57, 60, and Boucher – Tassinari 1976, 120.

mouth with everted rim and short rounded spout points downwards. The handle is circular in section and attached to the rim with a chevron, while terminating at the broadest point of the body in a trapezoidal attachment plate. The pitcher was an essential part of a refined tableware set, and this one was a Campanian product,⁶⁶ with parallels known both from the western and northern provinces of the Empire.⁶⁷ The handle may not be the original, as they were customarily more elaborate, often rising above the rim.

Another imported vessel is a bronze aryballos from Louhans (KM 8248:23, Fig. 13). Its body and mouth are hammered, while the base and the remaining handle are moulded. Its height is 12.0 cm, and the patina is green.⁶⁸ The base

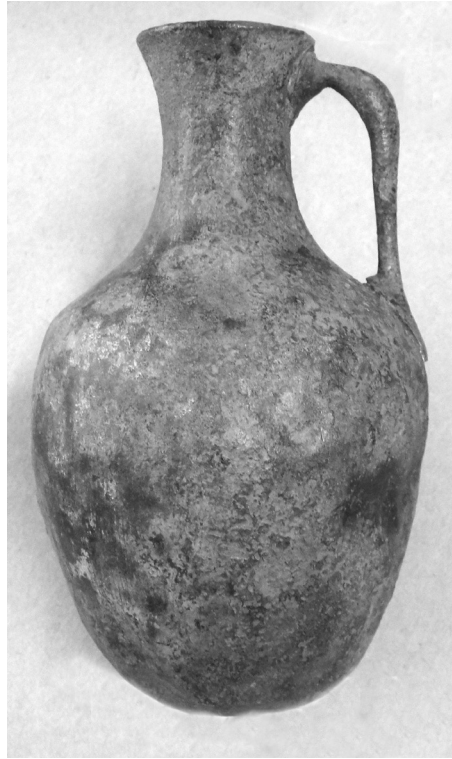


Fig. 13.

is decorated with four concentric low circles around an umbilicus, the body is ovoid, the narrow longish neck ends in a slightly flaring simple rim. The handle is ovoid in section at the narrowest point, round on the upper part, and attached to the neck and to the shoulder with flattened almond-shaped elements. This small oil flask represents a well-

⁶⁶ The basic shape of this pitcher is close to the Pompeian type E2100 (brocche con becco, ventre ovoidale) of Tassinari 1993A, 43, pl. CXXVIII:4–5 and CLVIII:4–5 and Tassinari 1993B, 70. Boucher – Tassinari 1976, 143, no 181. Kunze 2007, 272–273, no. R 65.

⁶⁷ From England, Eggers 1966, 106, 139, fig. 39b, from Pannonia, Radnóti 1938, 155–156, pl. XIII:76 and L:6, and from Saône-et-Loire, Baratte – Bonnamour – Guillaumet – Tassinari 1984, 84–85, no. 119, pl. 40.

⁶⁸ D base 3.0, D body max 7.1, D mouth 2.8/3.2, weight 149.8.

known Pompeian type datable to the I century BC and the I century AD.⁶⁹ As a luxury item, it may have been used in religious rituals for libation, or perhaps mundanely for applying perfumed oil.

From Gigny-sur-Saône comes a drinking cup (KM 8248:30, Figs. 14A–B) with a cylindrical, slightly concave body 10.5 cm in height. It was hammered, and its patina is brownish black; the bottom has been cut off, and the vertical handle is missing.⁷⁰ On top of the flat, thickened rim there are slight traces indicating where a handle was attached. Below the lip is a band between two incised lines, and on the lower body traces of the lower attachment of the handle in the shape of a heart leaf. Below that are remnants of a soldered ornament in low relief with an upright stem (length ca 6.5 cm), symmetrically aligned side-scrolls, and a short horizontal line ending in triangles.⁷¹ This is a drinking cup, a *modiolus*, identified as an Idria-type.⁷² The same basic shape of the cup is known from many examples from the tombs of Ornavasso in northern Italy, with a loop handle ending at the rim in two goose heads,⁷³ and as a *boccale a ventre iperboloidale* in Pompeii.⁷⁴ The heart-leaf shaped attachment with the identifiable relief



Fig. 14A.

shape of a heart leaf. Below that are remnants of a soldered ornament in low relief with an upright stem (length ca 6.5 cm), symmetrically aligned side-scrolls, and a short horizontal line ending in triangles.⁷¹ This is a drinking cup, a *modiolus*, identified as an Idria-type.⁷² The same basic shape of the cup is known from many examples from the tombs of Ornavasso in northern Italy, with a loop handle ending at the rim in two goose heads,⁷³ and as a *boccale a ventre iperboloidale* in Pompeii.⁷⁴ The heart-leaf shaped attachment with the identifiable relief

⁶⁹ Tassinari 1993A, 48–49, type F2210. Tassinari 1993B, 92, inv. 12310.

⁷⁰ D base 10.6, D mouth 9.6/8.3.

⁷¹ I am grateful to the conservators Pia Klaavu and Liisa Näsänen from the Finnish Heritage Agency for their painstaking help with this drinking cup, and their answers to the many questions that arose about the other bronzes.

⁷² Petrovsky 1993, 21–23, fig. 2:8.

⁷³ Bianchetti 1895, 92, fig. 40, pl. 17:4. Graue 1974, 104, 106, Abb. 26:17c, Tfl. 3:4, Tfl. 17:2, Tfl. 30:5, Tfl. 33:2. This type of a handle gives ample space for the ornament below.

⁷⁴ Type L4100 of Tassinari 1993A, 75. Tassinari 1993B, 165 (inv. 11350).

decoration below is known from, in addition to northern Italy, Great Britain,⁷⁵ and Pompeii, and also appears in jugs. There may have been a network of workshops stretching from Campania to northern Italy that produced these vessels,⁷⁶ and engaged in a wide network of trade in the last phases of the La Tène culture.

The Bronzes of the Enckell and Aminoff Collections

Albert Richard Enckell (1883–1964) was by education a Master of Science in Technology, and a specialist in the Russian economy due to his family and commercial relations,⁷⁷ first with Russia and then with the Soviet Union. He worked in different committees, organizations, and societies in both Finland and the Soviet Union. He grew to be an avid collector, introduced to the field by his maternal aunt Josefina Bronikovsky and her husband, Lieutenant General Gustaf Adolf Ramsay. He started collecting in the 1910's, and initially made some chance forays into the central European markets but eventually came to rely on the Soviet brokers. In its final form his collections included copper plate engravings, silverwork, medals, furniture, paintings, textiles, books, and

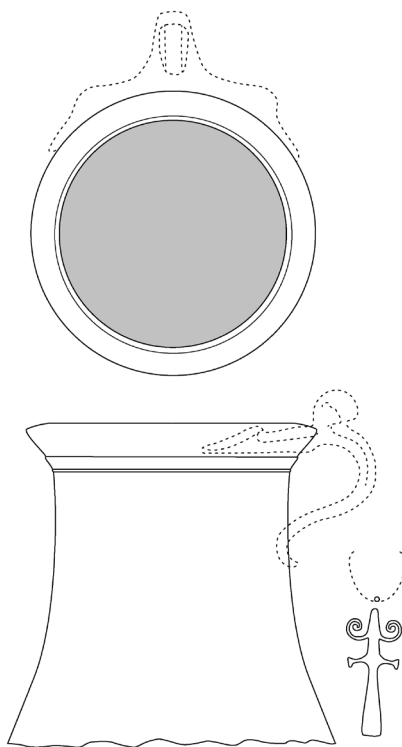


Fig. 14B.

⁷⁵ Déchelette 1927, 954–956, with reference to Capuan production. Eggers 1966, 100, 111, fig. 1:2. Petrovsky 1993, 22, fig. 2:6–7.

⁷⁶ Graue 1974, 21–22. Tassinari 1993A, 125. Tassinari 1993B, 49, 355 (inv. 1269). About the division of labour between workshops according to the techniques needed, Tassinari 2018, 82–84.

⁷⁷ He was born in Saint Petersburg, the son of the general of infantry Carl Enckell and a mother of Russian origin, *Catalogue of the alumni 1853–1899*.

decorative items.⁷⁸ This collection included the bronze askos (KM 19134, Fig. 15) under discussion here. The vessel was allegedly recovered from the Black Sea, nearby Kerch in the Crimea.

The height of the askos is 16.2 cm, including the handle 19.2 cm, and the diameter of the body is 15.6/13.2 cm.⁷⁹ It is moulded, with a green patina, and survives intact. It is an asymmetrical vessel of wineskin shape, with a continuous profile. The



Fig. 15.

body is decorated with twigs of olive-trees and olives rendered in relief. The flat base is slightly emphasized, the rim is moulded with *ovolos* and small pearls on top, and the lip turns slightly downwards. The vertical handle depicts a female feline, posing her hind paws on a bunch of small berries attached to the broadest part of the vessel's body; her tail is pressed tightly against the hind paws, while the front paws rest by the rim on small roundish supports, from which delicately arching twigs fall along the neck and the shoulder of the vessel. The muzzle and facial features of the animal are carefully shaped, the mouth is open, the ears are somewhat flat, and the forelock is clearly depicted.

There is no unanimous opinion on the use of the askoi. With a shape resembling a wineskin and handles often decorated with panthers or other Bacchic companions, they have been associated with wine and banquets, but another popular mode of decoration featuring olives and foliage may equally well refer to oil, with this idea being favoured also by the relatively small size of the vessels. Askoi are sometimes depicted in bath scenes, and with their large mouths they

⁷⁸ Lilja 1996, 27. His collections were bequeathed to the National Museum in 1965.

⁷⁹ D base 9.3/8.0, D mouth 9.0/7.0, and weight 2 032.

would also have been suitable for ablutions, without excluding their sacral use.⁸⁰ This is a rare type of askos, with a near parallel in both shape and decoration from Pompeii, discovered in 1876.⁸¹ Its engaging appearance soon made it a sought-after souvenir for foreign visitors, and it went into modern production after the Archaeological Museum of Naples gave local firms permission to copy antiquities in its collections, among others Fonderia Chiurazzi and Giorgio Sommer, the renown photographer.⁸² The simple flat bottom of our vessel differs from that of the Pompeian original, that had decoration consisting of concentric circles. As it is, the askos is a replica made in the late 19th or early 20th century in the manner of the first century BC. But what to make of the hearsay of its coming from the Black Sea? Was it perhaps intended to make the vessel more attractive to the customer?

Six years after the Enckell Collection was donated to the National Museum, another large collection, the Hans Aminoff Collection, was likewise bequeathed in 1971. It was a diverse body of material, parts of which were entered into the Historical and Exotic collections of the National Museum, and ten of which are Graeco-Roman.⁸³ It is unfortunate that there is no information on the individual acquisitions, but some of the items might be connected to Hans Aminoff's (1904–1968) maternal grandfather, the admiral Oscar von Kraemer (1829–1904), who made a remarkable career in the Russian navy. He stayed for longer periods in Athens in 1867–1868 and 1879–1882 and was directly involved in transporting antiquities for the Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg in 1873.⁸⁴ Hans Aminoff, a landowner, travelled for his part both in Europe and Egypt after the Second World War.⁸⁵ By the 1950's the whole collection was being displayed at the Pekkala Manor in Ruovesi, in the heart of Finland.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Tassinari 2009, 148–149.

⁸¹ Type Z2000 of Tassinari 2009, 167, no. 16 (inv. 69169). Its body is a little more flattened at the inferior attachment, where the bunch of berries rests on a shell. For an undecorated body, Tassinari 2009, 153, n. 26.

⁸² Chiurazzi 1929, 164, no. 290. Kovacs 2013, 44–45. Maaz 2010, 660–661.

⁸³ Lamps, terracotta figurines and vases.

⁸⁴ Estlander – Ekman 1931, 276. A terracotta unguentarium KM 17377:3 bought in the 1940's in Helsinki by Åke Pricklén had allegedly once belonged to the admiral and originated from Greece.

⁸⁵ Pietilä-Castrén 2007, 74–75.

⁸⁶ The information given by Hans Aminoff's daughter Antonia Hackman in 2005, Pietilä-Castrén

Two of the bronzes studied here were part of the Aminoff Collection. The first is a figurine of an advancing naked male (KM 18375:5, Fig. 16). It is intact, solid cast, with a height of 10.5 cm and a yellow sheen. The slender man is striding with his weight on his right foot; his right arm is raised, the left is extended, with a piece of drapery hanging down from the forearm. A hoodlike element covers his head, and at the neck there is a symmetrical knot. The bodily features are sketchily outlined, with more attention being paid to the lower body, while the arms and hands are more tubular; in the face the most attention is paid to the large, slightly aquiline nose. The low-key drapery is modelled into a sharp angle. This is another example of the attacking Hercules,



Fig. 16.

with his distinctive pose, lion skin, and club, indicated only as an extension of the forearm. In pre-Roman Gaul, figurines of Hercules were very popular as imports from the third century BC onwards.⁸⁷ The stark stylization and the featureless characteristics appear in many parallels from the Roman provinces, and a very near one, if not a mould sibling, comes from the Gallic area, dated from the III to the I century BC.⁸⁸ However, the date of the Aminoff figurine seems to be much later – in fact, similar

74, n. 142.

⁸⁷ Reinach 1894, 127–129, nos. 132–134. Boucher – Tassinari 1976, 23–24, nos. 16–17.

⁸⁸ Babelon – Blanchet 1895, 226, no. 535, with more kindred examples in Boucher 1970, 92–93, nos. 73–75, and Boucher 1976, 26–31. About the difficulties in establishing chronology or respective geographic area, Favaretto 2000, 82, nos. 96–97.

to his other bronze below this work was probably a museum copy. The unblemished surface and the golden sheen suggest a modern production.

The Aminoff pitcher (KM 18375:8, Fig. 17) is intact, mould-made, and covered with a powdery turquoise substance, with cobalt blue patches on the body and foot.⁸⁹ Its height is 11.2/12.3 cm, and it is characterized by an anthropomorphic handle.⁹⁰ The tapering foot with flat base is joined to the body by a torus. The oval body with rounded shoulders is decorated with two sets of petals, separated from each other by two horizontal incised lines: simple petals in relief on the lower body, while highlighted with a double contour on the shoulder. The



Fig. 17.

cylindrical neck rises from three ridges and flares into a trefoil mouth. The handle is shaped as a male acrobat arching his body backward in a bridge and poising his extended toes on the incised double line. His penis, abdomen, and rib cage are clearly shaped; his arms are extended and hooked, resting on the lip of the vessel as he grasps the tails of two felines lying on the rim facing forward. His mouth is open, his nose is small and upright, the eyes are almond-shaped, and he wears a helmet with a brim.

This is a replica of the oinochoe from the necropolis of Sala Consilina in Campania. It is displayed in the Petit Palais in Paris and considered a product

⁸⁹ This residue is the result of copper corrosion.

⁹⁰ D base 4.3, max D 6.7, D mouth 4.0/5.0, D inside mouth 1.2 and weight 578.5.

of a Corinthian workshop from ca. 525–500 BC.⁹¹ The use of a kouros as the subject of a handle was popular in Greece and Italy on many large vases, excepting the craters in late Archaic and subsequent periods.⁹² An interesting feature is the wide-open mouth of the acrobat, suggesting his inhaling deeply during the demanding performance. The two animals are supposed to be lions, if not panthers, depending in general on the visible details.⁹³ The pitcher may be a product of the Société F. Barbedienne et A. Collas, founded in Paris in 1838, and since 1913 with international branches in the United States and many European countries until its closure in 1954.⁹⁴ The later decades would coincide with Aminoff's travels in Europe. The size of our oinochoe is half of the original, and the foot and the lower attachment are also simplified, without the original's palmette and felines. As a result, the pitcher can be dated to the first half of the 20th century, having been made in the manner of the original of the late sixth century BC.

The Sequel

In 1979 Claude Rolley, the renowned specialist in bronzes, raised the question “Les bronzes antiques: objets d’art ou documents historiques”,⁹⁵ to which our modest selection can give a late answer. No matter their artistic level, the bronzes are still able to inform us about iconography, craftsmanship, the movement of objects and ideas, local customs, religion, and the lasting influence of ancient culture on modern times. We can follow the progress of the Strengberg figurines from a random purchase to becoming objects of educational merit in a local school as representatives of Etruscan culture, to the determined acquisition

⁹¹ Inv. no. 1560, Charbonneaux 1958, 44, 140, pl. 3:1; its height is 20.5 cm.

⁹² Kent Hill, 1958, 193.

⁹³ Mitten – Doeringer 1967, 83, pl. 1, no. 77.

⁹⁴ The industrialized reproduction of sculptures and artworks was a cooperative effort of two Frenchmen, the metalworker and manufacturer Ferdinand Barbedienne (1810–1892) and the engineer and inventor Achille Collas (1795–1859). They used plaster cast copies from the Atelier de Moulage of the Louvre as templates. The business flourished, as miniatures in different scales and materials were much sought after, Child 1886, 489–505.

⁹⁵ Rolley 1979, 13.

of the specimens from the Collection Millon, intended for museum display as glimpses of Celtic-Roman Gaul. In similar fashion, the Ignatius bronzes made their way from an area near Rome to the benefit of a university collection. The Enckell and Aminoff bronzes played minor roles in the two private collections, but still manifest the respective collector's individual taste for and enjoyment of ancient objects, even as replicas. Some of our bronzes had originally been acquired in or near their places of origin, while others made long treks already during the antiquity before finally settling down in the twilight of the storerooms of the National Museum of Finland.

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Illustrations

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