

Stolen Greek and Roman Antiquities

By
Clare Rachel Dewey

[Master of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts
University of Glasgow]

Christie's Education
London

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C Clare Rachel Dewey

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Stolen Greek and Roman

Antiquities

To be noted:

This thesis is in the form of an Exhibition Catalogue. Owing to the sensitive subject matter of the “Exhibition”, it would be highly unlikely that possible lending institutions would wish to be associated with the notion that they benefited from illegal activities.

An exhibition of this nature could be possible with the use of comparative material or even photographs. In this instance however, because the concept is imaginary none of these potential problems have arisen.

A similar exhibition was mounted by the Archaeological Museum in Palestrina entitled “Wounded Archaeology“. The objects were limited to a selection of Etruscan objects confiscated by Italian police. This exhibition will focus on the world wide problem of stolen art.

Abstract

Art is a matter of taste. All throughout history differing elements of society have held the belief that the art of the Ancient Greek's and Roman's should be interpreted as the pinnacle of all artistic achievement. This has led to a collecting mentality and the complex issue of ownership. Most people hope to surround themselves with objects which they consider beautiful; the ways and means by which this is achieved can be legal or against the law.

The trade in stolen Greek and Roman artefacts has become a major problem in the past thirty years. This is not a recent phenomenon. The Roman's led the campaign with their plundering mentality. The Grand Tour collectors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries aided the appeal of the antique.

This thesis is a survey of the history of stolen antique objects - from the era of the Roman's to the present day. What are the motivating factors behind the antiquities trade? What is their value? Can anything be done to alleviate the illegal traffic? Who are the beneficiaries from this trade? But fundamentally, the question arises, who has the right to own our common world heritage?

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Introduction

*“Art stealing is as old as art itself, and
art thieves are a wildly assorted breed,
from urbane, debonair professional
thieves to beatnik homosexuals, from
connoisseurs of Braque and Brueghel to
illiterates”¹.*

Although Milton Esterow’s quote is outdated, it serves to illustrate both the longevity of the stolen art industry and the diverse social status of the culprits.

The business of stolen art is now considered as “...cool, (and)sexy”², owing to the Hollywood movie industry adding an element of glamour with big budget blockbusters, such as the remake of the “Thomas Crown Affair”, and, “Entrapment”. There seems to be a certain amount of kudos attached to the concept of stolen art.

Stolen masterpieces often hit the headlines³. On August the 21st 1961, Goya’s Duke of Wellington (fig.1) was stolen from the National Gallery, London. This daring robbery, became a huge tabloid story igniting public imagination. So

¹ M. Esterow, The Art Stealers, London, 1967, p.4.

² J.Wilson “Watching the detective”, The Observer - Review, 5th August 2001, p.6.

³ J. Wilson, “Watching the detective”, loc.cit., p.6.

much so, that a reproduction of the painting found its way into the background of the first James Bond film, "Dr No"⁴.

The romantic connotations of stolen art have also filtered into literature - ranging from the character Raffles to the scheming of the Martin Clay in Michael Frayn's "*Headlong*".

In 1992 Insurance companies reimbursed over GBP 500 million for stolen art.

The trade in illegal art and antiques is a multimillion-dollar industry and poses a huge problem worldwide⁵. As a consequence the repatriation of objects to their original owners has become a prominent issue. This was intensified after the Second World War. The "...*funny hobby of the Nazi's - (that) everybody wanted to have his own private gallery*"⁶ led to a period of mass looting throughout mainland Europe.

The motives for stealing art are as diverse as the art that is stolen. Individuals

⁴ Goya's Duke of Wellington painting is in the background when James Bond meets Dr. No on his Caribbean island.

⁵ It is estimated by Interpol that the illegal trade in art and antiquities is so immense, that it ranks third after drug trafficking and white-collar crime. R. Thorne's Protecting Cultural Objects : The Getty Art History Information Programme California, 1995, p.7.

There are currently 355 Picasso's, 250 Chagall's, 180 Dali's, 120 Rembrandt's and 115 Renoir's missing from private and public collections, J. Wilson, "Watching the detective", loc.cit., p.6.

⁶ Dr K. Moser in A. Decker, "A legacy of shame", Art News, December 1984, p.56-68. Thousands of paintings, sculptures and antiques are currently disputed across the world, many believed to have been looted during the Nazi's on the 9th November 1938, on Kristallnacht. Adolf Hitler's personal art collection contained 6,755 paintings, of which 5,350 were Old Masters. Netherlandish collection's were plundered through an organisation called the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg (ERR), by 1940 21,903 art works had been looted through this organisation.

or groups can benefit personally, politically or financially. The trade in illegal Greek and Roman antiquities has become a major problem in recent years. It has been claimed that 80% of antiquities that enter the London Market are illegally excavated and smuggled out of the country of origin⁷. This is a staggering statistic.

This thesis shall explore the huge financial, political, and, personal benefits of stolen art; in relation to the historicism attached to possession of Greek and Roman antiquities. What have been the motivating factors behind the mass looting and plundering from the time of Eumenes II in 180 BC to the present day? Finally, the question shall be asked, who has the right to own the past - an individual, or are Greek and Roman antiquities part of the world's common cultural heritage?

⁷ N. Palmer, "Recovering Stolen Art", in K. Tubb ed. Antiquities: Trade or Betrayed - Legal, Ethical and Conservation Issues, London, 1995, p.3.

Chapter One :

Stolen Art -The Politics

Art serves different purposes. Twentieth century dictators, such as Lenin and Hitler, saw the potential of art to express their differing political agendas. They manipulated contemporary artists and art forms for propagandistic ends. Lenin exploited the new media of film, especially the work of Sergei Eisenstien to promote his revolutionary values. Art produced in the era of the Third International was steeped in communist doctrine¹.

The concept of artistic propaganda is not a modern phenomenon. The Roman victory over the Dacian's in 101 and 105-6 AD was celebrated with the erection of the 200m tall Trajan Column (*fig 2*). This huge monument stood in the Forum in the centre of Rome. It is a memorial to the soldiers who fell, but more importantly an artistic symbol which makes a political statement. It is an emblem which is a testament to the immense physical strength of the Roman Empire, who with ease systematically massacred and enslaved an entire nation.

The concept of plunder is an essential element of a nations propaganda machine. This can be in different forms - financial, cultural, or even people as slaves. Conquering nations often took art as there prize. In antiquity Sulla

¹ Piper, D The Illustrated History of Art, London, 1986, p.407.

looted Athens², Caius Verres plundered Sicily, stealing the acclaimed Zeus from Syracuse³. The treasures from the second temple were stolen by Titus⁴.

What drives a nation to steal another nation's cultural heritage? The ancient monuments of Greece have been plundered by all manner of nations since the era of the Romans. Ancient Greek art has often been regarded as the pinnacle of artistic perfection. Johann Joachim Winckelmann, the first art historian, declared that "*good taste, which is becoming more prevalent throughout the world, had its origins under the skies of Greece*"⁵ Winckelmann understood art as a reflection of the society in which it was conceived. He believed that the perfection of Greek art was a direct consequence of being born from what he understood to be a perfect society .

According to Winckelmann principles a statue such as the bronze of an Athlete Crowning Himself in the Getty (**cat 1**), is an artistic embodiment of the state. He believed that in such a sculpture, the good order, discipline and strength of the Ancient Greeks are illustrated with the fluid lines and the carefully structured rendering of the composition. Each element was carefully thought out. Each finger was individually engineered and designed to be crucial element in the entire programme. No single element was left to chance. The icon created should therefore be regarded with respect, as it should evoke a positive

² Meyer, K The Plundered Past, London, 1973, p.65.

³ Arnau, F Three Thousand Years of Deception in Art and Antiques , London, 1961, p.25.

Meyer, K The Plundered Past, *op.cit.*, p.65.

⁴ Meyer, K The Plundered Past, *op.cit.*, p.65.

⁵ Winckelmann, J.J "Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture", in Preziosi, D ed. The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology, Oxford, 1988, p.31.

response from viewers. Winckelmann was not alone in his evaluation of ancient Greek art as perfection.

Emulation is said to be the ultimate form of flattery. Roman artists aspired to achieve art, which would equal the glory of Greek innovation. Contemporary artists would sign their art with famous Greek artist's names - such as Praxiteles, Myron and Pausias⁶. The essence of the Renaissance is a celebration of a return to ancient artistic principles⁷. In 1496 Michelangelo fooled an antiquity dealer with his rendering of a figure of cupid. It was buried, 'rediscovered', and then celebrated as an exquisite piece of Greek craftsmanship⁸. Buildings were erected conforming to the antique principles of Vitruvius in his *'Ten Books of Architecture'*⁹. Right up until the present day, buildings are built which embody what we perceive as Greek and Roman principles. Even in a country thousands of miles from the epicentre of Greek and Roman artistic splendour, such as Japan, the Oshara Museum was built in the 1930's complete with pseudo-Greek facade. Greek and Roman architecture is valued as a significant artistic achievement of mankind. It evokes connotations of order, of education, of democracy etc. Principles upon which the foundations of most states are built upon. By building public institutions in the form of a Greek Temple, a link to the glory of this past civilisation is achieved. There is a certain amount of allure of attached to ancient Greek and

⁶ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A. E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 2, Pennsylvania, 1987, p.556.

⁷ Burckhardt, J The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy, Oxford, 1981.

⁸ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 2, loc.cit., p.553.

⁹ Gombrich, E.H The Story of Art, London, 1995, p.288.

Roman art, therefore it is no surprise that it has been looted, stolen and plundered throughout history.

From the fourth century B.C, the Roman's plundered and stole art from Greece¹⁰. The art they stole was valued for its connotations with the great democratic state of Greece and the military achievements and expansionist vision of Alexander the Great (356-323 BC) and later Hellenistic rulers. The Roman's plundered Greek art not only as a symbol of their supremacy, but also because of its artistic value.

These stolen artworks were transported across the Adriatic sea to Italy. Some never made it to the final destination¹¹. The Getty Bronze (**Cat.1**) was discovered in the sea just east of Rimini in the 1970's and secretly taken to a village where it was then transported to Germany for restoration, and then finally to the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu. It is thought that this statue was removed, possibly from ancient site of Olympia, and lost at sea on its journey to the heart of the Roman Empire¹². Not only does the statue embody all of the characteristics of the Winckelmann agenda for beautiful art. But, it also gives an insight into first real collectors of art - the Romans.

The Romans became kleptomaniacs. They collected Greek and Roman

¹⁰ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, Pennsylvania, 1987, p.2.

¹¹ Such as the Artemisian Zeus, the Riace Warriors and the Eros Enagonios.

¹² Frel, J The Getty Bronze, Malibu, 1982, p.4.

literature on a grand scale, filling two entire libraries either side of Trajan's Column. They assembled marbles and bronzes borne from another people's heritage. Imitation of Greek art was also a booming business. Pseudo Greek sculpture was mass-produced. In fact the vast majority of surviving acclaimed Greek works are Roman copies. The Apulian's copied red figure Greek pottery (**Cat 4**). There was mass production of Greek art.

This hunger for fine art was not only reserved for the patrician classes. When an Emperor removed a statue of Apollo from the public arena to his own private bathhouse, there was uproar in Rome. A mob descended and demanded the repatriation of the sculpture immediately. The Roman's seem to have understood and harnessed the beauty and splendour of these Greek works of art dedicated to creating an image of perfection: an embodiment of beauty with no flaws. The women created are curvaceous yet modest, Capitoline Aphrodite (fig 3). The men, more often than not, are rendered as muscular and athletic, an emblem of strength; such as Statue A from Riace (figure 4).

Our understanding of Greek art would be hindered if the Romans had not stolen artworks and then lost them at sea. We would be left with only marble reproductions. Bronze art throughout time has been melted down and reused. Thanks to the plundering attitude of the Romans and recent archaeological underwater excavation original Greek bronzes have survived (fig. 4). These losses at sea, have allowed scholars to appreciate the original beauty of the art thanks to the plundering mentality of the Roman's.

Conquering armies have always looted art. In 1648, Queen Christina of Sweden ordered her army to conquer Prague so that she could obtain the fine art and book collection of the Emperor Rudolph¹³. A 12th century manuscript, the Benevento Missal, currently in the British Library, was looted during the second world war. This has led to calls from the Italian government for it to be repatriated¹⁴.

One of the greatest eclectics from the past was Napoleon. He plundered art for the sake of imitation. *“The Roman’s, once an uncultivated people, became civilised by transplanting to Rome the works of conquered Greece...thus...the French people...naturally endowed with the exquisite sensitivity, will...by seeing the models from antiquity, train its feeling and its critical sense...the French Republic, by its strength and superiority of its enlightenment and its artists, is the only country in the world which can give a safe home to these masterpieces. All other nations must come to borrow from our art, as they once imitated our frivolity”*¹⁵. There was an inherent belief that these art works required a location, befitting their splendour, ultimately the dominant country of the time - France.

Gregoire expressed the sentiment that *“... certainly if our victorious armies*

¹³ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, op.cit., p.3.

¹⁴ Shek, T “Two means by which the British Museum could give the Elgin Marbles to the Greeks”, The Art Newspaper, no.112, March 2001, p.4.

¹⁵ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, op.cit., p.17.

*penetrate into Italy the removal of the Apollo Belvedere and of the Farnese Hercules would be the most brilliant conquest*¹⁶. Henceforth, the Laocoon (Cat 2), the bronze bust of Junius Brutus, the Discobolus, the Dying Gaul, the Medici Venus and the Apollo Belvedere (fig.5 and 6) were transported to Paris. It is peculiar that Napoleon in the 18th Century, saw as an essential element of his and the Republic of France's all conquering prowess, to own a victory symbol from a period of a time nearly two thousand years earlier.

The value of Greek art to the Roman's and of antique sculpture to the French Republic at the time of Napoleon, is identical. This plunder was their prize. A trophy which established a direct link with an ancient super power. These pieces of sculpture were not valued solely for the political interpretations and implications, but also treasured for their artistic beauty.

War is also a destructive factor in the history of art. The vast medieval complexes of the monastery of Monte Cassino were ruined during the second world war. Countless churches were caught in the bomb blasts. A fire during the conflict of the Spanish Civil War, destroyed the unique twelfth century frescoes from the Chapter House at Sigena. These frescoes are fundamental in evaluating the migration of artistic styles¹⁷. War leads to the destruction of key historic monuments. Following the second world war, in 1954, at the initiative of Italy, there was a convention dedicated to the "*Protection of Cultural*

¹⁶ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, op.cit, p.17.

¹⁷ Dodwell, C. R The Pictorial Arts of the West - 800 -1200, Yale, 1993, p.372-373.

*Property in the event of armed conflict*¹⁸. In principle this is an important step in recognising the importance of cultural heritage. However, it is hardly the first consideration in a war situation to save an ancient building or artwork from destruction.

The conquering superiority of plunder is not the only political statement which art can express. Art is a powerful tool. Monuments of the past are vital to establish a country's identity. If one thinks of a pyramid, one immediately thinks of Egypt and the pharaohs. The pyramids at Giza have various values - for the historian, the astronomer, the art historian, the tourist and the Egyptian. If a conquering army, such as the British or French had destroyed the pyramids then a vital piece of that nation's, and the world's, cultural heritage would have been lost forever.

Destruction of art is often carried out under the banner of religion. The Iconoclasts of the eighth and ninth centuries destroyed religious icons throughout Byzantium¹⁹. Earlier this year the Taliban regime in Afghanistan began to destroy art with religious fervour²⁰. The giant statues at Bamiyan were the largest standing Buddha's in the world. Their destruction, all in the name of religion, has destroyed icons which have stood for hundreds of years (fig 7)²¹.

¹⁸ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, *op.cit.*, p.29-32.

¹⁹ Cormack, R Byzantine Art, Oxford, 2000, p86-102.

²⁰ Salahuddin, S "Taliban begins smashing all Afgan Statues", Institute of Art Law, Internet Publication, <http://www.ial.uk.com/news/010301.html>, 1st March 2001.

²¹ Eisenberg, J "Though Shat Countenance no other Gods- Cultural Terrorism by the Taliban at Bamiyan", Minerva, May/June vol. 12, no. 3, pp. 2-3.

Thieving a Buddhism of a unique icon. Ridding the world of a beautiful aesthetic object. And, ultimately destroying an element of their own nations diverse religious and cultural heritage. By dynamiting these statues, the Taliban's political message was headline news.

What gives a nation; or a regime; or an individual; the right to destroy all our past as a world community? It is a travesty that the statues could not have been saved. Dismantled piece by piece and rebuilt in another country. This would not have been an impossible task- whole Egyptian temples, such as the Temple of Isis at Philae, were reassembled with the building of the Aswan dam in the 1950's.

Archaeological monuments are not only targeted. Muslim leaders in Italy are calling for the destruction of a fifteenth century, "Last Judgement" fresco by Giovanni da Modena. They believe that the fresco offends Islam because it illustrates Mohammed being thrown into the flames of hell²². It seems as though religious tolerance is required in order to save both lives, but also the world communities cultural heritage throughout the world.

The destruction of heritage should never be congratulated, however in some cases, it may be the only way to save the art. Many Christian churches in

²² Owen, R "Muslims say fresco must be destroyed", Institute of Art Law, Internet Publication, <http://www.ial.uk.com/news/290601/html>, 29 June 2001.

Turkey, and Christian sites in Jerusalem have been systematically destroyed²³. By destroying these buildings and graveyards, a vital piece of these countries past has been removed. It must be a better option to allow these beautiful objects to be smuggled out of these countries in order to save them. Although, all context would be lost, at least the objects would still be able to be admired for there aesthetic worth.

The Mosaic from the Church of the Panagia Kanakaria, in the village of Lythrankomi in north Cyprus, is a case in point (**Cat. 3**). The church for many years had fallen into disuse after the Turkish invasion of North Cyprus. Local farmers used it as a shed. The beautiful 6th century mosaics in the apse were ignored. That was, until the mosaics were smuggled out of the country to Switzerland and eventually to the USA. After a unique court battle, the mosaic fragments were finally returned to Cyprus²⁴.

Repatriation of art is a controversial issue. Especially the case for the possible repatriation of the Elgin marbles to Greece²⁵. In a legal sense Lord Elgin was well within his rights to remove the marbles due to the permission slip he received from the Ottoman authorities, which said not to “...*hinder* (Lord Elgin) *from taking away any pieces of stone with inscriptions and figures*”²⁶. People were living and robbing the Acropolis for building there own houses.

²³ Dalrymple, W From the Holy Mountain - A Journey in the shadow of Byzantium, London, 1988.

²⁴ Appeal made to the United States Appeal court, seventh circuit 917F.2d 278 (1990), “Autocephalous Greek Orthodox church of Cyprus vs. Goldberg and Feldman Fine Arts”.

²⁵ Such as the “British Committee for the Restitution of the Parthenon marbles”.

²⁶ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1 op.cit p.6.

The Ottoman administration of Greece at this time did not care for ancient art. Elgin removed the sculptures, such as the Recumbent Hero (fig 8). Ultimately some of the finest surviving Greek sculpture has ended up in the British Museum, bought by the Parliament in 1816 for GBP 25,000. Thousands of people see the sculptures every year in the British Museum.

The sculptures, were not made for a museum. They were an integral part of Phidias programme for the Acropolis. There is the belief that by removing an object from its context then it loses some of its impact value. Walter Benjamin believed that by displacing an object to a new location then it loses its aura²⁷. This aura is what makes the artwork unique.

The Parthenon is recognised throughout the world. But the impression the thousands of tourists each year get is completely at odds with the cohesive programme engineered by Phidias. Elgin carried out cultural vandalism²⁸, but it has been argued that the marbles have survived in a far greater condition by being placed in a monitored museum environment rather than on top of the Acropolis amidst the smog of Athens. The response of the Greek government to this argument is that “...*the British say they saved the marbles. Well thank you very much. Now give them back*”²⁹. The three Caryatids still *in situ* at the Erechtheum are severely weathered. The statue in the British Museum is in near perfect condition.

²⁷ Arendt, H ed. Walter Benjamin - Illuminations London, 1995, p.211- 244.

²⁸ The French call this *Elginisme*, after the actions of the Scot.

²⁹ Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, loc.cit., p.134.

It can be argued that the marbles in London serve as a cultural ambassador for Greece. They are housed in one of the great museums of the world. They sit in the same building with glories from all manners of differing cultures and eras, where they can be appreciated by hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. It can hardly be denied that the art of ancient Greece, surpassed all other art produced previously in terms of the understanding of the human anatomy and the transformation of this knowledge into an artistic form be it from marble, limestone or painted on to pots. It is an outstanding achievement, which should be acknowledged by all, and appreciated by all.

The Elgin marbles in the British Museum is probably the most famous object in the treasure house. One could argue that the removal of the Parthenon marbles to London is a part of their continuing history. It is statement of the era of British expansion and conquest. The nineteenth century was an era of the collector. The Parthenon may have been robbed of its sculptures, yet the buildings are still there. They only survived the era of Ottoman rule, because a Mosque was erected amidst the ruins. Keeping the Acropolis as a religious site. However, this was torn down. The continuous occupation of this site over two thousand years has been ignored. There is no sense at all of continuity. The site has been categorised and isolated to a single moment. Therefore there has been a loss of history from the 'dark ages' to the Ottoman era of occupation. Who has the right to deny another people's heritage?

Turkey poses another political problem. Only recently the ancient Roman City of Zeugma was rediscovered. Unfortunately, the rediscovery coincided with the building of a dam. The whole area of the city was to be flooded. Some sculpture and mosaics were saved but the unknown majority was flooded. By smuggling these objects out, at least some enjoyment of the objects could have been had. However, Zeugma is a hard case to argue for. Save a lost past or give water to the present inhabitants of a land? Surely life is more important than a dead past. This is a social issue. It is essential that those who are alive are given priority, rather than expanding our knowledge of the past.

Art can serve many different purposes and politics is just one of them. Political leaders throughout time have been aware of the benefits of plundering another nation's art. The value of association adds a greater value to these pieces which is not merely based upon their aesthetic worth. Throughout time Greek and Roman art has been evaluated and appreciated as the pinnacle of artistic perfection. It makes perfect sense that the Getty bronze (**Cat. 1**) and the Laocoon (**Cat.2**) were stolen. These are fantastic objects through which statesmen wish to use for propagandistic means. It seems as throughout the past, some beautiful objects were only saved because they were stolen from a country of origin. For the history of art, we need to feel indebted to the Roman despots with their exquisite taste; or else our appreciation of Greek art would be far less.

Chapter 2:

Stolen Art - The Collector

Art has been collectively stolen and looted for hundreds of years for differing reasons. When dealing with an individual beneficiary there are two main reasons - intellectual or financial gain.

The collecting mentality has always been a part of human nature from the dawn of time. Collections of stone objects have appeared in the archaeological record from before 4000 BC¹. In Bronze Age graves there are accumulations of daggers, spearheads, swords, personal ornament, knives and awls². The concept of collecting began with great earnest in the era of the Greeks. In 180 BC Eumenes II built the altar of Pergamun, on which he displayed “*art treasures of some antiquity*”³. In the era of Pausanias (*fl.* AD 160)⁴, the Temple of Zeus at Olympia boasted the throne of Arimestos, bronze horses, statues of Hadrian and Trajan, portraits of Augusta, olive wreaths dedicated by Nero and the gold and ivory statue of Zeus made by Phidias⁵.

The greatest collectors of Art treasures from the past were the rich and

¹ Pearce, S On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition, 1995, London, p.58.

² Pearce, S On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition, loc.cit. p.58.

³ O’Keefe, P Trade in Antiquities - reducing destruction and theft, 1997, UNESCO, p. 10.

⁴ Pausanias wrote a volume of books which described sites important throughout Greece. It is still vital to this day for Greek enthusiasts.

⁵ Pearce, S On Collecting: An Investigation into Collecting in the European Tradition, loc.cit. p.90.

privileged men who participated on the Grand Tour of Italy. Men in their youth could spend up to three years in Rome and Venice. Part of this experience, was to collect souvenirs - especially those of ancient origin. These men were not interested in the exact archaeological location of their finds. Instead they valued these pieces of Greek and Roman art for their intrinsic aesthetic value and their connotations with the ancient past. In the eighteenth century one such man was William Hamilton⁶. He was British ambassador to the court of the King of Naples. Whilst serving in the kingdom, he became completely fascinated with Vesuvius and the recent rediscovery of Pompeii in 1756⁷. He amassed a vast collection of Greek, but primarily Roman art. He was especially fascinated with ceramics. Within his collection were such pieces as the Hamilton Vase (**Cat 4**).

These men's collections formed the basis of great number of European State collections. Without men such as Charles Townley⁸ and William Hamilton the British Museum would not have such a wide and diverse collection of fine Greek and Roman art. These men collected Greek and Roman art because of they appreciated the perfection of composition and form encapsulated in the art. They loved the art they collected, welcoming and believing in Winkelmann's theory that objects such as the Hamilton Vase (**Cat 4**), should be hailed as the zenith of all artistic achievement. Men wished to own pieces which emulated what they saw as the finesse of the ancients. The exquisite

⁶ Jenkins, I and Sloan, K Vases and Volcanoes: Sir William Hamilton and his Collection, London, 1996.

⁷ Sontag, S The Volcano Lover, London, 1996.

⁸ Cook, B.F The Townley Marbles, London, 1985.

Portland Vase, is a masterpiece of glass construction. It was copied on a vast scale by Josiah Wedgwood's porcelain factory in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was the ultimate aim of these men to own a piece of the past which would bring them closer to the ancients. They believed that the ideals they associated with the ancient Greeks and Romans would be transferred to them through ownership. Without these men, our national institutions would be without their diverse cultural and national blend. The concept of the cultural ambassador would have no relevance.

This demand for art intensified excavation and the sale of the spoils. People from all manner of social backgrounds adopted the craze for archaeological exploration. Even respectable ladies took an active role in the destruction of historical landmarks in order to expand their own collections. This did raise moral questions in some amateur archaeologists. Amelia Edwards expressed her concern in the 1870's but "*...we soon became quite hardened to such sights, and learned to rummage among the dusty sepulchres with no more compunction than befitted a gang of professional body snatchers...so infectious is the universal callousness, and so overmastering is the passion for relic hunting, that I do not doubt we should again do the same things under the same circumstances*".⁹

The actions of these men and women, be it excavation or Grand Tour purchase, effectively stole a nation and a people of their own heritage. These activities are

⁹ Quoted from Lowenthal, D, The Past is a Foreign Country, Cambridge, 1985, p.43.

part of the ever-evolving story in the history of an individual object. These actions do rob a people of an element of their past. The transfer of artistic objects from nation to nation has occurred since the dawn of time. The Romans stole from the Greeks. The Venetians stole from Constantinople(fig. 9) ¹⁰. The French stole from the Papal States. The landed gentry of Britain stole from Italy.

Is this wrong? Even though these activities purges the “home” nation of a piece of its own history. Is it not better for the coin, the bust or the pot to end up in the hands of someone who truly recognizes the value of the piece? Not in monetary terms but rather in the recognition that this object’s major value is attached to its historical connections.

Auberon Waugh raises the point that *“when I think of my own fierce joy of acquiring a Roman coin at the age of 15, and my frenzied researches into the dim, fourth century Emperor portrayed on it...there can be no doubt in my mind that it served a far more useful purpose than it would in the county museum”*¹¹.

There is an argument for someone who genuinely loves the art in owning it. Museum cellars are filled with objects that never see the light of day. This is a monumental travesty. All objects from legal excavations eventually end up in museums of some description. The experts in these institutions are able to

¹⁰ Wilton-Ely, J & V The Horses of San Marco, Venice Italy, 1977.

¹¹ Quoted in Lowenthal, D The Past is a Foreign Country, loc.cit. p.44.

extract the fullest amount of information from them. However, only the major pieces usually end up on public display. Rather than taking up valuable space in storerooms. There are people who would value these lesser objects. I am also not imploring that illegal excavation should be allowed. But what use is it to a museum to be cluttered with objects that are in cases in a basement. This is not to say that museums should put on display every single object. Not all objects would be valuable additions to a display case. Visitors to museums would feel oppressed with the number of objects. Those which are key, such as the Hamilton Vase (**Cat 4**), would be lost amongst the more mediocre. Surely there must be a case for the common Oinochoe or mass-produced Tanagra figurine to be sold to private collectors. Unfortunately in the present climate, in order to buy a beautiful object collectors often have to resort to buying objects which are illegally excavated - the so-called “fresh Antiquities”.

The notorious Dutch art smuggler, Michel van Rijn, exposed on his website an object for sale in the Royal-Athena Galleries¹². The marble sculpture of the Sleeping Eros (**Cat 5**), is alleged to have been the result of an illegal excavation. The marble is of exquisite craftsmanship¹³. According to Michel van Rijn’s sources the piece is the result of recent clandestine digs in Ostia Antica. This marble is currently on sale in the gallery owned by Jerome Eisenberg, the Editor of *Minerva* magazine. He recently wrote “...*we certainly do not knowingly condone any type of illegal excavation or chance find that*

¹² van Rijn, M A Provenance is Born, Internet Publication, <http://www.michelvanrijn.com>

¹³ Eisenberg, J Roman Marble Sleeping Eros, Internet Publication, <http://www.royal-athena.com/PAGES/romancatpages/MA0101.html>

destroys the context of an ancient site, and no museum curator, collector or dealer would or should encourage it”¹⁴.

If these allegations prove to be correct, serious concerns over the genuine working ethos's of respectable dealers shall be called into question. All this to feed a market eager to own and look after art from the ancient past. Museums do not need to own every object from a site. The flow of illegal wares could be lessened if there was a smaller market. Collectors are essential in preserving the past, however if greed takes over proceedings, then essential knowledge concerning our collective cultural heritage shall be lost forever.

¹⁴ Eisenberg, J “The Editor in Chief Replies” Minerva, Sept/Oct 1991, vol. 2, no. 5, p.37.

Chapter 3:

Stolen Art - An Socio-Economic Solution?

In 1856 Hawthorne from the British museum was concerned that “...*the present is burdened too much with the past. We have not time ... to appreciate what is warm with life, and immediately around us; yet we heap up all these old shells, out of which human life has long emerged, casting them off forever. I do not see how future ages are to stagger under all this dead weight, with the additions, which will continually be made to it*”¹⁵. Hawthorne raises a fundamental argument in the case for the excavation of illicit antiquities. He raises the question of the importance of the present. Statistics tell us that illegal excavation has increased significantly over the past thirty years. This is fundamentally linked to socio-economic problems. There is much tombaroli action in Sicily. However, the local populations from the village of Marinella di Selinute feel that it is part of their birthright to dig up and sell what they find. They do not pause to think of the epic destruction they are causing to sites of archaeological importance¹⁶. The people involved in these activities are incredibly poor. The excavation of objects is a means to a better way of life. An easy way to gain some cash - for the fundamentals in life - food, water and shelter. I have to disagree with the idea expressed by O’Keefe that “*looters (are) persons whose unbridled lust for possession destroys the history of*

¹⁵ Quoted in Lowenthal, D The Past is a Foreign Country, loc.cit. p.66.

¹⁶ In-between 80-100,000 tombs have been looted on this site alone.

humanity"¹⁷. The history of humanity is an evolving process. These people dig up these goods out of necessity, not out of greed.

Turkey is estimated to have in the region of 40,000 sites of archaeological importance¹⁸. It may be rich in heritage, but otherwise it is incredibly poor.

Cornelius Clarkson Vermeule III, a former curator of the Boston Museum of Fine arts, complained that "*...today, in the tiniest Turkish town, you walk into the local merchants and see tacked to the wall a list of auction prices current issued by Sothebys-Parke Bernet*"¹⁹. This is not a statement of anger that the villagers are looting as a means of survival. But rather, a feeling of annoyance that fantastic articles similar to the New York Treasure (fig 10) which comprised of 219 pieces of gold and silver, can no longer be purchased at such low prices²⁰. For many years, local people with little understanding of western market values of archaeological objects were being systematically ripped off.

The looting of unguarded archaeological sites is becoming far more calculated. The concept of stealing for a ready made market becomes relevant. In Israel at a site near to Tel Aviv, a mosaic of Fortuna was ripped from the ground with power tools. It is believed that this 1400 year mosaic was torn from the ground to order by specialists in archaeological theft²¹. "*Sometimes I'll get a call from someone who may have moved into a new home, a young couple say, wanting*

¹⁷ O'Keefe, P Trade in Antiquities- reducing destruction and theft, loc.cit, p.4.

¹⁸ Meyer, K The Plundered Past, London, 1973, p.56.

¹⁹ Meyer, K The Plundered Past, loc.cit, p.57.

²⁰ An un-provenanced collection in the Boston Museum of Fine Art, probably of Turkish origin.

²¹ Eisenberg, J, "News", Minerva, January 1990, vol. 1, no. 1, p.42.

something to decorate their living room. So I might go to a villa that I know and saw off the mosaics from the floor. They give me the sizes and I just take my tape measure along"²². What began as a way of enabling local people to get extra financial help, albeit by illegal means has degenerated into an industry where robbery becomes far more complex - with much higher stakes.

It would be too easy to believe that the robbing of archaeological sites only occurs in poor nations, which we can dismiss as uneducated people who do not understand the importance of what they are selling. Great Britain suffers frequently from illegal excavation. The novelty of the metal detector which began in the eighties has sparked an increasing interest in excavation. For the amateur it is an easy way to find historic metal objects. Many sites throughout Britain have been pillaged by this destruction. Many of these men and women disregard anything else they may find with an object. These people want a prize.

In 1982 sixteen Romano-British bronzes were found in a field in Suffolk²³. They were stolen from a scheduled historic monument. There are so many of these throughout the nation that it would be an impossible and expensive task to police them. The Icklingham bronzes were sold in the USA. This collection of bronzes included a fabulous bronze cheetah inlaid with silver spots. It is a shame for Britain's cultural heritage that this object is not in our country. It was

²² Mr Induno quoted in Ruiz, C "My Life as a Tombarolo" The Art Newspaper no.112, March 2001, p.36-38.

²³ Reynolds, N "The Icklingham Bronzes" Minerva, Jan 1990, vol. 1, no. 1, p.10-11.

described as “... *one of the most important finds of the last 50 years... and incredibly important for Romano-British studies because of its extremely fine and interesting workmanship, advanced technology and iconographic and religious importance*”²⁴. The collection of objects is currently in the collection of Leon Levy and his wife. On their death, these objects become the property of the British Museum.

However, frequently throughout this thesis I have raised the idea of a cultural ambassador. These objects highlight a unique time in British history. Many of these American Museums serve to show what is genuinely believed to be the best. These objects usually come from the epicentre of production - Athens or Rome. It would have been a unique highlight to have had a collection of Romano British bronzes in another country to highlight what the nation of Britain and other provincial outposts achieved throughout the period of Roman occupation.

Provenance, becomes a fundamental issue in the debate concerning stolen antiquities. States, such as Italy, have laws forbidding the sale of articles dug up this century. Yet this does not stop the huge exodus of objects leaving the country. False papers are created or stories concocted. Provenance is fundamental in determining who has the legal right to own an object. In some cases this can become incredibly complex and problematic. A vast majority of

²⁴ Quoted in “Icklingham Farmer Sues NY Gallery” *Minerva*, July/August 1991, vol. 2, no. 4, p.5.

the antiquities that are for sale in the USA and London have limited owner histories. The catalogues serve to bring attention to the limited provenances of these Greek and Roman objects. Often all that is said is that the terracotta, for example, is from an Old European family collection. This adds a certain amount of kudos to the object. There is an impression relayed that the object must have been in private hands for a fair length of time - probably prior to twentieth century, and therefore pre- legislation.

Another means by which antiquities are given respectability, is through publication. An object such as the Apulian Vase (**Cat 6**) for sale at Christies South Kensington, on the 25th of April 2001, which has no known provenance²⁵. Owing to the fact that the vase was published in Trendall and Cambitoglou's "*The Red Figured Vases of Apulia II*", the impression is given that the vase is consequently free from any controversy, regarding speculation over the original find spot and owner history.

This spring sale attracted criticism from the Times. The sale was exposed as attempting to sell stolen art from a legitimate and much respected auction house. The twelve Apulian vases, in question, seem certain to have been the bounty from a clandestine dig in Italy. The export of Apulian wares has been against Italian law since 1902. It has been argued that these vases could possibly have come from a location out with of Italy, but this seems to be a

²⁵ Hornsby, S; Insley-Green, C and Sully, E Christies South Kensington - Fine Antiquities Wednesday 25th April 2001.

very rare possibility. Out of the 13,631 known Apulian vases only six have ever been found in an alternative country. Ricardo Elia expressed his concern, *“since the only possible source of genuine Apulian pottery is looted archaeological sites in Puglia, these figures provide evidence of massive looting in recent years”*²⁶. It would be unlikely that the twelve vases, up for sale in Christie’s were all found in Switzerland or France for example.

On occasion such as with the Apulian vases, the style and culture of an object betrays that it is possibly the prize from illegal activities. Clazomenian artefacts are incredibly rare. They are only found in a single location in Turkey. A Turkish law from 1906 forbids any of these artefacts from being excavated and exported²⁷. However since 1970, two sixth century Clazomenian sarcophagi have made their way into American Museums. The J. Paul Getty Museum is currently at the centre of a repatriation dispute²⁸ regarding a terracotta sarcophagus purchased in 1977. There can be no doubt that the object is the result of clandestine smuggling and excavation. The blame for robbing Turkey of their heritage should not fall with the local people, who in most instances this is for basic survival. The fault lies with auction houses and the art market who are not vigilant enough in checking their facts. Museum authorities, especially the rich American institutions, need to be far more vigorous in what they purchase. Museums such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the

²⁶ Quoted in Watson, P “History under the Hammer” The Times - Supplement Monday April 23rd 2001, p.5.

²⁷ In fact illegal for any antiquities to be exported.

²⁸ Kaylan, M “Disputed Art at the Getty”, in Institute of Art Law, Internet Publication, <http://www.ial.uk.com/news/18071.html> , 18 July 2001.

Getty have fantastic collection - however, the number of cases of countries requesting the repatriation of objects is on the increase. Countries such as Turkey and Greece have become aware of their rich cultural heritage which lies within their international borders. They have become increasingly aware that this art ends up in alternative countries and often from sites which may never be excavated properly.

The knowledge lost from clandestine activities could be immense. Colin Renfrew hypothetically explored the scenario of what if the royal tomb at Vergina had been found by *archaiokapiloi* rather than professional archaeologists. It would never have been determined that this tomb was the burial site of Phillip I of Macedon, due to painstaking unravelling of numerous individual elements. What amount of knowledge has been lost? Who has the right to steal this past?

The pillaging of *tombaroli*, *archaiokapiloi* and other looters across the world, seems to be primarily a result of socio economic problems. Looting of an archaeological site produces extra much needed revenue. Could these men's activities be used in a far more beneficial way. The *tombaroli* who loot Etruscan sites probably know far more undiscovered sites than the archaeologists. Would it not be a solution for the state to employ them for their expertise? In this way the state would stop the destruction of sites but also learn and be able to keep any elements of vital importance.

Chapter 4:

Legislation and the Art Market

Stolen Greek and Roman antiquities ultimately end up in the art market.

London's largest controversy surrounding the sale of antiquities was after the publication of Peter Watson's book "*Inside Sotheby's*", that exposed the corrupt practices of the auction house. It would be a shame if the major auction houses Bonham's and Christie's also withdrew antiquities their sales in London. The problems which arise are usually due to dubious provenance.

Geraldine Norman estimated that 80% of the antiquities that enter the London art market are illegal finds²⁹. The British government signed the 1970 UNESCO convention earlier this year³⁰. The convention is a means through co-operation between states, to attempt to prohibit the sale and import of illegally acquired antiquities. This convention is a key testament to the hope of the British government to curb what Alan Howarth described as the "*...increasing incidence of suggestions that the illicit traffic is flourishing in London*"³¹.

Great Britain is key to policing this trade and setting an example to the rest of

²⁹ Palmer, N "Recovering Stolen Art" in Tubb, K Antiquities- Trade Or Betrayed : Legal, Ethical and Conservation Issues London, 1995, p.3.

³⁰ Clayton, P "Britain signs the 1970 UNESCO Convention", Minerva, May/June vol. 12, no. 3, pp.3-4.

³¹ Bailey, M "Britain says yes to UNESCO Convention - The government clamps down on the trade in stolen artefacts", The Arts Newspaper, vol. XII, no.113, April 2001, p.1.

the world. London operates as the second largest art market in the world, generating a turnover of GBP 15 million annually in antiquities alone. Over 91 countries have signed the UNESCO agreement³². The two major exceptions being the USA and Switzerland. These two countries are key ports in the flow of illegal antiquities from the *tombaroli* to the collector (fig 11).

The recovery of stolen antiquities has been helped by institutions such as the Art Loss Register, the internet and the magazine Trace. On March 1991, Judith Nugee, an expert at Christie's was viewing some consignments in New York. She recognised a sculpture entitled Jupitor Enthroned, Jupitor Capitolinus (fig 12), which was stolen on the 27th of November 1990 from the Daedalus Gallery. This led to arrests and the object being recovered³³.

Most countries have some form of legislation restricting the export of objects deemed to have national importance. In the United Kingdom and Canada export licenses are required in order for art and archaeological objects to leave the country. This has become an essential means by which important objects can be kept within the nation it was found within.

Great Britain's museums have reaped the benefits of the implication of export licenses. The incredibly rare Elsenham Pyxis(Cat 7) was saved from ending up probably in the United States of America. Amateur metal detectors, Justin

³² For Full text Renfrew, C Loot, Legitimacy and Ownership, London, 2000, P.93-103.

³³ Wakeford, C "Stolen Property! The Art Loss Register and its Work", Minerva, Mar/Apr 1992, vol.3, no.2,

Hayes and Gordon Barker discovered the Elsenham Pyxis, in September 1990. It was found part of a Roman cremation mound with a number of other objects. They contacted Essex's County Archaeological Unit, the objects were duly examined and recorded. Because the Pyxis was made from Bronze it could not be claimed as Treasure Trove³⁴. Therefore the landowner and the finders went into a 50:50 agreement and decided to sell the collection.

They went to Christie's for a valuation, but they were told that only the Pyxis was saleable. The hexagonal box appeared as Lot 129 in the Antiquities sale on the 10th July 1991. The catalogue made no mention of its provenance. There was no indication of the associated finds. The Pyxis was eventually sold for GBP 33,000. Immediately after the sale the buyer applied for an export license. Luckily this was blocked³⁵. The country now has an important find from the era of Roman occupation in one of the greatest public institutions in the world, the British Museum. This Pyxis is an incredibly rare find. Much more can be extracted from this object with a knowledge of its context. Hypotheses can be formed regarding the original owner - his or her social position, his or her wealth, and what they held dear.

Monuments of national importance are being lost everyday. The Italian police managed to save from an unknown destination a unique sculpture. The Roman marble Capitoline Triad (fig. 13), comprising of Juno, Jupiter and Minerva was

³⁴ For a text of Treasure Trove see Renfrew, C Loot, Legitimacy and Ownership, loc.cit. p.132-139.

³⁵ Bland, R "The New Treasure Trove Bill" Minerva May/June 1994, vol. 5, no. 3, p.23.

recovered in Switzerland. This is the first time a statue such as this has ever been found. It is unique. It is a tragedy to the scholarship of Roman history that the sculpture was broken when it was excavated with mechanical equipment. The tomb robbers, left a vital piece, an arm, and henceforth a find spot can be established. Twenty nine people were arrested in connection with this crime³⁶, a staggering number which illustrates the complexities networks involved in the trade in stolen art.

Sicily is another area of the world which is poor in wealth but rich in heritage. One such find is the gold Phiale of Achyris (Cat 8). This fourth century BC libation bowl is thought to have been found during electric pylon excavations in Caltavuturo, Palermo³⁷. The phiale passes through the hands of several dealers until it was sold to Michael Steinhardt in the USA for \$1.2million. The Phiale was exported through the normal route through Switzerland to the United States with the aid of false papers³⁸. According to section 826 of the Italian Civil Code, objects of archaeological interest "*...discovered in the subsoil... are part of the non-disposable patrimony of the state*"³⁹. The American courts ruled in favour of Italy.

³⁶ Lattanzi, G "Unique Capitoline Triad Recovered by Italian Police", Minerva, May/June 1994, vol. 5, no. 3, p.2.

³⁷ Lufkin, M "US Collector Challenges Italy's Law - Michael Steinhardt is refusing the Italian States Claim for the return of a 5th Century Phiale" The Art Newspaper, vol. X, no. 86, Nov. 1998, p1+3.

³⁸ Slayman, A.L "The Looting of Italy" in Archaeology, Internet Publication, <http://www.archaeology.org/9805/abstracts/italy.html>, vol. 5, no. 3, May/June 1998.

³⁹ Lufkin, M "US Collector Challenges Italy's Law - Michael Steinhardt is refusing the Italian States claim for the return of the 5th Century Phiale" The Art Newspaper, loc.cit p.3.

The Phiale is a symbol of success in returning an object to its original location. Legislation enables countries to fight for the return of some beautiful objects of cultural history. Organising such a case requires a great amount of finance, time and man power. It would be unreasonable to presume that all objects under dispute could be settled in the courts. However, it does send a signal to collectors that will not always be able to keep what they purchase if from a dubious provenance. It is a shame for Michael Steinhardt, he has lost a great amount of money and the ownership of a beautiful object, but this is the consequence of purchase without the proper documentation.

Problems arise when a provenance can not be determined. The Seuso Treasure (Cat 9) is a case in point. The silver treasure hoard was valued at USD 40 million, yet troubles arose at the time of the sale. Lebanon, Croatia and Hungary are all in the process of contesting ownership from the Duke of Northampton⁴⁰. They believe that the silver plate is the result of illegal excavation within their national borders. At the present time the silver hoard is languishing in a bank vault in New York. It is shame that the treasure could not be on public show during the court proceedings. Who is to say that an adequate solution to all parties shall be reached?

Mexico, Guatemala and Peru go to a far greater extreme with a total prohibition of export for all antiquities. Peru exposes a severe problem in this

⁴⁰ Clayton, P "Two Antiquities Disputes in New York - The Icklingham Bronzes and the Sevso Treasure" Minerva, March/April, 1993, vol.4, no. 2, p.2.

law. It is a poor country. The museums are severely under-funded. Peru is rich in amazing Inca artefacts, especially their fantastic gold jewellery. Much more rare, and vital to an understanding of Inca life, is its abundant collection of exquisite antique fabrics. These woven pieces are kept in poor conditions which increase the deterioration process. There are little allowances for changes in humidity or an effect of bright sunlight. These fabrics survived for hundreds of years under the ground in a stable environment. But now are rotting in the state museums.

The people of Peru seem to have three main options when it comes to protecting their own cultural patrimony. There is the option of leaving the objects in the ground, undiscovered, and hope that the objects will not be found through looting. At least they will be protected in the controlled environment of the soil of the Andes. The second option is for the objects to rot in a poorly funded museum somewhere on the Inca Trail. The third alternative is that some of the objects could be sold to the West. The South American Institutions would benefit from the high prices these artefacts would fetch at auction. The proceeds of which, could be ploughed into improving the facilities in these native museums. There needs to be a sense of balance. Of course no country wishes to lose a part of their cultural heritage, but in some instances this is the only way to save what has been found. The key concept needed is co-operation. Is it not an option that museums in the Europe and the United States of America could rent cultural objects from lending countries? This could help towards funding their own museums, but equally they would still own the

objects. The gold jewellery, for example, would be able to be seen by all number of cultures: people of different races and religion. These objects would serve as cultural ambassador for these South American nations. They would generate a better understanding of the worlds heritage rather than being locked in an a cultural niche.

The third world is not the only place where some museums cause more harm than good to some objects. It is not only unprotected unknown sites that get targeted. Probably one the most famous sites in Italy, has to be Pompeii.

It is not only sites which are targets. Museums often fall victim to the greed for antiquities. A 1st century B.C or A.D Celtic sword was stolen from Peterborough Museum on the 17th April 1994⁴¹. It has never been recovered. The Museo Archaeologia Nazionale di Palestrina was broken into on the 23rd of November 1991. Many Etruscan treasures dating from the fourth century BC were taken⁴². Dealers are also a victim of burglary, such as Charles Ede in October of 1992⁴³

The Herculaneum Museum was broken into and 233 objects were stolen⁴⁴. This museum was built in 1980 but has never opened its doors to the public, because of an inability to raise the GBP450,000 essential for security. On the 12th of

⁴¹ Eisenberg, J "Newsflash" *Minerva*, May/June 1994, vol. 5, no. 3.

⁴² Eisenberg, J "Important bronzes stolen from the Museum of Palestrina" *Minerva*, Mar/Apr 1992, vol. 3, no. 2, p.29-31.

⁴³ Eisenberg, J "Stolen" *Minerva*, Jan /Feb 1992, vol. 3, no. 2, p.18-19.

⁴⁴ Eisenberg, J "Treasures stolen from Herculaneum" *Minerva*, May 1990, vol. 1, no. 5, p23-25.

April 1990 the Corinth Museum also fell victim to a night raid also due to a lack of any proper security except for a 62 year old night watchman⁴⁵. Luckily the majority of items were recovered and repatriated on the 22 July 2001, such as the Terracotta Shield (Cat 10). The artefacts were smuggled into USA by the Icarahalios gang. Two hundred and fifty of these beautiful Greek objects were found in a warehouse in Miami. Miami has become an essential port in the smuggling of illicit antiquities into the American art market⁴⁶. Amongst crates of fish were found a fifth century BC Kouros head and a marble statue of Pan⁴⁷. The key perpetrator of the raid, Anastasios Karahalios was given life imprisonment⁴⁸. The objects were easily identified thanks to photographs.

Undercover police operations are key in attempting to stem the flow of illegal art trade. However, with so many more important issues at stake in countries it is often not given enough resources. London is the second largest art market in the world. However, Scotland Yard has only two police officers in its Art and Antiques squad. The Carabinieri of Italy estimate that in the past twenty years, 244,403 art thefts have taken place. Of which 117,578 have been recovered leading to the arrest of 2590 people.

It was reported in the New York Times in 1973 that the curator of Ancient Art at the Cleveland Museum, estimated that 95% of all ancient art in the USA had

⁴⁵ Aspropoulos, S "Corinth Museum Looted" Minerva Sept 1990, vol. 1, no. 7, p.23-25.

⁴⁶ Romey, K "Corinth loot found under fresh fish" Archaeology, Internet Publication, www.archaeology.org/9911/newsbriefs/corinth.html, vol. 52, no. 6, Nov/Dec 1999.

⁴⁷ Romey, K "Corinth loot found under fresh fish" op.cit

⁴⁸ Axarlis, N "Corinth Antiquities Returned" Arachaeology, Internet Publication, www.archaeology.org/online/features/corinth/index.html, February 6th 2001.

been smuggled in. The Czech government estimated that thefts and illicit excavation robbed the country of 10% of their cultural heritage annually. These are shocking statistics.

Many illegal antiquities filter their way through Switzerland to the high prices of the United States of America. One such object is key in the Metropolitan Museum's Greek and Roman collection. The so-called "Million Dollar Pot", (Cat 11). This black figure calyx-krater is a beautiful signed work by one of the pioneering forces of Athenian ceramics and declared as "*...the finest Greek vase there is*". There are two different stories concerning the provenance of the pot. The first official story was that the vase had been kept in fragments under a bed, in Lebanon. The second official story from the Metropolitan Museum is that the pot had been part of a European private collection since the First World War. However, the New York Times exposed the purchase as from bootleg excavations at an Etruscan tomb. The article alleges that the Calyx krater was transported from Italy via Zurich and finally on to New York.

The Calyx Krater (Cat 11) would probably have been found from a unique site. It is a great loss to scholars not to have known where the krater was found. Similarly, the Elmalı Hoard, which was illegally excavated in Turkey in 1984, is a cache of great rarity. The find comprised of 1,661 ancient coins. Including thirteen fifth century B.C Athenian decadrachms. Of which only thirteen others are known throughout the world. This find was incredibly rare,

and nicknamed the “Hoard of the Century” - and consequently very valuable - both intrinsically and extrinsically. It became the possession of American businessman William I Koch⁴⁹. No find point is known for the coins. It is believed that they were dug up somewhere in Southern Anatolia. Under Turkish law the state owns any cultural objects discovered post 1906. Subsequently the Turkish authorities took Mr Koch to court. The hoard is part of a long succession of success by the Turkish government at reclaiming disputed objects⁵⁰.

Comparable to this is the dealing of frescos. So little is known of Roman and especially Greek painting that it needs to be looked after and guarded as a serious study aide. Numerous museums throughout the world contain within their collection frescoes that have no provenance. The J Paul Getty Museum in Malibu contains such a fresco. The fragment illustrates a landscape (**Cat 12**). But other than a study of the image we have no context. The painting does allow academic study into composition, colour, line and technique. However, if this painting was pillaged from a site other than Pompeii, scholars could assess patterns of style across the empire. Like what is possible through the study of mosaic. The site of Pompeii is fundamental in the study of ancient painting. If Vesuvius did not erupt in 79AD then the world would have lost an priceless piece of knowledge. Pompeii stands as a insight into Roman daily life. A

⁴⁹ Lufkin, M “Elmali hoard of coins returned to Turkey” The Art Newspaper no. 91, April 1999, p.7.

⁵⁰ Eight Antique statue’s found in a shipwreck off of England, a marble head of a woman returned from Austria and an Ottoman seal returned from New York.

snapshot of a lost era. However this did not stop thieves in 1977 stealing twelve irreplaceable frescoes. They will never be identified⁵¹. The sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum should be protected for all. They are indispensable components of the world's cultural heritage.

Rare finds like this and the Metropolitan Vase (**Cat 11**), are beautiful objects. However, knowledge of them would be far more complete if they had been found through proper excavation. Could the cache of coins have been buried in panic? Were they buried with a rich man or woman? Why were they buried? These are questions that can only be answered through conjecture. There is no solid evidence. What we have are the objects but the story is incomplete, without a context.

Looting of unknown sites is rising to epic proportions. Leading to the opinion that "*...the greed for art is destroying it*"⁵². Tombaroli activity in Italy is a huge problem⁵³. The statistics shown a massive increase in the number of Etruscan sites looted in the past century. In 1957 it was estimated that 300 sites had been plundered. This figure rose to the astonishing figure of 44,000 in 1977. At one site in particular, of 550 chamber tombs, looters had destroyed 400. How many other sites suffer similar fates?

The Art Newspaper had a candid expose into the practice of one of these

⁵¹ There were no photo's taken of the wall paintings.

⁵² Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, loc.cit., p.51.

⁵³Ruiz, C "My Life as a Tombarolo" The Art Newspaper, no. 112, March 2001, p.36-38.

tombaroli, Mr Induno. He revealed the extent of the practice. Every ten days his team breaks into a virgin tomb. Each *dromos* reveals on average 30-40 vases. Mr Induno takes what he believes is the scientific approach. Each tomb robbery takes two days - the objects have been buried in an controlled environment for anything up to 2,600 years. By exposing the vases to the air for 24 hours they harden and oxidise allowing the objects to be removed safely. The objects are then passed on inevitably to a middleman or *ricettatorre*. Each tomb only has a net profit of between \$3,300 - \$5,700 for the tombaroli. The winners financially in the equation are the dealers.

The next step in this practice is to get the objects out of the country of origin. The Corinthian artefacts was found in Miami amongst crates of fish. Mr Induno highlighted another common practice, is the hollowing out of marble slabs into which are placed the valuable bronze objects. It is then sealed with stucco⁵⁴. A customs official would have no idea that these pieces of marble are helping to export his nations treasures.

There needs to be a market for these stolen objects. But this does not seem to be a problem. After the sculptures of Picasso and Epstein, the collecting of Cycladic idols became big business. However, there has been a loss of information regarding the sculptures. We have few find spots and very little context.

⁵⁴ Ruiz, C "My Life as a Tombarolo" The Art Newspaper loc.cit. p.37.

It is a crying shame that our world heritage is being systematically destroyed.

But as with most things in life the problem lies with money. The tombaroli use it as a way to live. The market is there willing to buy these articles.

Unscrupulous individuals forge documents and tell lies to potential buyers.

Michael Steinhardt lost the golden phiale which he bought in good faith. Peg

Goldberg was the scapegoat in the case of the Kanararia mosaics. Dealers and

experts in auction houses need to be more vigilant, or else the legal trade in

Antiquities will no longer exist. Collectors will begin to be unwilling to spend

great amounts of cash on objects which could at any moment be the centre of a

law suit.

Conclusion

The trade in illegal antiquities is a huge problem world-wide. If we as a world community wish to save an element of our common cultural heritage, then action needs to be taken sooner rather than later. Conventions and legislations are all very well and good, but if they are not properly implicated then they are as worthless as the piece of paper they are written upon.

Collectors should be able to own pieces of the past, but often they now have to resort to purchasing clandestine wares. The collector may claim ignorance, however it is up to the purchaser to be due diligent in checking what they purchase. The over riding principal and concern is provenance.

This thesis has attempted to highlight this trade in our past. The value of which has altered throughout time. The political statements of Roman Emperors and Napoleon. The appreciation of aesthetic values of the Grand Tour tourists. The *tombaroli* and looting activities in Italy and Turkey, often in the name of survival. The fat cat dealers who benefit from this fraud. The unsuspecting victim, such as Michael Steinhardt, who lost the art and thousands of dollars. The greatest lost is to our knowledge.

The true location of the Seuso treasure could have answered many questions. But instead, there is an ongoing law suit in which there are no winners. What use is a fantastic archaeological prize in a bank vault?

Throughout this thesis I have mentioned the idea of an object as a cultural ambassador. We are part of a multi-cultural society, it makes perfect sense for institutions throughout the world to want to show case heritage from the dawn of time and from every corner of the world. The Greek and Roman era's are no exception

Throughout the past man has evaluated this 'classical' art as the ultimate artistic achievement of man kind. It is no surprise that these works are targeted as part of the million dollar stolen art industry. Antiquities pose a real problem. They are uncovered from the ground. They can be found by anyone. It would be an inconceivable concept to imagine the policing of every single potential archaeological site.

This is why vigilance needs to come from another source - the dealer or auction house. Art is a commodity. It will always be stolen. However, more diligence by market forces could help to clamp down on this tidal wave of knowledge which is lost every single day.

Glossary

Archaiokapiloi - Looter of an archaeological site; Greece

Ricettatorre - Middleman

Tombaroli - Looter of an archaeological site; Italy

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The Catalogue

To be noted:

The Literature referred to in the catalogue is relevant to the subject matter of Stolen Antiquities, rather than a survey of every bibliographical reference.

1 Athlete Crowning Himself

c.320 BC

Bronze with copper inlays: h.1.515m

J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California

77.AB.30

Scholars have relied upon Roman marble copies in order to study Greek art, however, recent underwater archaeological investigations have revealed a number of large bronze statues, which were taken as plunder by the Roman's and consequently lost at sea. This sculpture was found in the Adriatic, close to Rimini.

The Getty bronze illustrates a victorious athlete at the Olympic games, possibly even a portrait of a prince. The athlete does not show any *aidos* (modesty) regarding his victory, which indicates a date post Alexander the Great (d.323 BC).

This bronze was possibly the work of Alexander's court sculptor Lysippos, whose artistic output was prolific. The Getty bronze illustrates the alterations he made to the Polykleitan Kanon - smaller heads, subtler proportions and stances, and, a greater richness of detail.

This statue would possibly have been stolen from Olympia.

Victorious athletes had the right to erect a statue in their honour.

Only after three successive victories in three different Olympic years would an athlete be allowed to raise a portrait image. The Getty statue serves as a memorial to an amazing athlete.

PROVENANCE. Found in the Adriatic sea just off Rimini.

LITERATURE. Frel, J The Getty Bronze, Malibu, 1982; Getty Explore Art Statue of a Victorious Youth, Internet Publication, <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/objects/oz8912.html> , 1999; Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts - Volume 1, Pennsylvania, 1987; Vermeule, C.C Greek and Roman Sculpture in America, Los Angeles, 1981.

Cat. 1 - Athlete Crowning Himself



2 A and B **Laocoon**

c. 150 BC

Marble: height 184cm (72 1/2 inches)

Vatican Museum, Rome

The Laocoon was rediscovered in 1506 and had immense implications upon Renaissance art . The sculpture survives as a marble copy of a bronze Greek original, which was attributed by Pliny as the work of three Rhodian's called Agesander, Athanadoros and Polydoros. Pliny regarded the Laocoon as the greatest work of art in the world.

The Laocoon illustrates an episode from Virgil's *Aeneid* in which the Trojan priest, Laocoon and his two sons, were attacked by two giant sea serpents after warning that the Trojans should not trust any Greek gifts. The priest and his sons are illustrated struggling and writhing amid the coils of the serpents. The piece is composed of strong diagonals and expressive gestures. The face of the priest is set in an expression of anguish and suffering as he attempts to wriggle free.

The copy was probably made during the Julio-Claudian Dynasty, in either the reign of Augustus (27 BC - 14 AD) or his successor, Tiberius. The Emperor Tiberius created a pleasure cave at Sperlonga which was filled with copies of Greek sculpture. When the cave was rediscovered, a sculpture of *Odysseus' Helmsman falling* which was signed by the same Rhodian sculptors was found. There was a market for copies of exquisite works of Greek art.

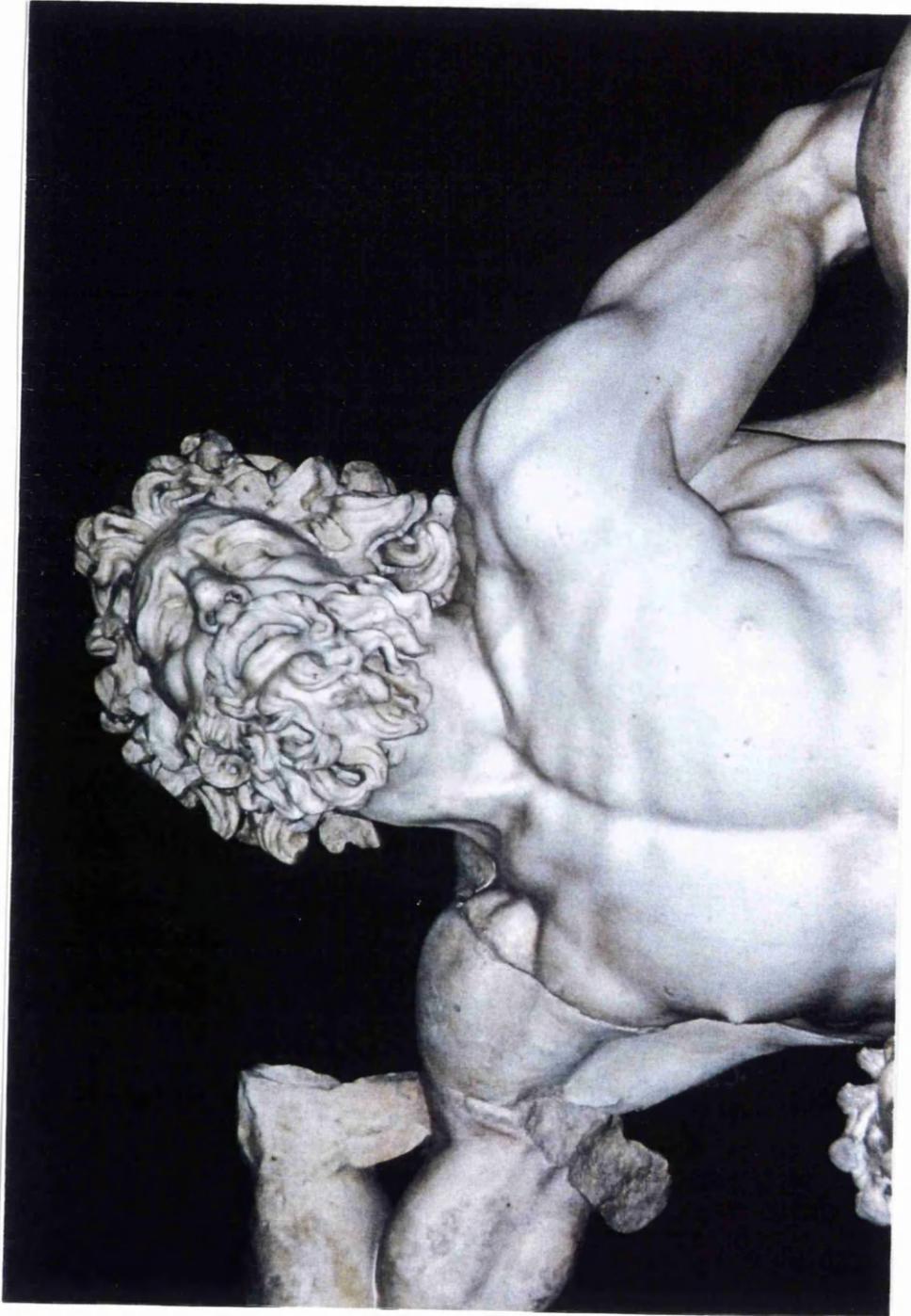
PROVENANCE. Found 1506 on the Esquiline Hill, Rome; 1796-1814 the Louvre Paris; 1814- present the Vatican Museum.

LITERATURE. Boardman, J Greek Art, London, 1996; Merryman, J.H and Elsen, A.E Law, Ethics and the Visual Arts, Pennsylvania, 1987; Spivey, N Greek Art, London, 1997.

2A: The Laocoon



2B: The Priest Laocoon



3 Fragment of Apse Mosaic

525-550 AD

Mosaic with glass tesserae; 60 cm (24 inches square).

Cyprus

This mosaic formed part of an apse decoration from a church in northern Cyprus. The mosaic illustrates Christ sitting on the lap of the Virgin Mary, surrounded by archangels and apostles. From a period of time of vast production of mosaic decoration across the Byzantine Empire, from Thessaloniki, Asia Minor and in Cyprus.

The mosaics from the apse were taken in four fragments. They were further ruined by a process of straightening out the images. It was believed that they would be far more marketable if they were without the curved surface. This has put the image in danger. The plaster is cracking in parts and the glass tesserae is buckling.

The fragment illustrates Christ at eight years old. He holds to his left breast a rolled up scroll. Scrolls are usually held by prophets. This is probably a reference to the prophets belief that a son of God would save mankind. Christ holds the scroll close to his heart. He knows

that the true prophets spoke the word of his father. Illustrating a connection between son, father and the prophets who believed that he would arrive one day.

PROVENANCE. From the Autocelphalous Greek Orthodox Church of the Pangia Kanakaria in the village of Lythrankomi, in North Cyprus.

LITERATURE. Gerstenblith, P “The Kanakaria Mosaics and United States Law” in Tubb, K Antiquities: Trade or Betrayed - Legal, Ethical and Conservation Issues, London, 1995, pp.105-121; Theodorou, J “The Stolen Mosaics of Kanakaria” in Minerva May/June 1992, vol. 3, no. 3, p.27-29.

3: The Kanakaria Christ



4 Hamilton Vase

c. 330 - 310 BC

Terracotta with added white; height 88.5 cm (35.4 inches)

British Museum, London

GR 1772.3-20.14 (BM Vases 1284)

This Apulian vase has been attributed to the Baltimore painter, the predecessor to the white Sakkos painter (Cat. 6).

The Hamilton Vase takes the form of a volute krater and would have been used for mixing wine.

The Vase has a mythological theme. Castor, the son of Leda and Tyndareus, stands under a naiskos . Castor's face is represented on the neck of the vase, in three quarter view, illustrated with a delicate sensitivity. His head sits amidst a foliate design of swirling tendrils and blossoming blooms, which envelop the entire neck of the vase. The worship of Castor and his twin brother, Polydeuces (or Pollox), became incredibly popular during the Roman period. According to local legend, Castor and Polydeuces fought at the head of the

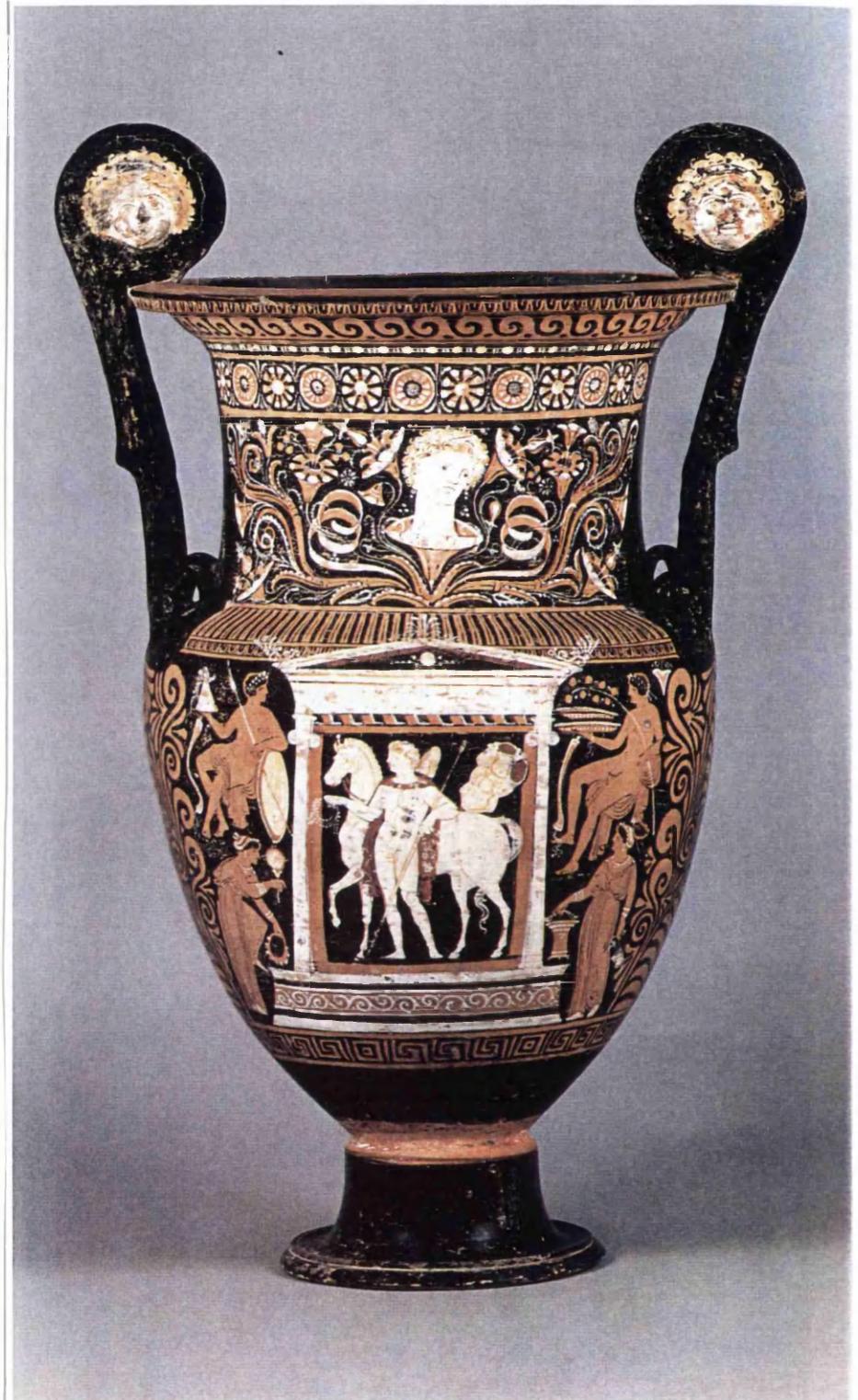
Roman army against the Latins at the battle of Lake Regillus in 496 BC. A temple was erected in Rome dedicated to their worship.

The Hamilton vase was highly praised during the eighteenth century. It was reproduced in replica by Wedgwood and illustrated in d'Hancarville's book, *Antiquites Etrusques Grecques et Romaines*.

PROVENANCE. Reported to have been found at Bari; in the collection of Sir William Hamilton; British Museum, London from 1772.

LITERATURE. Jenkins, I and Sloan, K Vases and Volcanoes : Sir William Hamilton and his Collection, London, 1996; Sontag, S The Volcano Lover, London, 1996.

4: Hamilton Vase



5 **Sleeping Eros**

1st century AD or BC

Marble: length 87.5 cm (35 inches), width 50 cm (20 inches)

Royal-Athena Galleries, New York

MA 0101

This exquisite marble illustrates cupid fast asleep, lying upon the Nemean lion skin besides his quiver and Herakles club. This episode relates to Herakles last love and his marriage to the goddess Hebe. Cupid was no longer needed to shoot his arrows on Herakles behalf. Herakles was living with the Gods on Olympus and had no longer for his attributes any longer. Cupid was finally able to sleep.

At cupid's feet is a lizard. A lizard has mythological significance. According to ancient Roman texts, lizards had the ability to grow a new tail. This was a symbol of both the hope of renewal for a lost love and of resurrection in the afterlife.

Each of the details are rendered delicately. Cupid's wings, the club and the lion hide lead the viewer into the composition and towards

the tender child's face.

PROVENANCE. Thought to have been illicitly dug up in Ostia Antica, Italy; illegally exported to Royal-Athena Galleries, New York.

LITERATURE. Eisenberg, J "Early Roman Imperial Marble Sleeping Eros", in Royal-Athena Galleries, Internet Publication, <http://www.royal-athena.com/PAGES/romancatpages/MA0101.html>, 2001; van Rijn, M "A Provenance is Born", in Michel van Rijn, Internet Publication, <http://www.michelvanrijn.com>, 4th June 2001.

5 : Sleeping Eros



6 Apulian Oinochoe

c.320-310 BC

Ceramic, red-figure decoration with added white and yellow details: 44.5 cm high

Private Collection

Apulian vases are made from a distinctive black clay. They seem not to have been traded during ancient times, and are found almost exclusively in Italy.

The Oinochoe has been attributed to the White Sakkos painter. His repertoire included figured scenes of youths, women and Eros.

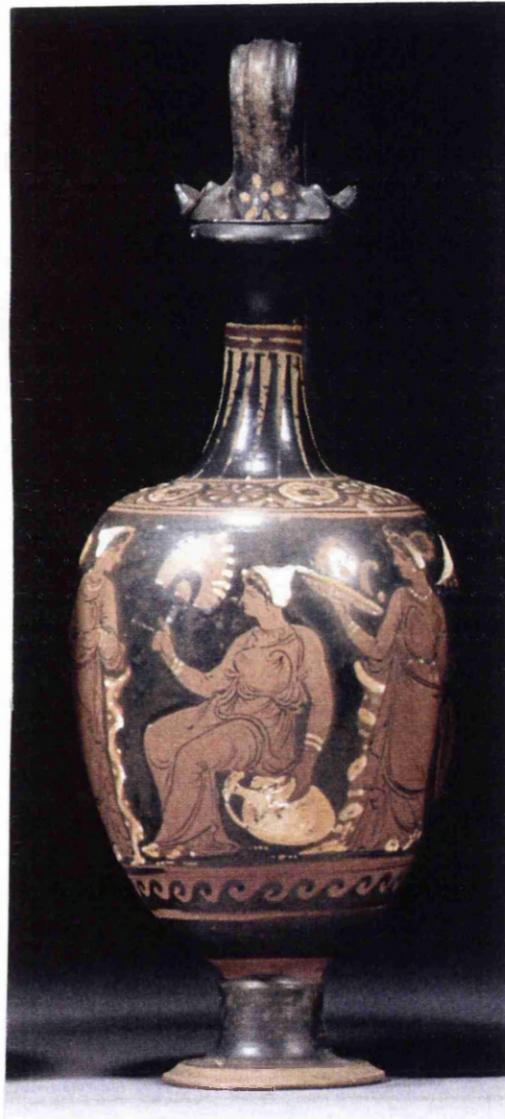
Occasionally with frontal heads of women, or, as on this oinochoe, a representation of Nike in added white.

The oinochoe illustrates a domestic scene of a noble woman with two attendants at either side. Vases provide vital evidence of ancient interiors, the use of objects and dress - such as the fan with the tasselled edge and the phiale laden with food stuffs (similar to Catalogue 4) for historians.

PROVENANCE. Sold at Christie's London on the 19th of October 1970 as Lot 57. Currently in a Private Collection.

LITERATURE. Hornsby, S, Insley-Green, C and Sully, E Christie's: South Kensington - Fine Antiquities, London, Wednesday 25th April 2001; Trendall, A.D and Camitoglou, A The Red Figured Vases of Apulia II, Oxford, 1982; Watson, P "History Under the Hammer" in The Times, Monday April 23 2001, Supplement, p.5.

6 : Apulian Oinochoe



7 **Elsenham Pyxis**

c. first half of the 2nd century AD

Bronze with millefiori enamel decoration, missing lid: height 46 mm (1 3/4 ins)

British Museum, London.

PRB P.1991.12-1.1

This hexagonal bronze box is decorated on all sides with millefiori enamel patterns created out of six different colours. The box forms part of a group of objects were used to contain either cosmetics or jewellery, which have the name pyxis.

This particular pyxis design is one of only a dozen which have been found throughout the entire Roman Empire, and the first to have been found in Britain. These exquisite boxes are thought to have been made in the low countries and then exported throughout the Empire. International trade was fundamental to the Roman Empires economy. The provinces of the Empire, such as Great Britain, benefited - be it fish oil from Spain, Samian ware from Gaul or bronze boxes from the Low Countries.

The pyxis formed part of a Roman cremation mound. It was buried along with the remains of six Samian ware pots, a bronze lock plate, a key, an iron lamp, twelve bone and six glass counters, a bronze cup and three silver coins. The latest coin is a denarius from the reign of Antonius Pius, which was issued c.145-8 AD. Indicating that the burial took place after this date. It was common practice in both Greek and Roman times to bury the deceased with coins as they were required in the afterlife to pay the ferryman Charon to aid their crossing of the Styx.

PROVENANCE. Found in September 1990 in Elsenham, Essex by Justin Hayes and Gordon Barker with the aid of a metal detector; Lot 129 in the Christies Antiquities sale on 10th July 1991; purchased by the British Museum Society, for the British Museum to commemorate the directorship of Sir David Wilson.

LITERATURE. Bland, R "The New Treasure Trove Bill" in *Minerva*, vol.5, no.3, May/June 1994, p.20-23; Caygill, M *The British Museum: A-Z Companion*, London, 1999; Stead, I *The Salisbury Hoard*, Stroud, 1998.

7: Elsenham Pyxis



8 Phiale of Achyris

c.300 BC

Gold: diameter 23 cm (9 inches) height 4 cm (1 1/2 inches)

Sicily

A phiale is a flat libation bowl without handles. A libation is a liquid offering such as wine and oil made at an altar or a tomb. A phiale in use is illustrated on the Apulian vase (cat.12).

This fine gold phiale is illustrated with acorns, beechnuts and bees in concentric circles around the omphalos. The omphalos is a representation of the navel of the universe, which was reputedly inside the Temple at Delphi at a point determined by Zeus after he sent two eagles, one east and the other west, to circumnavigate the world.

The phiale has a dedication, punched in dots around the rim is written in Greek “ *of the demarch Achyris* ” with a value of “ *115 gold* ”.

PROVENANCE. Believed to have been unearthed in Caltavuturo, Palermo during electric pylon excavations; 1976-1980 in the collection of Vincenzo Pappalardo; 1980 - 1991 Vincenzo Cammarata; 1991 William Verres; 1991 - 1995 in the collection of Michael Steinhardt; 1995 - 1999 US customs; 1999 returned to Sicily.

LITERATURE. Endean, C "Indiana Jones and the Temple of 'stolen' relics" The Sunday Telegraph, March 14th 1999, p.29; Lufkin, M "The Penalty of lying to customs" in The Art Newspaper, no.95, September 1999, p.6; Lufkin, M "US Collector Challenges Italy's Law" in The Art Newspaper, vol. X, no.86, November 1998, p.1-3; Rose, M "Steinhardt loses appeal" in Archaeology, Internet Publication, <http://www.archaeology.org/9909/newsbriefs/steinhardt.html>, vol.52, no.5, Sept/Oct 1999.

8: Phiale of Achyris



9 **The Hippolytus Ewer and Situlas**

c. 400 - 650 AD

Repousee silver decorated with parcel gilt; Ewer height 57.3 cm (23 inches),
Situla height 22.8 cm (9.1 inches).

The Ewer and Situla's form a set intended for the service of wine.

The Seuso Treasure is part of a number of huge silver dinner and wine services which have been found. Comparative examples include the Mildenhall Treasure found in Suffolk in 1942/3.

The three pieces are illustrated with the story of Hippolytus and Phaedra. The buckets and the ewer are decorated with the distinctive beading around the rims, similar to the Great Dish in the Mildenhall Hoard.

Large dinner service sets seem to have been buried in times of war and unrest. The Seuso treasure was buried in bronze cauldron. Some scholars believe that the type of manufacture indicates that the cauldron was made in Hungary. The case for a Hungarian provenance is incredibly strong.

PROVENANCE. Unknown

LITERATURE. Painter, K “The Seuso Treasure”, in Minerva,
vol. 1, no. 4, April 1990, pp.4-11; Eisenberg, J “New Revelations on the
Provenance of the Seuso Treasure”, in Minerva, vol. 1, no. 5, May 1990, p.3;
Mango, M The Seuso Treasure , Michigan, 1994; Clayton, P “Decisions
reached on Two Major Roman Treasure Hoards - Seuso and Hoxne”, in
Minerva, Jan/Feb 1994, vol.5, no.1, p.4; Nagy, M and Toth, E “The Seuso
Cauldron - Is the Seuso Treasure from Hungary?” in Minerva, December 1990,
vol. 1, no. 10, pp.22-23 and “The Seuso Treasure - The Pannonian
Collection?”, in Minerva, September 1990, vol. 1, no. 7, pp. 4-11.

9: The Hippolytus Ewer and Situla's



10 Shield of a Rider and Horse

c. 500 BC

Terracotta; diameter 30 cm (12 inches)

Corinth Antiquities Museum

702

Terracotta objects were mass produced. They were often used as votives. The use of this shield could have been as a memorial votive to the horsemen illustrated. At the temple of Bassai hundreds of military votives have been excavated.

The style of the shield is quite archaic. There is little understanding of the concept of perspective. The horseman is just placed on top of the image of the horse. There is little attempt to render a naturalistic image.

PROVENANCE. Corinth Antiquities Museum

LITERATURE. Aspropoulos, S “Corinth Museum Looted” in Minerva, vol.1, no.7, September 1990, p.23-25; Axarlis, N “Corinth Antiquities Returned” in Archaeology, Internet Publication, <http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/corinth/index.html>, February 6th 2001; Romey, K “Corinth loot found under fresh fish” Archaeology, Internet Publication, <http://www.archaeolgy.org/9911/newsbriefs/corinth.html>, vol.52, no.6, Nov/Dec 1999.

10: Terracotta Shield of a Horse and Rider



702

11 **The Million Dollar Pot**

c. 515 BC

Terracotta: height 45.7 cm (18 inches)

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

1972.11.10

This Calyx Krater was bought by the Metropolitan Museum New York in 1972 for \$1 million, where it was declared as “ *...the finest Greek vase there is*”.

The Calyx krater is the work of the painter Euphronios and the potter Euxitheos. Euphronios was one of the pioneers in developing the naturalistic potential of the red-figure brush technique.

The body of the krater illustrates an episode from the Trojan war - the death of Sarpedon. The fallen hero's body is being carried away by Thanatos (death) and Hypnos (sleep) to Lycia, whilst being overseen by Hermes.

Painted pottery has been essential in gaining an impression and

understanding of life in ancient Greece. Death and sleep are depicted in contemporary battle uniform, recreated in great detail.

PROVENANCE. Believed to have been dug up from an Etruscan tomb in 1972 by a bootleg excavation; 1972 Metropolitan Museum, New York. OR Purchase, Bequest of Joseph H. Dukee, gift of Darius Ogden Mills, and gift of C. Ruxton Love, by exchange 1972.

LITERATURE. Meyer, K The Plundered Past, London, 1973.

11: The Million Dollar Pot



12 Nilotic Wall Painting Fragment

70 AD

Tempera on plaster: height 45 cm (18 inches), width 37.4 cm (14 15/16 inches)

J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu, California

72.AG.86

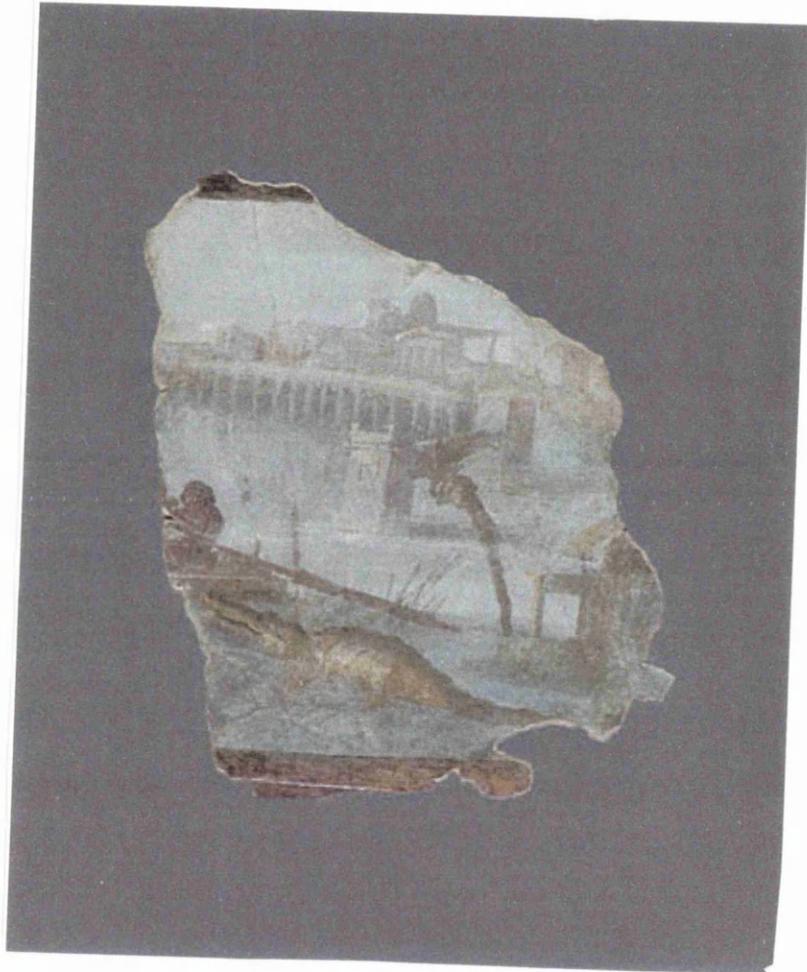
After the annexation of Egypt in 31 BC, Nilotic themes became popular for Roman interiors; be it a wall painting or a huge mosaic, such as the one at the Temple of Fortuna in Palestrina. This fragment illustrates a pygmy in his canoe being stalked by a crocodile. Behind whom is a cityscape, leading directly onto the water. Could this be an indication of what the great lost city of ancient Alexandria looked like in its hey day?

This fragment has a fictive windowsill framing the top and bottom of the landscape scene. This indicates an adoption of the Style III form of Roman wall painting, as classified by Mau in 1882. The study of Roman wall painting was only possibly with the rediscovery of Pompeii in the 18th century.

PROVENANCE. Unknown.

LITERATURE. Henig, M ed. A Handbook of Roman Art : A Survey of the Visual Arts of the Roman World, London, 1983; Wheeler, M Roman Art and Architecture, London, 1996.

12: Nilotic Wall Painting Fragment



Comparative Illustrations

figure 1 : Francisco Goya The Duke Of Wellington,

1812-14, Oil on mahogany; National Gallery, London.

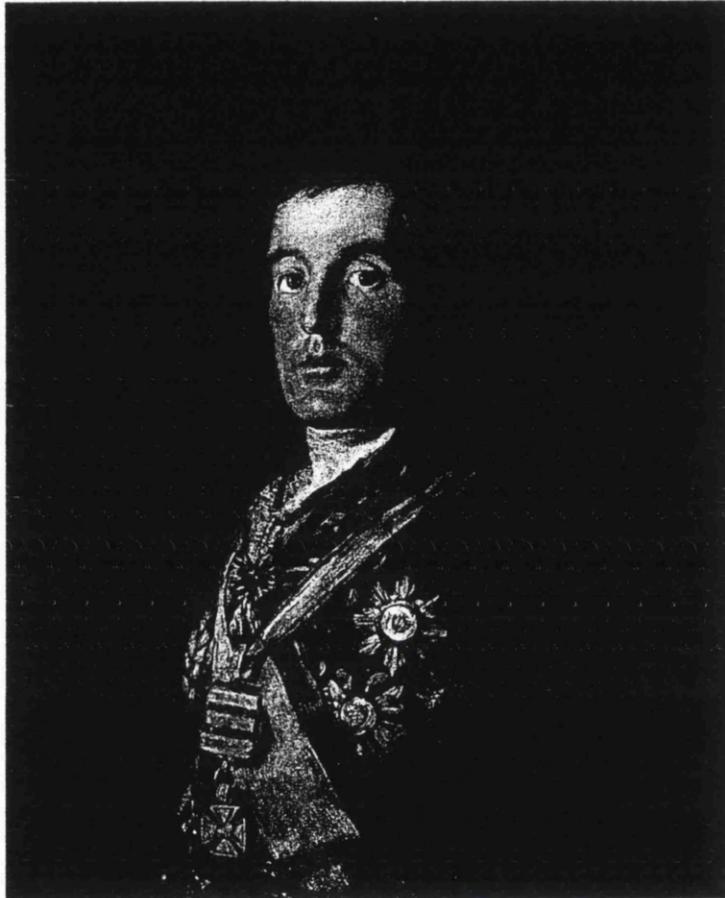


figure 2:- Trajan's Column,

Marble, after 106 AD, The Forum, Rome.

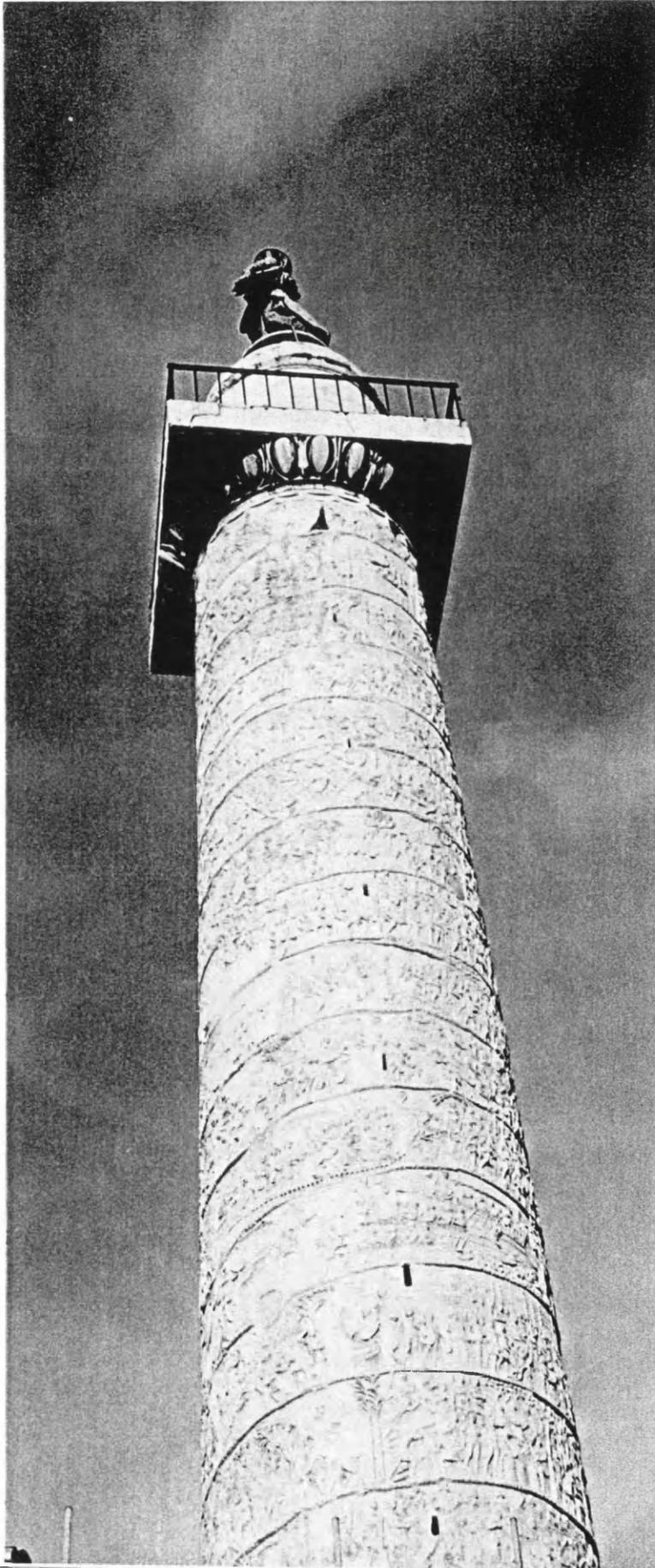


figure 3:- Capitoline Aphrodite

3rd or 2nd Century AD; Marble; Capitoline Museum, Rome.



figure 4:- Statue A from Riace

c.450 BC; Bronze; Museo Nazionale, Reggio Calabria.



figure 5 :- Apollo Belvedere

c.330 BC; Marble; Vatican Museums, Rome.

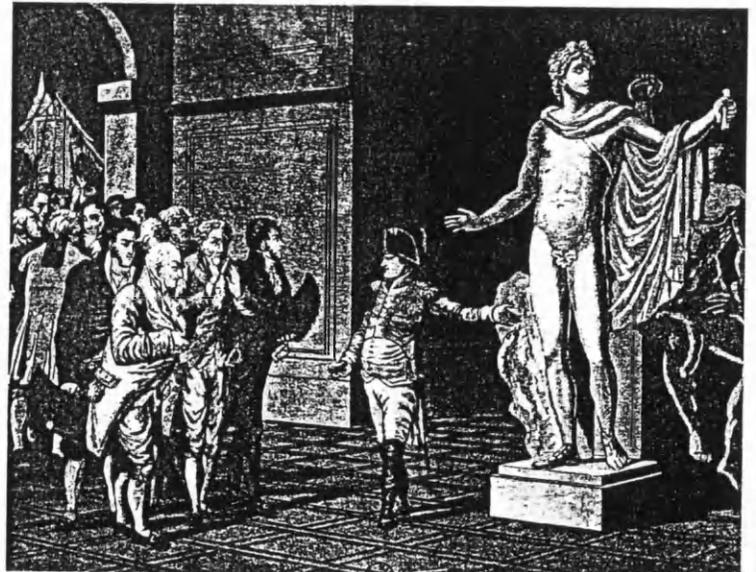
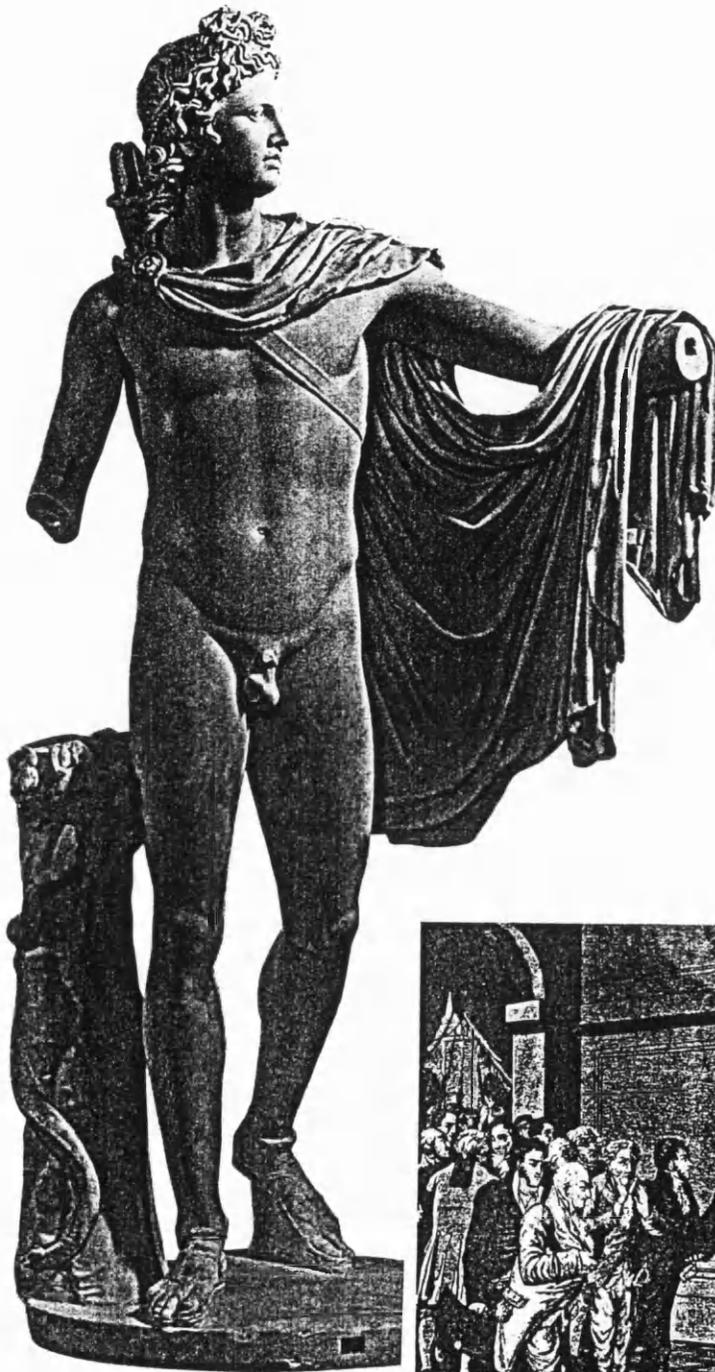


figure 6 : “Napoleon Bonaparte Showing Apollo Belvedere to his Deputies” c.1799, Etching.

figure 7:- Buddha at Bamiyan,

5th or 6th Century A.D



figure 8:- Reclining Hero.

c. 435 BC; Marble; British Museum, London



figure 9:- San Marco Horse,

Hellenistic; Bronze; Basilica of San Marco, Venice.



figure 10:- New York Treasure.

Late sixth century B.C; Metropolitan Museum, New York.

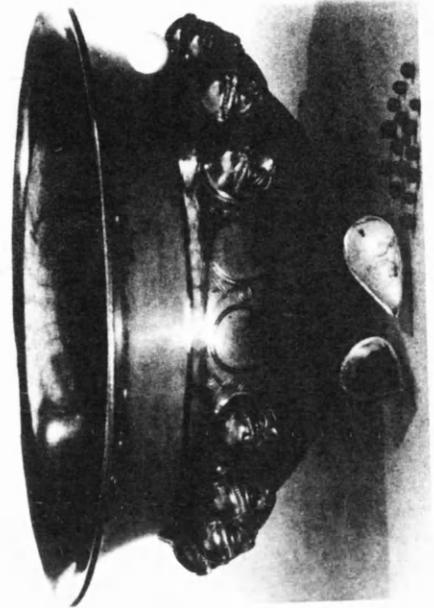


figure 11:- Tombaroli



figure 12:- Jupitor Enthroned. Jupiter Capitolinus

2nd Century A.D, marble.

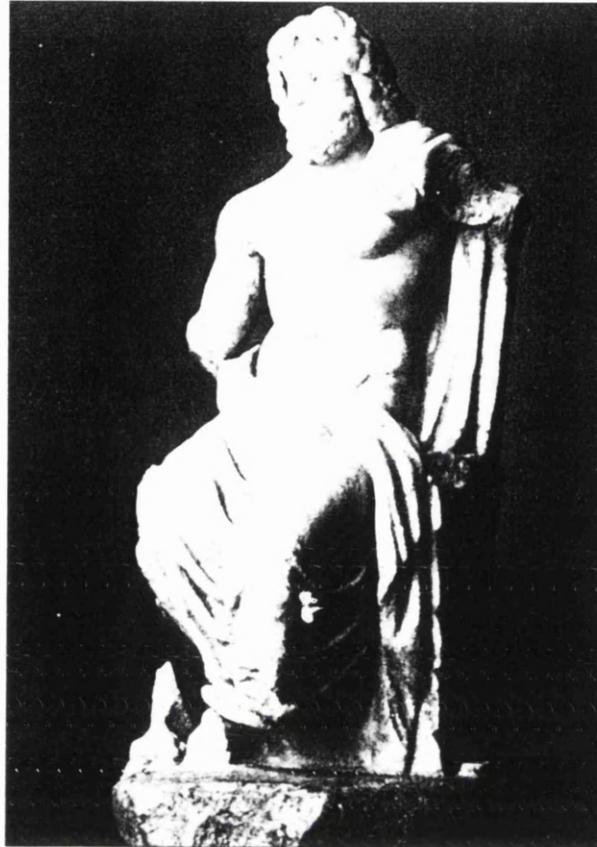


figure 13:- Capitoline Triad