“The Castness of the Things”: A Visitor’s-Eye View of Value in the Cast Gallery of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

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Abstract

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Archaeological plaster casts, namely highly precise reproductions of ancient Greek and Roman sculptures, have had a tumultuous history. Once considered an essential feature of nineteenth-century country homes and art schools, casts suffered a dramatic twentieth-century downturn in popularity. Nonetheless, some collections, particularly those held within university museums, weathered this era. The recent "replication turn" in modern scholarship has directed new attention to these objects, generating more knowledge than ever before about casts' own histories, their unique materialities, and contexts of display. Such scholarship has outlined the many values that casts possess as objects in their own right. However, less research has been directed toward understanding how the objects "work in practice" within the museums that display them today. My thesis aims to shed light on this significant issue. Through visitor studies research conducted at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, I analyse the diverse value(s) that contemporary museum audiences attach to casts. While many of the value(s) identified by the Ashmolean's users align with those discussed in scholarship, I note that there are many important nuances. I also consider the special influence that the setting of a university museum such as the Ashmolean has on perceptions of casts. I argue that it is not only the educationally focused setting but the particular disciplinary value system of the Museum's interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists that impacts on the values associated with the casts. Furthermore, I tackle the thorny issue of authenticity, which also influences how the casts are interpreted. I demonstrate that their status as copies of ancient sculptures, works of art that are highly embedded within Western culture, results in their value being inevitably somewhat dependent upon their ancient referents. Finally, I explore how recognising the "castness" inherent in all things can inform wider debates over contemporary museum and heritage practice.

Dedication

To Bertha “Peggy” Alice Ellis,

Constance Rosina Kate Tredget,

and Emma Louise Ellis,

who have all, in their own way,

helped this thesis

to take flight.

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Dad, throughout this PhD process, I took a special pride in putting in many long days of work because they showed me just how much I take after you. But don't worry, I promise I'll get a real job now.

Georgie, you exemplify the power of perseverance and never giving up. The vigour with which you have embraced new challenges fills me with the confidence to do the same.

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Conventions

Since this thesis takes as its subject archaeological plaster casts of ancient Greek and Roman sculptures, it also contains a limited amount of vocabulary that is specific to discussions of the ancient world. When a term is sufficiently straightforward to summarise in a few words (e.g., "*agora*", meaning "public assembly space", c.f. section 1.2), the definition will be given within the main text of the thesis. However, when I refer to a historical or mythological figure from the ancient world, a specific archaeological site, or a particular ancient sculpture, for which a lengthier description is required to give the full context, an asterisk will appear (e.g., "*Parthenon frieze**", c.f. section 2.1). These asterisks direct the reader to consult the glossary in Appendix 1. The glossary aims to provide an accessible description of relevant terms to ensure that readers from any disciplinary background will be able to fully understand the text, as well as highlight any pertinent scholarly debates that surround the objects or sites under discussion.

Throughout this thesis, individual casts from within the Ashmolean Museum's collection are referred to using their accession numbers, as given within the Frederiksen and Smith 2011 Cast Gallery catalogue (e.g., **B140a**).

I use the term "classical" with a lower case "c" to refer collectively to the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. In line with general archaeological convention, the term "Classical" with an upper case "C" will be used to refer specifically to the so-called "Classical period" of ancient Greek history that stretches from 510-323 BC. The name of the discipline of Classical Archaeology will also be capitalised.

Finally, all drawings and photographs included within this thesis are the author's own, unless otherwise stated. In the case of photographs, the dates included within the figure captions indicate when the image was captured.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Preamble

In the midst of drafting this thesis, I put down my pen and picked up a paintbrush. The image overleaf was the result: a representation of the face of Laocoön (*Lay-ock-oh-on*), a Trojan priest best known from the writings of the ancient Roman bard Virgil. Virgil's epic poem *The Aeneid* describes how, towards the end of the Trojan War, Laocoön attempts to warn his people of the Greeks' plot to capture their city by means of a wooden horse (*Aeneid* 2.199-233). Laocoön meets an untimely end: Virgil details how he and his sons were brutally assassinated by serpents sent by the vengeful goddess Athena, a supporter of the Greek cause, to silence him.

Before reading the rest of this thesis, I invite you to gaze into the marbled face of Laocoön and ask the following questions:

- Do you like this painting? Does it have value? If so, what kind of value?
- Do you consider it "authentic"?
- How does the medium in which the work is made, watercolour on paper, influence your view?

Now that you have spent a few moments pondering the image, I can tell you a little more about it. In short, it is a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of an original.

More precisely, it is a printed copy of a photograph taken by me for this thesis; of a watercolour painting; of a photograph taken at an art exhibition; of a plaster cast made by artist Orla O'Byrne and exhibited at the James Barry Exhibition Centre, Cork, Ireland; of another plaster cast, a teaching model used to train artists at the Crawford Institute of Technology; of an original piece of ancient Roman sculpture, the Laocoön and his sons statue group found in 1506 on the Esquiline Hill in Rome and now exhibited at the Vatican Museums (Smith 1995: 108).

At this point, the painting may appear less like an artistic representation and more like an onion, and there are potentially even more layers than those outlined above. To produce the watercolour, I printed off a hard copy of the photograph that I took at the art exhibition to allow me to better capture the light and shade when painting. There is also an unknown number of stages of copying between the Crawford Institute of Technology (CIT)'s plaster cast teaching model and the original Laocoön statue group. It is possible that the CIT's cast is itself modelled on another plaster copy. We must also consider whether the Laocoön in the Vatican that we refer to as an "original" was likewise the result of copying processes. It is doubtful that it was made in a single moment of artistic inspiration in the workshop of the ancient sculptors to whom Roman writer Pliny the Elder attributes the piece (*Natural History* 36.5). "First drafts" of sculptures produced in antiquity were regularly made in clay and then translated into the finished marble form (Toumoum and Siller 2005: 175).

My watercolour could therefore be a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of a copy of an "original" that is itself the result of a copying process.

Another question now rears its head: Has the revelation of the layers behind the image caused you to reconsider your answers to the questions asked above? If you answered "yes" when initially asked "Does it have value?", has this view now changed? Why? Why not? It is questions of this ilk that this thesis seeks to interrogate. The overarching research focus that binds together this thesis is as follows:

- How and why do we assign value to museum objects?

Although I have so far invited you to consider this question through the medium of a watercolour painting, this thesis takes as its main subject another form of reproduction, namely the plaster cast. In this chapter, I will first introduce plaster casts (1.2), before defining the key concept of value (1.3). I will then outline my research questions (1.4).

1.2 Plaster casts

Plaster casts are highly precise[1] three-dimensional reproductions[2]. They are produced, as their name suggests, in Plaster of Paris[3], a fine white powder made from a naturally occurring crystalline mineral known as gypsum, which hardens when mixed with water and allowed to set. Making a cast is a lengthy and skilled practice, often requiring the creation of complex moulds taken from the surface of the original object. Casts can be highly diverse in terms of scale and subject matter. Casts of colossal architectural elements[4] have been produced, as have reproductions of very small archaeological objects.[5] Human[6] and animal[7] subjects have also been routinely cast. To consider every variety of cast discussed here would be a task too great for a single PhD thesis, so this project limits itself to casts of a very particular kind: archaeological plaster casts taken from "original"[8] ancient sculptures made in classical antiquity.

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[1] Studies which have compared nineteenth-century plaster casts of ancient Greek and Roman sculptures to their ancient referents have shown that many casts reproduce their referents to within 1mm of accuracy (Payne 2019a: 1630).

[2] Such terms as "reproduction", "copy", and "replica" can be interpreted as having diverse meanings. For example, when discussing manuscripts, Jonathan Alexander differentiates between a copy (a "relatively neutral" term), a reproduction (which is accurate and serial in nature but inferior to the original), and a replica (which is supposedly more accurate than the reproduction and refers to copies made by artists of their own work) (Alexander 1989: 64). However, in this thesis, these terms will be used interchangeably to refer to casts. They should not be construed as value judgments.

[3] Plaster of Paris is so called because of the abundant supply of raw gypsum that was extensively mined at Monmarte, Paris during the nineteenth-century (Payne 2020: 4).

[4] The 10mx17m Pórtico de la Gloria from Santiago de Compostela Cathedral, Spain was cast in its entirety in 1866 (Montero Tortajada 2020: 7). Today, it remains on display at London's Victoria and Albert Museum (henceforth V&A).

[5] The Ashmolean Museum's collection contains plaster casts of ancient Greek *fibulae* (brooches) measuring just 6cm (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 243).

[6] The Musée de l'Homme, Paris is one of many museums that displays plaster cast busts taken from living indigenous peoples from Oceania and Australia, South East Asia, America, and Africa (Schlanger 2016: 1094). The casts were produced by colonial Europeans for anthropological purposes, to aid in the pseudo-scientific study of phrenology (ibid.). The making of such casts was an uncomfortable and often violent process, involving either the bribery of the sitter (Blackley 2004: 51-2) or compulsion: forcible casting undertaken without the subject's consent (Tocha 2019a: 66).

[7] A particularly striking example is a full-size cast of a crocodile, made for use within the teaching collection of the Berlin's Royal Arts and Crafts Museum (Tocha 2019b: 28).

[8] The term "original sculptures" used here is somewhat problematic. This is because many ancient statues that survive from antiquity are themselves reproductions. The Romans had great thirst for Greek art, and there were insufficient Greek bronze originals to satisfy their demand (Boardman 1985: 16). Therefore, Roman artisans produced marble copies of Greek works for their enthusiastic patrons (ibid.). Roman copies will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6, but for now, it is merely sufficient to note that the term "ancient original" must be used with caution. In this thesis, I will (for the most part) use the term

Ancient Greece and Rome were prolific statue-making cultures. Sculpted images of gods, heroes, mythological figures, royalty, the political and social elite, and the deceased were commonly carved from marble or cast in bronze. These sculptures littered public, private, religious, and sepulchral settings: just one fourth-century BC *agora* (public assembly space) in the Greek city of Priene was home to over one hundred statues (Ma 2012: 231). The casting of such statues began to take off as a phenomenon during the Renaissance (Borbein 2000: 29).

As alluded to above, key to understanding casts is their traditional making process, which I will now summarise in brief.[9] First, a mould must be made from the original object. This process involves the application of wet Plaster of Paris to the surface of the original in multiple sections.[10] Once the plaster has set and been detached from the original, a kind of 3D jigsaw will have been created, preserving a negative impression of the original's surface. This can then be used as a mould, known as a piece-mould. Depending on the size and complexity of the object being cast, the mould might be entirely filled with plaster to create a solid cast, or plaster may be swilled around the mould to produce casts with hollow interiors. In the latter case, reinforcements might also be placed inside the mould. These reinforcements can be likened to skeletons, providing hollow casts with additional support.[11] Once the plaster has set inside the mould, the cast can be extracted. Finally, finishing processes are often carried out, including the chiselling away of "flashlines", thin raised lines on the surfaces of casts that result from the jigsaw-like mould pieces not sitting entirely flush during casting.

"ancient referent" to avoid unintentionally misrepresenting the status of the works from which the casts were derived.

[9] I provide an in-depth guide to the technique of plaster casting in Appendix 2, which includes photographs of my own practical experience of creating a 1:1 plaster copy.

[10] More flexible materials have also been put to use in the mould making process. Nineteenth-century cast-makers employed clay, wax, paper, and a latex-like tree resin called gutta-percha for mould making (Sonntag and Hubbard 2018: 93). From the end of the nineteenth-century until the 1960's, gelatine was the material of choice, after which silicone gained greater popularity (Burg et al. 2019: 233).

[11] Such reinforcements are traditionally made from wood or animal bone, but wound steel structures are preferred today (Burg et al. 2019: 236).

Casts can also be treated with sealants to protect their surface, or painted to resemble the material in which the original was made.

Many historic casts made in this traditional manner survive in museum collections today, and more continue to be produced in historic *Gipsformereien* (replica workshops) such as the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. However, despite their endurance through time, casts have undergone a tumultuous history. As I will explain in detail in Chapter 2, their value has been called into question from the moment of their inception: at various stages in their history, casts have been beloved parts of public and private collections, and at others, they have been deemed entirely worthless and rejected in a sometimes-violent fashion. As a consequence of these continual vacillations, casts are ideal vehicles for interrogating the concept of value in a museum setting. But before proceeding to outline my specific research questions surrounding casts and value, I must first define this key concept and the relationship that my thesis will have to the theoretical debates that surround it.

1.3 "Value"

The term "value" has been the subject of long and continuous debate in fields such as philosophy, sociology, and anthropology (Rescher 1969: 1). Often, these debates can be highly conceptual in nature. For example, since its publication in 1935, many theoretical discussions surrounding the value of art and/or museum objects more generally, and reproductive objects more specifically, have been inspired by Walter Benjamin's seminal essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. In this essay, Benjamin theorised on the influence that reproductions might have on the value of art objects.[12] Contemporary scholars continue to respond to his ideas, generating much

[12] Benjamin argued that through their reproduction, art objects lose what he terms their "cult value", which is associated with their specific situatedness in time and place, and gain so-called "exhibition value", which is linked to their democratisation and availability to all (Benjamin 1999).

theory regarding how reproductions still transform value today.[13] While such discussions are a perfectly valid way of approaching questions of value, they can become increasingly abstract, with little connection to or input from real-life museum experiences. Conversely, in this thesis I make the conscious choice to eschew a purely theoretical emphasis. I will not contemplate what we might call "the cast gallery in the age of mechanical reproduction", generating theory around simulation, artifice, surface, and representation. Instead, I consider the value of museum objects in a more grounded and practical way, attempting to understand how museum users encounter and value casts as things.

However, I will still consider one of Benjamin's other key concepts, namely authenticity. Authenticity, defined by Benjamin as the perceived uniqueness of the work of art (Benjamin 1999: 220-222),[14] is intimately connected with value: an object's possession of the quality of authenticity is often viewed as a necessary condition for value to be assigned to it (Frazier et al. 2009). In Chapter 7 of this thesis, I will delve more deeply into the idea of authenticity, again directing my focus less toward theory and more toward understanding how museum users negotiate this term and its relationship with value. In accordance with this approach, I will now define value in a practical, everyday sense, in the manner in which it is understood in common parlance.

Defining value

In everyday terms, value is a word that is associated with worth and quality. As defined in the Oxford English Dictionary, value is a positive characteristic, linked with the desirable and the important. It is often connected with a specific kind of worth or benefit: that which is monetary or economic. A commodity is considered to have

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[13] Jos de Mul, for example, adds to Benjamin's theory the concept of a third category of "manipulation value", whereby the value of an object depends on the extent of its ability to be manipulated for primarily political ends. This value, de Mul proposes, is especially applicable to digital reproductions (de Mul 2009).
[14] Authenticity is by no means defined in this way by all commentators. Others link authenticity to originality as opposed to uniqueness, but even this prompts debate: Jones and Yarrow showed in their discussion of Glasgow Cathedral that authenticity can be located in numerous different areas: in the original material of the cathedral, in the cathedral's original appearance, and in its continued adherence to original functionality (Jones and Yarrow 2013).

economic value if "its benefits to the well-being of society are greater than or outweigh its costs" (Holden 2004: 31). Museums and cultural institutions and the objects within them have long been considered to possess this kind of value. This is evident in the rhetoric surrounding the foundation of British public museums in the nineteenth-century, for example. At this time, the exhibition of state-owned works of art, including those from India and other parts of the then-empire, was intended to have economic benefit. It was hoped that they would improve the aesthetics of British manufactured products, the meagre performance of which in international markets was attributed to "poor design" (Belfiore 2004: 186).

However, newly founded museums were also considered to provide non-economic value. Henry Cole, the founder of London's South Kensington Museum, framed its value in social terms, stating that "museums would improve public mores by providing a wholesome recreational alternative to procreation and the pub" (McClellan 2003: 10). The same museums also had a more wide-reaching social and even political value, functioning as symbols of national pride and identity for nations who competed to acquire significant archaeological discoveries for display (Morris 1994: 11). These examples highlight the importance of discussing not value singular but values plural (Throsby 2000: 19). There is an evident need to break down value into more specific, nuanced categories.

For the purposes of this thesis, it is useful to define one further subset of value terminology: instrumental vs. intrinsic values. John Holden, in his study of how cultural value is understood by both professionals working in cultural institutions and government policy-makers, describes instrumental values as "the ancillary effects of culture, where culture is used to achieve a social or economic purpose" (Holden 2006: 16). These are the kinds of values held by the nineteenth-century museum founders discussed above: their institutions were presented as being valuable for stimulating economic growth, improving social morals, and for political posturing on a global scale, a set of reasons that reach far wider than the doors of the museum. Thus, when applying Holden's definition to museum objects, one might consider that an object has instrumental value if it is valued as a means for achieving something else. By contrast,

intrinsic values are located in "the subjective experience of culture intellectually, emotionally and spiritually" (ibid.: 14). Holden gives examples of personal testimonies that he considers to indicate intrinsic value, including "'I hate this; it makes me feel angry', or 'If this was taken away from me, I would lose part of my soul'" (ibid.: 14). Here, Holden's imagined respondents are directly reacting to an object that is in front of them. They do not seem to perceive the object as a medium for accessing other, wider benefits. Instead, the object is itself the end: the emotive experience that it provides renders it intrinsically valuable in its own right.

Instrumental values are often thought of as subordinate to intrinsic values (Rescher 1969: 54). Why this is the case can be explained by considering where the so-called "locus of value" lies in each instance (ibid.: 8). Let us first examine a sentence indicative of instrumental value, such as: "The Ashmolean Museum's Alfred Jewel is a valuable attestation of Anglo-Saxon metalworking." Here, the locus of value lies not in the Jewel itself but in its didactic function, since it is perceived to enhance an understanding of Anglo-Saxon England. Let us now consider a contrary example, indicative of intrinsic value. In the statement "I love looking at the Alfred Jewel, the gold filigree is breath-taking!", the locus of value is the Jewel's impact on its viewer, created by its own aesthetically appealing material qualities. Thus, the locus of value for intrinsically valued objects is found within the Jewel itself. It is for this reason that intrinsically valued objects might be considered to have greater value in general than instrumentally valued objects, since they have greater value for their own sake.

In summary, value is a positive characteristic of museum objects. However, it is a nuanced concept. To be understood fully, it must be broken down into its component categories, each of which can be understood as either instrumental or intrinsic in nature. Defining the categories of value that are relevant for cast collections will therefore form an essential part of this thesis.

1.4 Research questions

Having introduced the objects on which my thesis is based and the main concept which I aim to investigate, I now outline my research questions:

> **RQ1:** What *categories of value* do *users* of cast collections assign to plaster casts?
>
> **RQ2:** What *factors* impact upon how value is assigned? In particular, does the context of *a university museum* affect how casts are valued?
>
> **RQ3:** Is a cast's value inevitably *dependent upon its relationship to its ancient referent*?
>
> **RQ4:** Are casts simply *copies* of ancient masterpieces, made in a *poorer material*?

The development of these research questions was a highly iterative process. My questions were continually configured and reconfigured in response to my exploration of existing scholarship. For example, the emphasis placed on understanding categories of value in **RQ1** is motivated by my discussion of value in section 1.3 above, which highlighted the necessity of understanding value as a multifaceted concept. The remainder of my research questions were developed in much the same way. To evoke this within the finished thesis, my literature review in Chapter 2 presents not only a journey through existing scholarly literature surrounding casts, but also embodies the process of my research question development. As the literature review progresses, I will present, where appropriate, short insights into how the emergent ideas and themes influenced the formulation of my research questions. I will also show how the precise phrasing of the questions was adapted in response to the developing historical narrative.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Generalising accounts of the history of plaster casts usually provide a picture not unlike that illustrated in Fig.2a.[15] Casts are often presented as enjoying widespread popularity from their inception until the late nineteenth- / early twentieth-century, when there is a marked decline that leads to the destruction of many collections, followed by a twenty-first century resurgence. However, I will now demonstrate that although this trajectory does describe some of the main trends in the history of casts (there was indeed a twentieth-century decline in assessments of their value), this picture is somewhat oversimplified. In fact, casts have been divisive since their modern inception: the value(s) attributed to them have long existed in a state of flux. In what follows, I will divide casts' histories into three key periods, defined both temporally and in terms of the values attributed to them in each period: tradition (2.1), decline (2.3), and revival (2.4). However, I will also consider the important theme of vacillation (2.2), which provides an important counterpoint to Fig.2.a, since even during their eighteenth- and nineteenth-century heyday, casts were not universally considered to possess value. At salient points in this historical overview, I will present the research questions that arise from the discussion.

[15] Pearce's simplified trajectory of casts' histories is mirrored in Foster et al. 2014: 140, Fig.1.

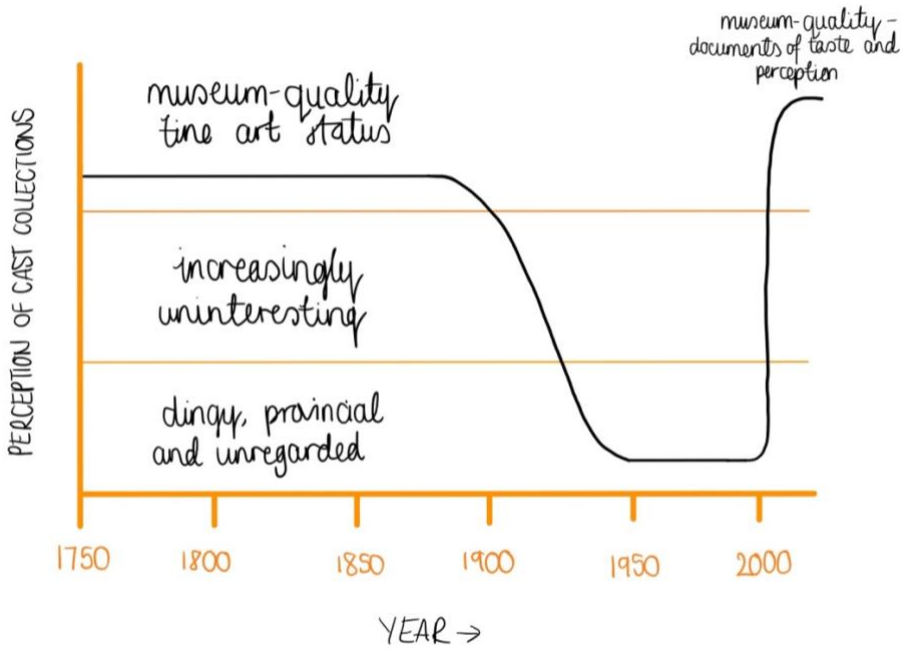

Figure 2.a The fate of plaster casts in public opinion and museum display. Based on Pearce 1995: 363, Fig.20.4.

2.1 Tradition

The practice of making casts originated in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Italian workshops where there was ample access to antiquities from Rome and surrounding areas (Marchand 2017: 83). From their inception in the Renaissance until the nineteenth-century, these casts have been associated with many traditional values. As I will now outline, they have been valued variously as representational objects, aesthetically valuable decorative items, objects with ideological influence, and educationally valuable teaching tools.

2.1.1 Representational value: Artists' workshops

Renaissance painters and sculptors in Italy (Marchand 2017: 83), the Netherlands (van Rheeden 2001: 215), and France (Gampp 2010: 502) used casts as drawing aids in their workshops. Casts continued to be common features of artists' studios in the eighteenth-century. For example, King Stanisław August of Poland commissioned the casting of "masterpieces from museums in Rome" to provide models for artists working in Warsaw (Kowalski 2010: 37). The cast collection of the Royal Academy of Arts, London also dates back to 1770 (Trusted 2018: 27). In such contexts, casts provided excellent reference works. They were used to train students in the art of representing complex three-

dimensional figures in a two-dimensional sketch (Fahlman 1991: 4). Casts of female figures are presented as being especially useful in this role: until nude live models became acceptable in art academies in the nineteenth-century (McNutt 1990: 165), casts were one of very few means by which artists could study the naked female form (Fuentes Rojas 2010: 237).

The aims of teaching art students using casts were not just practical but ideological. Through drawing from casts, students were taught to replicate not just form but the style, mood, and execution of ancient sculptures in their own work. Nicolas Vleughels, who headed the Académie de France in Rome from 1724–1737 advocated this use of casts, encouraging his students to develop an "artificial memory" of ancient works on which to draw when crafting their own pieces (Macsotay 2010: 189). The Berlin Academy of Arts is thought to have espoused a similar philosophy in 1792 (Sedlarz 2010: 208). In such contexts, casts can be seen acting as mediators of taste.

Moving into the early nineteenth-century, there was a continued demand for casts from art schools. Students at the Royal Academy of Art at The Hague (Haskell and Penny 1981b: 114); the Yale School of Fine Arts, Connecticut (Fahlman 1991: 2); Crawford School of Art, Cork (Murray 1992: 196); the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris (Gampp 2010: 506); the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, Milan (Valli 2012: 257); and the Edinburgh College of Art (Stoica and Stewart 2012: 1) benefitted from drawing casts. In 1843, the Somerset School of Art was presented with 1,500 plaster casts by Charles Heath Wilson, which prompted art academies across the rest of Britain to acquire their own collections (Malone 2010: 163). The British National Course of Instruction of Drawing, introduced by Sir Henry Cole in 1852, mandated the study from casts such as the *Parthenon frieze** in artistic training (Milton Smith 1985: 103). By 1884, over 200 British schools adhered to this course (Malone 2010: 164). Casts' continued representational value for nineteenth-century artists is clear.

2.1.2 Decorative value: Mansions and museums

Casts were also present in royal collections during the Renaissance, decorating the palaces of Mary of Habsburg (Cupperi 2010: 83), Francis I of France (Trusted 2018: 27),

Henry VIII (Kurtz 2000: 38), and Philip IV of Spain (Solis Parra et al. 2010: 385-6). Aristocratic families continued this trend into the seventeenth-century: extant household inventories reveal considerable cast collections (Lock 2010: 264). The eighteenth-century began to see private patrons outside of Europe purchasing casts for decorative use. The collecting phenomenon reached the uppermost echelons of US society, with President George Washington obtaining a collection of plaster casts in 1759, including a pair representing Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar (McNutt 1990: 160). Collecting in Europe kept pace with these developments: the popularity of the Grand Tour[16] created a booming market for casts, which served as souvenirs of Mediterranean travels (Nichols 2006: 116). Wealthy patrons exhibited casts within private museums (Mandel 1996: 231). Art academies used casts as ornaments as well. In 1783, Madrid's art academy acquired Philip IV's aforementioned cast collection. Instead of using the casts for artistic training purposes, they were incorporated into the decorative scheme of the academy building (Solis Parra et al. 2010: 388). The decorative value of casts continued to be recognised by nineteenth-century private patrons: no country house or mansion was considered complete without them (Bevivino and Shaw 2016: 202).

These displays were not only decorative in nature but were also ideologically charged, due to casts' links with classical antiquity. In Britain and its colonies, the classical world symbolised high culture and good taste, and its art exemplified moral virtue (Malvern 2010: 251). In some areas, where access to original works of classical art was impossible, plaster casts provided the next best alternative for accessing this artistic canon (Nichols 2007: 28). Casts thus inherited a potent brand of rank and prestige from their ancient counterparts: their display evoked the status of their owners (Bevivino and Shaw 2016: 202). Other institutions also benefitted from the ideological associations of their

[16] This refers to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century custom of young, aristocratic men concluding their education with extended periods of travel around Europe. Such tours were both scholastic and pleasurable: Grand Tourists were able to soak up the cultural legacy of classical antiquity and the Renaissance, gain exposure to the fashionably polite circles of the continent, and enjoy the hedonism of travel (Black 2003:1).

decoratively displayed casts. For example, the casts that were used to decorate the Academia de San Carlos, Mexico City in 1911 were thought to "dignify the appearance" of the building (Fuentes Rojas 2010: 242). Casts seem to have contributed considerable social cache.

2.1.3 Ideological value: "Civilising" tools

While the displays of casts discussed above might be considered both decoratively and ideologically motivated, other contemporary uses of casts can be understood as primarily ideological in nature. For example, when plaster casts were introduced to the city of Boston in 1728 (Dyson 2010: 558), the objects were intended to function primarily as educators of taste. The casts' owner, John Smibert, had originally planned to ship the objects to Bermuda, in order for them to serve as visual aids in a college aimed at "civilising" the native population (McNutt 1990: 159). However, this project never came to fruition and the casts remained in New England (ibid.). Two years later, they were put on public display for the people of Boston, and were thought to "improve" the city's cultural climate (ibid.). At this time, Ireland also equipped its National Gallery and Museum with plaster casts to fulfil its aims of "public education" (Bevivino and Shaw 2016: 202). These examples demonstrate casts' ideological value.

2.1.4 Educational value: Classical Archaeology

The German University of Göttingen is credited with being the first to use casts for the study of Classical Archaeology in 1767 (Frederiksen and Marchand 2010a: 5), followed in the 1880's by the universities of Cambridge (Beard 1993: 1) and Oxford (Kurtz 2000: 234). American institutions were not far behind: between 1891-1898, Cornell University established a teaching collection of casts and the University of Missouri did the same (Dyson 1998: 107). Considered as fundamental to education in Classical Archaeology as a laboratory was to a scientist (Kurtz 2000: 196), the casts were chiefly employed to illustrate chronological developments in Greek and Roman sculpture (ibid.: 281).

Casts were also used alongside photography during the nineteenth-century to disseminate and record new archaeological finds (Payne 2019a: 1626). For example,

when the *Nike of Samothrace** was excavated in 1863, plaster copies of the sculpture were quickly dispersed across Europe (Allen and Rygorsky 2005: 15). A plaster mould-making workshop was also established at Athens in 1891 in order to record the finds discovered by French excavators at the site of Delphi in mainland Greece (Mulliez 2007: 151). Thus, casts have long held educational value for Classical Archaeologists.

2.1.5 Summary

Two useful conclusions emerge from the above discussion. First, the manner in which a cast was traditionally valued evidently depends upon the context in which it was found. For instance, in an art academy setting, a cast might have representational value, whereas in a private home, the same cast could have significance in both ideological and decorative senses. As a result, my study seeks to understand why the categories of value identified in response to **RQ1** are present, placing especial emphasis on context:

> **RQ2:** What *contextual and/or other factors* impact upon how value is assigned to plaster casts?

Second, three of the values that I outlined above as being traditionally associated with casts (representational, ideological, and educational) are instrumental in nature. Each of these value categories depends on the casts' imitation of the physical forms of ancient statuary, and/or their link with the dominant ideologies that contemporary society associated with the ancient world. My third research question therefore aims to consider whether casts' values continue to relate to their ancient referents in this manner today:

> **RQ3:** Is a cast's value inevitably *dependent upon its relationship to its ancient referent*?

2.2 Vacillation

Thus far, my discussion of casts' traditional values has taken us from the Renaissance to the nineteenth-century. As suggested in Fig.2.a, casts were incredibly popular with many audiences during this period. The objects were so sought after during the

seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries that their acquisition became a specialised trade (Frederiksen and Marchand 2010a: 4). New cast production centres also abounded during this period: in 1798, when Napoleon looted huge quantities of art from the Papal States and brought them to Paris, he established the Louvre as a supplier of casts to the world (Mendonça 2016: 97). This prompted other European capitals to found their own national cast-making workshops (Schreiter 2016: 27).

By 1874, casts had become the main attraction at most American museums (Macleod 2014: 43). The Boston Museum of Fine Art even sold one of its first donated paintings to fund the purchase of more casts (Dyson 2010: 564). The objects continued to be such integral staples of museum displays by the end of the nineteenth-century that cast-makers began to be employed directly by museums (DiSalvo 2011: 5). Another sign of the great thirst for casts at this time was the 1867 International Convention for Promoting Universal Reproductions of Works of Art, which mandated the unrestricted flow of cast moulds across Europe (Nichols 2006: 117) and the US (Born 2002: 8).

Yet the picture presented by Fig.2.a can be problematised: casts were not above criticism even during the earliest periods of their creation and display. This can be seen in the example of the prominent Fugger family of Augsburg in 1567, who rejected a delivery of casts on the grounds that they were not interested in plasters (Marchand 2010: 77). The value of casts was even called into question during the height of their nineteenth-century popularity. An article from an 1831 issue of the New England Magazine stated that viewing a cast in order to gain an impression of an ancient sculpture was comparable to attempting to identify a handsome man from his shadow (quoted in McNutt 1990: 164). Furthermore, an anonymous letter dated to 1895 called for the destruction of casts, condemning plaster copies as worthless and debased (quoted in Bilbey and Trusted 2010: 468). By the end of the nineteenth-century, although some cast collections were expanding, such as those in Melbourne (Cooke 2010: 578) and Padua (Menegazzi 2010: 614), collecting in other parts of the world had slowed. The Boston Museum of Fine Art, which had prolifically accumulated casts during the early nineteenth-century, began to purchase far fewer pieces, with only 36 new acquisitions in the year 1896 (Dyson 2010: 564). Thus, while Fig.2.a suggests that casts

enjoyed uniform popularity over the first two centuries that it charts, this is an oversimplification. The continual vacillations of casts' value again highlights why these objects are so well suited to interrogating questions of value in museum settings.

2.3 Decline

Despite the nuances discussed above, Fig.2.a does usefully pinpoint a distinct period of decline in casts' popularity. I will now demonstrate that this began at different times in different contexts, with the most notable overall downturn in casts' perceived value occurring in the twentieth-century. I will discuss this decline and the reasons for it, again noting that it was not universally observed.

2.3.1 Historical background

Casts first began to fall from favour in art academies. At the end of the nineteenth-century, new technologies such as lanternslides and large photographs replaced casts in classrooms (Dyson 2010: 573). The practice of copying from other pieces of art in general fell out of fashion at this time, meaning that many casts were discarded on account of their purpose being deemed outdated (Beard 1993: 21).

However, by the mid-twentieth century, the popularity of casts declined on a wide scale. The dominant attitudes at this time were exemplified by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. In 1938, the museum removed their cast collection from display (Nichols 2006: 118). The casts were so vilified at this time that they were either placed in damp and wholly unsuitable storage rooms, piled on top of one another, or simply destroyed (Dyson 2010: 574). Many other collections met a similar fate. When casts at the Edinburgh College of Art fell into disrepair at this time, they were deemed unworthy of the expense required to fix them (Stewart 2012: 27).

Nevertheless, this twentieth-century decline was not universally observed, even within a single city. For example, Boston Museum of Fine Arts removed its cast collection from display in 1909 (Nichols 2006: 119). Yet despite this, in 1917 the Caproni brothers set up a cast production centre in Boston in order to meet the demand for casts from other

museums[17] and Bostonian cultural institutions such as concert halls and theatres (Dyson 2010: 571-2). Similar trends can be seen on a global scale. Amidst the removal of casts from institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow was opened to the public in 1912 for the express purpose of displaying plaster casts (Burg 2010: 539) and the cast collection of the Hague Academy of Fine Arts was contemporaneously expanded by Constant L. Scheurleer (van Rheeden 2001: 217-8).

Casts also remained an acceptable teaching tool for archaeology students even when museums were removing them from display. For example, after dismantling its Cast Gallery in 1935, the British Museum donated its collection for use at University College London (Beard 1993: 21). Around this time, Professor John D. Beazley of Oxford University also opined that plaster casts from the antique were of equal importance to books for teaching Classical Archaeology (Kurtz 2000: 295). Thus, while the decline of casts was marked in some regions and in some contexts, other institutions continued to favour their casts.

2.3.2 Explanation

The question now remains of why some casts faced destruction in this era. Many scholars attribute moves to eradicate casts at the turn of the twentieth-century to the broad philosophical movement of Modernism that was gathering pace in Western society (Jenkins 1992: 229; Beard 1993: 22-23; van Rheeden 2001: 220; Nichols 2007: 29; Stewart 2012: 27). Modernism was preoccupied with the uniqueness, or so-called "aura" (Benjamin 1999: 215), of original art objects. According to cultural critics like Benjamin, the source of this concern for aura was the proliferation of mechanical reproduction methods such as photography (ibid.: 214). Photography allowed reproduced versions of original artworks to become omnipresent, which threatened the "unique existence" of original objects (ibid.: 215) and prompted a questioning of what

[17] For example, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts routinely purchased new plaster casts from the Caproni brothers until 1920 (Leibold 2010: 189).

qualified as “art” (Nichols 2007: 29). It is probably no coincidence that it was within this intellectual climate that casts fell in popularity. Like photographs, they were perceived to lack their own aura and the all-important touch of a particular artistic hand or mind (Bury 1991: 123).

In institutions that were removing their cast collections, original objects were indeed given greater precedence. In 1908, the V&A produced a report discouraging the further augmentation of their cast collection, advising that the space currently occupied by casts would be better filled with original pieces (Bilbey and Trusted 2010: 471). A year later, the Fogg Fine Arts Department at Harvard initiated a new museum administrator training programme, which gained international acclaim for its explicit focus on original objects (Macleod 2014: 53).

As well as lacking the important quality of originality, the material from which the casts were made was critiqued at this time. Scheurleer’s aforementioned acquisition of new casts for The Hague in the early twentieth-century was not without dispute. Critics at the institution argued that “plaster destroys rather than improves taste” (quoted in van Rheeden 2001: 220). Similarly, in 1905, the City of Manchester debated whether casts should remain on display in their museums and galleries. Those who opposed the display of casts derided them as mechanical reproductions made in a so-called “worthless” material (quoted in Bilbey and Trusted 2010: 469). This critique was not unique to Manchester: other contemporary cast critics also condemned the “lowly, common” material of plaster (McNutt 1990: 164). Thus, the material of plaster itself seemed to be at issue at this time.

Indeed, Marden Nichols has argued against a focus on Modernism, stating that the history of casts should not be seen as a straightforward history of taste (Nichols 2007). Instead, she posits that institutional politics within individual museums and galleries exerted a stronger influence over the fate of casts (ibid.: 31). She illustrates the power of institutional politics using later developments at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford as his case study. The £49 million spent on renovations at the Museum in 2010-2011 was in part justified by citing the need to connect the outbuilding in which the casts were

displayed to the museum proper. However, despite this, the Chairman of the Ashmolean Advisory Committee for Fundraising, Anne Heseltine, had never previously visited the Museum's Cast Gallery. Nichols argues that the casts' inclusion within the museum was only consequential when it helped to justify the wider plan for renovations (ibid.: 32-3). While it is beyond the scope of this thesis to debate the veracity of Nichols' claims, this remains a useful example of how museum politics can also impact the fortunes of objects within individual collections.

Along the same vein, Paul DiMaggio has suggested that social change within individual cities also had an impact on the fate of plaster casts. He links the demise of the Boston Museum of Art cast collection with growing ethnic diversity in Boston. He states that this prompted a need within the Old Bostonian elite to align themselves with so-called "high culture" over newer "popular culture" to reaffirm their position at the top of the social hierarchy (DiMaggio 1982). Casts, which had become associated with popular culture, were disparaged and thus removed from the Museum's displays (ibid.: 33-50). Developments within nations as a whole may also have played a role in the downfall of casts. Dyson cites the growing affluence of early twentieth-century America as having a major impact on the status of casts there. This new wealth provided American collectors with the ability to purchase original sculptures from Europe, causing casts to be viewed with dislike (Dyson 2010: 572). Identifying clear-cut reasons for the decline in casts' esteem is therefore not straightforward, as institutional, geographical, and social factors are likely to have played as much of a role as the prevailing ideologies of the day.

2.3.3 Summary

The above discussion of casts' decline has shown that the objects' value suffered in the twentieth-century for a multitude of reasons. This includes the casts' status as copies and the negative perceptions of the material in which they are made. I therefore seek to establish whether these factors continue to impact on assignations of value today:

> **RQ4:** Are casts simply *copies* of ancient masterpieces, made in a *poorer material*?

2.4 Revival

Towards the end of the twentieth-century, under Postmodernism, some interest in casts was renewed. Postmodernism began to playfully reinterpret past art forms, as seen in the 1992 exhibition of casts at the Museum of Classical Archaeology, Cambridge (Beard 2000: 159). A selection of the Museum's casts were dressed up like actors and exhibited in a tableaux that evoked scenes from *Hippolytus* (an ancient Greek play by tragedian Euripides) (Beard and Henderson 1997: 80). The end of the twentieth-century also saw collections that had survived the tumult of the Modernist era redisplayed in new institutions, with some older cast galleries enjoying a rejuvenation. However, their comeback is not as dramatic as Fig.2.a might suggest: the revival of casts has not occurred in the national museums discussed above but in smaller and more specialised institutions. For example, some of The Metropolitan Museum's extant casts were removed from storage and redisplayed in New York's Queens Museum in the 1970's (Nichols 2006: 115), and others from the collection were given to a museum in Munich that opened to the public in 1991 (ibid.: 120). As I will now discuss, the revival in fortunes of casts within some institutions has been accompanied by the recognition of new values for the objects.

2.4.1 Historical and documentary value

The late twentieth-century saw a renewed interest in casts in academic scholarship. Since many extant museum cast collections stem from the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, they are now considered to have documentary value as heritage objects in their own right (Lowenthal 1985: 145, 283). This appreciation of casts' historical value arguably began with the publication of Haskell and Penny's 1981 volume 'Taste and the Antique' (Payne 2019b: 31). Haskell and Penny historicised casts within their own contexts and highlighted how their study can bring about a greater understanding of the dissemination of ancient art from the Renaissance onwards (Haskell and Penny 1981b). The objects have been cast in the role of a historical document.

Subsequently, major international conferences have been dedicated to understanding the histories of individual museum cast collections. This includes 'Les moulages de

sculptures antiques et l'histoire de l'archéologie', hosted in Paris in 1997, which examined the vacillations in cast popularity through case studies of collections in Germany, France and Britain (Lavagne and Queyrel 2000). A particularly significant contribution to studies of casts' documentary value came at the 'Plaster Casts: Making, Collecting and Displaying from Classical Antiquity to the Present' conferences, held at the University of Reading in 2005 and the University of Oxford in 2007 (Frederiksen and Marchand 2010b). The published proceedings from these two conferences cover far more ground both geographically and temporally than ever before. The volume profiles not only European case studies but collections as far afield as Mexico City (Fuentes Rojas 2010) and New Zealand, highlighting the role that casts played in colonial contexts (Cooke 2010). It also considered modern private cast collections such as that at Aynhoe Park, Oxfordshire (Perkins 2010) alongside ancient Greek, Roman, and Egyptian casts that are extant from antiquity (Frederiksen 2010; Landwehr 2010). The Staatliche Museen zu Berlin also provided a venue for the discussion of casts in 2015, placing further European collections in their historical context, pondering the role of traditionally made casts in an age of new digital reproductions (Helfrich and Haak 2016).

Publications focusing on the history of collections, as well as associated cast catalogues, have raised the profile of casts in Cambridge (Beard 1998), Pisa (Donati 1999), Oxford (Kurtz 2000; Frederiksen and Smith 2011), Berkeley (Miller 2005), Cornell (Terrell 2011), Berlin (von Gaertringen 2012), and those within Eastern European institutions (Marcinkowski and Zaucha 2010). Scholarship has also considered casts as historical documents of artists' careers, such as the collection of prominent Dutch sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (Zahle 2020). Ink has likewise been spilled over the histories of casts taken from ancient architecture (Lending 2017).

The newfound perception of casts as historic objects has also rendered their makers, making processes, and subsequent conservation relevant and important issues. Master cast-makers such as Domenico Brucciani whose workshop produced thousands of casts for museums across the globe have similarly been deanonymized by recent efforts (Wade 2018). The 2015 conference on 'The Value of Plaster as a Model, Cast, Copy' at Possagno pushed for a better understanding of casts' historic making processes and

materiality (Guderzo and Lochman 2017). Furthermore, conferences such as 'Destroy the Copy' and 'Destroy the Copy II', hosted at Cornell University, New York and Freie Universität, Berlin in 2010 and 2015 respectively, highlighted the plight of many cast collections in Europe and the US that had been subject to neglectful decay and intentional destruction. The specific treatments needed to preserve casts have also subsequently received much-needed scholarly attention (Payne 2019b; Payne 2020).

Recent temporary exhibitions have also worked to present casts as objects in their own right by displaying them in creative ways. One such project was the 'Cast Contemporaries' exhibition at Edinburgh College of Art in 2012. This exhibition placed historic casts of ancient sculptures from the Edinburgh School of Art collection alongside works by contemporary artists who had responded to them (Dorsett and Stewart 2012: 37). The theme was continued by 'Near Life: The Gipsformerei - 200 Years of Casting Plaster' at the James-Simon-Galerie, Berlin, in 2019-2020. 'Near Life' also featured contemporary artworks which made use of the material of plaster and cast-making techniques to "show how casts have emancipated themselves from the subservient status of technical aids to works of art in their own right".[18] In an innovative break from tradition, negative moulds from the *Gipsformerei* at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, objects which are not typically placed on museum displays, were also exhibited to attest to the casts' skilled making process.

Likewise, the permanent exhibitions of the Croatian Academy's Glyptotheque were modernised in 2005, displaying casts taken from Croatian heritage monuments alongside plaster copies of notable Greek sculptures (Getaldić 2016: 246). In 2018, the V&A reopened after a major regeneration project (Trusted 2018: 26). To coincide with the opening, the Museum hosted the 'Celebrating Reproductions: Past, Present and Future' conference, sharing the fruits of the major conservation work carried out on its own casts, electrotypes, photographs, and digital reproductions, but also wider investigations centred on replica collections in Ireland, continental Europe, and the

[18] https://www.smb.museum/en/exhibitions/detail/near-life/ Accessed 03/11/2020.

United States. In 2019, Crawford Art Gallery, Cork similarly unveiled a major redisplay of their plaster casts, in which the objects were acknowledged as the Gallery's founding collection (Waldron 2019).

However, despite these newly invigorated displays, casts are not yet fully rehabilitated. Some collections remain neglected. This includes the Copenhagen Cast Collection which received dramatic funding cuts in 2002, despite an outcry from the Friends of the gallery (Nichols 2007: 37). Likewise, although casts at the Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh continue to be displayed, they were deaccessioned at some unknown stage during their history and have never officially re-entered the Museum's collections (personal communication with CMOA staff).

The revival of casts is part of what has been described as a "replication turn" in scholarship more widely, one that considers reproductions both analogue[19] and digital[20] as objects with complex lives of their own (Foster and Jones 2020a: 14). As a result of this renewed scholarly interest, replicas in general are described as coming out of "curatorial purgatory" (ibid.). It is within this context that the impressive list of values that is attributed to casts (representational, decorative, ideological, educational, and historical as discussed above) has been generated. However, although scholarship is now much more ready to accept the value of reproductions in general and casts more specifically as objects in their own right, less research has been conducted into how replicas "work in practice" (Foster and Curtis 2016: 142), namely understanding how they are interpreted and perceived by their audiences. Casts especially are ripe for this

[19] Instead of being regarded as two-dimensional images which are of interest for their content alone, photographs are now widely recognised as three-dimensional objects "that exist in time and space and thus in social and cultural experience" (Edwards and Hart 2004: 1).

[20] Gwyneira Isaac's study of the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington DC considers digital reproductions of Native American cultural artefacts, displayed on touch-screens, not only as "vehicles" for the transmission of knowledge, but as objects in their own right that are "part of the [Museum's] message itself" (Isaac 2008: 307).

kind of analysis, as limited in-depth research into museum users' conceptions of the objects' value(s) has been conducted to date.[21]

The necessity of conducting research into how replicas work in practice was further highlighted by Foster and Jones's analysis of the history and significance of the original St John's Cross, Iona and its 1970's concrete replica that stands in the grounds of Iona Abbey today (Foster and Jones 2020a). Foster and Jones' meticulous research brought the replica's historical journeys and its networks of relationships to the fore. This enabled them to justifiably conclude that "the replica might be said to have its own life" (ibid.: 160). The authors also noted that many of the users who came into contact with the replica Cross, including the locals, tourists, and heritage professionals that they interviewed as part of their study, also felt that the replica derived value from its "life story" (ibid. 159). However, the information that the respondents deployed to construct the replica's value was rarely historically accurate in the same way as the research that had resulted in Foster and Jones' own conclusions: "no-one […] really knew anything about the replica's creation and subsequent history" (ibid.). Thus, although Foster and Jones and their respondents broadly seemed to have arrived at the same conclusion about the replica Cross: namely that it possessed intrinsic value, the manner in which this value was constructed was different in each case. This highlights the necessity of not only understanding the ways in which value is constructed in scholarship: exploring the potential differences between how scholars and other users understand the value(s) of an object presents a fruitful avenue for research.

2.4.2 Endurance of traditional values

Although scholarship has recognised many new values for casts today, many collections can still be seen in roles that evoke their traditional values. For example, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, displays casts of various ancient subjects in elevated niches

[21] Fiona Rose-Greenland's study of visitor perceptions of polychrome plaster casts at the *Gods in Color* touring exhibition is an exception to this (Rose-Greenland 2016). However, her research focused on the highly specific case of temporarily exhibited brightly painted casts, rather than cast collections more generally. Her results will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 7.

around its monumental staircase. These casts are not interpreted by label text in the same manner as the original marble sculptures which stand at ground level below them. Instead, they seem to function as an in-keeping element of the space's décor.

The value of casts as artists' models is also recognised by some today, although to a far lesser extent than attested historically. Since the early 2000's, CIT Crawford College of Art & Design, Cork has begun to redeploy a cast of Laocoön in tonal drawing classes, where students learn how to represent the play of light and shade on an object's surface (pers. comm. with CIT student). The subject matter of the cast is not slavishly copied as before and is described by art students as being of little consequence. It is the effect of the light that the art students are encouraged to capture.

The cast's pedagogical role within academic teaching likewise remains. University museums continue to regularly take in casts when they are rejected by other institutions. For instance, in 2001, the Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco deaccessioned their plaster casts and offered them to the city's Art Institute and the California College of Arts and Crafts, who both declined to accession them (Dintino and Pearson 2005: 12). It was not until 2003 that the casts found a home within the teaching collection of the University of California, Berkeley's classics department (ibid: 10). Casts' traditional values might be seen to endure in these new ways.

However, although these older values can be seen to coexist with newer ones, not all of them are weighted equally. While casts' educational values are widely discussed in scholarly literature, their value as historic objects in their own right is often less widely realised. This is indicated in the ways in which casts are discussed even in current reproduction-focused publications. In his recent investigation of the role of duplicates in heritage, John Darlington writes of the V&A's Cast Courts that "this is heritage duplication for education" (Darlington 2020: 64), with no other potential categories of value appearing in the discussion.

2.4.3 Summary

Again, this investigation of casts' revival brings about two useful conclusions. First, I showed that research into how users of cast collections understand and negotiate their value is limited. In order to address this important gap in scholarship, my thesis will not position scholars as the only legitimate evaluators of objects. Instead, it will aim to specifically investigate the categories of value identified by the museum users who interact with cast collections on their museum visits, hence the particular phrasing of **RQ1**:

> **RQ1:** What *categories of value* do *users* of cast collections assign to casts?

Second, I demonstrated above that university museums now form the final resting place for many cast collections that have been ousted from other institutions. Since the university museum provides one of the last refuges for casts, establishing what impact such institutions might have on casts' display will therefore have the greatest significance. As a result, I will modify **RQ2** to read as follows:

> **RQ2:** What *factors* impact upon how value is assigned to casts? In particular, does *the context of a university museum* affect how casts are valued?

Having articulated how casts' historical context and research background motivate and justify my research questions, I now present the full list again for clarity:

> **RQ1:** What *categories of value* do *users* of cast collections assign to plaster casts?
>
> **RQ2:** What *factors* impact upon how value is assigned? In particular, does the context of *a university museum* affect how casts are valued?
>
> **RQ3:** Is a cast's value inevitably *dependent upon its relationship to its ancient referent*?
>
> **RQ4:** Are casts simply *copies* of ancient masterpieces, made in a *poorer material*?

Next, I will outline how this thesis will go about providing answers.

2.5 Thesis structure

Having conducted a review of relevant scholarly literature, positioning my research questions within this context, in Chapter 3 I will outline my research design, introducing the university museum that will form the case study for this thesis, and present my methods and methodology. In Chapter 4, I will then address **RQ1**, outlining the categories of value that cast users discussed during my investigation. I will also examine the instrumental or intrinsic nature of these values, touching on issues raised by **RQ3**. Next, in Chapter 5, I will tackle **RQ2**, analysing how the particularities of the university museum in which my research is based impact how casts' values are understood. Within this chapter, I also outline how the museum users' own visit agendas interact with these contextual factors. In Chapter 6, I discuss how the interpretive communities to which the users belong are equally significant in influencing perceptions of casts' value. In particular, I analyse the ways in which the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists within my case study museum perceives the material in which the casts are made and how this might impact upon how the objects are valued. In so doing, this chapter provides an answer to the latter half of **RQ4**. I present in Chapter 7 an investigation of how museum users interact with casts' status as copies of ancient statues, addressing how they negotiate the objects' authenticity. This speaks to the former half of **RQ4**, as well as picking up on issues raised in **RQ3** about casts' relationships with their ancient referents. Finally, in Chapter 8, I will conclude by returning to my wider research focus, explaining how thinking about casts specifically helps one to understand value in a museum setting more generally.

Chapter 3 Research Design

In order to investigate my research questions, I conducted qualitative research, choosing a single case study as the setting. In this chapter, I will first introduce my single case study, the University of Oxford's Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology (3.1), before justifying my choice of both the single case study approach and a qualitative methodology (3.2). I then describe my data collection methods and analysis techniques (3.3). Next, I present an essential reflection on my particular position as the researcher conducting this study (3.4). Finally, I provide an outline of ethical considerations (3.5) before moving on to the discussion of my results in Chapter 4.

3.1 The Ashmolean Museum

The Ashmolean Museum opened as Britain's first public museum in 1682 in its original premises on Oxford's Broad Street. In 1894, the Museum's collection was moved to its current location on Beaumont Street, positioned behind the University Art Galleries.[22] In 1908, the two institutions were amalgamated, creating the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology as it is known today (Melfi 2010: 23).

The Ashmolean forms the perfect setting for research into plaster casts. The Museum possesses one of the largest, richest, and most diverse British collections of casts from ancient sculpture, numbering around 1000 objects. The casts are embedded within the Museum's wider art and archaeology collections, exhibited in a well-appointed gallery that is dedicated entirely to their display. The gallery is spread across two floors: the main Cast Gallery (Fig.3.a) which is accessed through a set of sliding glass doors on the Museum's ground floor (Fig.3.b), and the Lower Cast Gallery (Fig.3.c), which is entered via a flight of stairs in the corner of the main Gallery (Fig.3.d). The Lower Cast Gallery is an open storage space where the majority of the Museum's casts reside. The casts are densely packed into the Lower Gallery, so visitors are only permitted to enter in small

[22] Following the convention of Kurtz 2000, in what follows I will refer to University Art Galleries as simply "the University Galleries".

groups during the Museum's twice-weekly 'Downstairs in the Cast Gallery' tours: 45-minute visits to the space led by trained volunteers.

The Ashmolean's casts make an interesting and useful case study due to their position within a university museum. The Ashmolean Museum in general and the Cast Gallery in particular enjoy a special relationship with the University of Oxford. The University's Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies is located just down the street from the Cast Gallery, and alongside members of the public, the space is frequented by students, researchers, and academic staff with an interest in ancient sculpture. Formal university teaching in the form of undergraduate and postgraduate tutorials also occurs in the space. Tutorials can be led by the Gallery's curators, Dr Milena Melfi and Professor Bert Smith, who are also tutors of Classical Archaeology at the University, or by other members of the University's academic staff. Smith's office can also be found within the Cast Gallery, on a mezzanine floor above the main space. In addition, the Cast Gallery serves as an educational outreach resource: it is frequently used in the University of Oxford's open days and for visiting primary and secondary schools focusing on ancient Greece and Rome.

Figure 3.a The Ashmolean's main Cast Gallery. 09/05/2019.

Figure 3.b Entrance to the Ashmolean's main Cast Gallery. 09/05/2019.

Figure 3.c The Ashmolean's Lower Cast Gallery. 08/10/2018.

*Figure 3.d Casts **B161** (left) and **H102** (right) in foreground, with roped-off stairs leading to the Lower Cast Gallery in background. 09/05/2019.*

As outlined in section 2.3, although many cast collections faced the threat of destruction in the twentieth-century, the Ashmolean's casts have never been thus endangered (Marchand 2012: 135). Instead, the Museum's casts are often reinterpreted in thoughtful, innovative interventions. For example, in 2010 the Ashmolean exhibited a collection of works by British contemporary artist Thomas Houseago throughout the Museum, including in the Cast Gallery. The display of Houseago's large-scale figurative sculpture in this space created dialogue between his work, which refers to both ancient statuary through its subjects and processes, and the casts, which are evoked by Houseago's similar use of plaster as a sculptural material. Following this, in 2015, the Ashmolean played host to the travelling exhibition 'Gods in Colour: Painted Sculpture in Antiquity'. Over twenty new casts of ancient sculptures, painted in full colour, were displayed alongside the existing Cast Gallery holdings. The colours were reconstructed based on fragmentary pigments found on the surface of the casts' ancient referents, challenging the traditional view of Greek and Roman sculpture as being devoid of colour (Brinkmann et al. 2017). The Ashmolean's continual reinterpretation of their casts continued with the 2018-2019 exhibition 'Antinous: Boy Made God'. This small display,

located not in the Cast Gallery itself but in the Museum's temporary exhibition space, focused on representations of an ancient Roman youth named *Antinous**. Casts from the Ashmolean's existing collection as well as loans from the Museum of Classical Archaeology, Cambridge; the Art Institute of Chicago; and the British Museum were arranged to tell the story of Antinous' life and his subsequent veneration as both a hero and a god (Smith et al. 2018). This exhibition was a particularly impactful break from tradition as it displayed the casts alongside original artworks both ancient and modern. This is highly unusual: for over a century previously, Oxford had displayed its casts separately from its antiquities, although the two classes of object were shown within the same rooms in the University Galleries in 1845 (Melfi 2010: 27-9). Furthermore, the Museum's major 2019 temporary exhibition 'Jeff Koons at the Ashmolean' featured many plaster casts, which Koons incorporates into his contemporary artistic practice. Koons regularly uses casts from ancient statues such as the *Belvedere Torso** in his work, to which he attaches a large blue glass "gazing ball". The viewer is reflected in the gazing ball, an act which aims to "affirm our place in the past, present, and future", by showing the viewer almost at one with the reproduction of the ancient work (Rosenthal and Sturgis 2019: 58). The dynamic environment in which casts are displayed makes the Ashmolean an especially interesting case study.

Finally, the Ashmolean also makes for an apposite institution for study because of the long history that casts have within the Museum. Casts have been displayed at the Ashmolean since the 1800's. Kurtz's seminal 2000 volume provides an extensive history of the Ashmolean Museum's plaster cast collection up until 1994, covering both the acquisition of casts and their display within the Museum (Kurtz 2000). This volume will be summarised here and developments after 1994 will be included to bring Kurtz's work fully up to date.

3.1.1 Acquisition history

The Ashmolean Museum's first casts were acquired by the building's architect Charles Cockerell in the 1840's (Melfi 2010: 29). They reproduce scenes from the friezes of the *Parthenon** and the *Temple of Apollo at Bassae** (Kurtz 2000: 231) and remain in the Museum to this day. They are set into the walls of what is now the 'Egypt at its Origins'

gallery (Fig.3.e) and the Grand Staircase (Fig.3.f) respectively. Cockerell also designed several other spaces with the display of casts in mind: a niche opposite the main entrance to the building was constructed in order to exhibit casts of the Greek god of music, Apollo, and the Muses (Melfi 2010: 29).

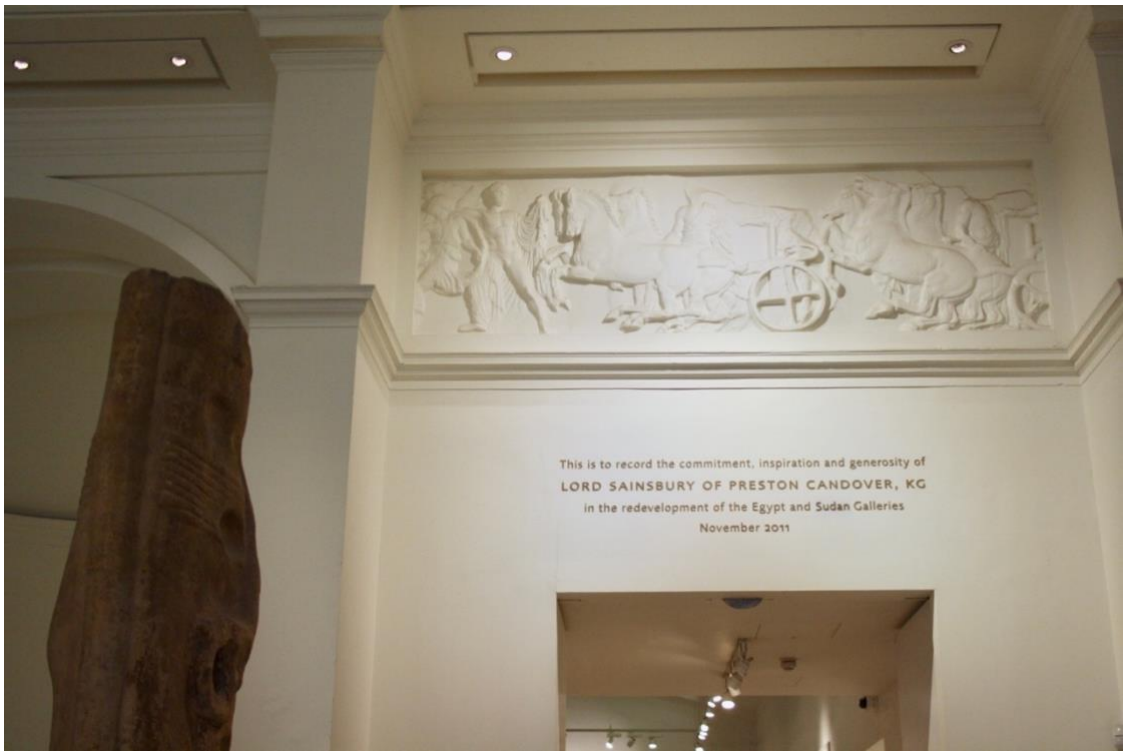

Figure 3.e Casts of the Parthenon frieze set into the walls of the Egypt at its Origins gallery. 09/05/2019.

Around the same time, a group of casts, including representations of Laocoön and *Antinous**, were given to the Ashmolean from the private collection of British sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey (Kurtz 2000: 184). Chantrey had begun collecting casts in 1815, but it was following his death in 1841 that his casts were donated to the Museum by his widow (ibid.). Other casts were gifted to the Museum by the Duncan brothers, who brought many casts back from their Grand Tour as souvenirs (Melfi 2010: 29). Thus, many of the casts that the Ashmolean acquired in this early period predate the institution's move to Beaumont Street (Marchand 2012: 135). This includes cast **B213**, representing the *Calydonian Boar** (Fig.3.g). This cast was part of the collections of the Queen's College, Oxford in 1782 before moving to the Ashmolean in 1845 (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 129). Other casts were produced for the Museum from moulds originally made for the Emperor Napoleon (MacGregor 2010: 50-2).

It was in 1884 that cast collecting in the Ashmolean took off on a wider scale: the objects were exhibited jointly for public viewing and for the teaching of Classical Archaeology (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 1). From this date until 1913, Oxford acquired more than 500 casts, although acquisition was curtailed from the outbreak of the First World War to the end of the Second (Kurtz 2000: 231). Some casts were destroyed during the Second World War to make space for an air-raid shelter in the museum's basement (Melfi 2010: 32).

Figure 3.f Casts of the frieze from the Temple of Apollo, Bassae set into the walls of the Grand Staircase. 09/05/2019.

From 1913-2010, the Ashmolean acquired only 200 new casts (Melfi 2010: 32). It was in 1929 that Professor John D. Beazley, then professor of Classical Archaeology at the university, placed the final large-scale order of casts for the Ashmolean's collections, numbering 50 pieces (Kurtz 2000: 296). The majority of acquisitions during this time were small-scale statuettes and heads, acquired by means of either gifting or exchange, as there was no budget for purchases (ibid.: 231). Gifts were often given by professors of Classical Archaeology associated with the University of Oxford, including Sir John

Boardman in 1982 (ibid.: 330) and Professor Olga Palagia in the late 1980's and early 1990's (ibid.: 330-1). With the focus on purchasing new casts gone, the majority of the work carried out in the Cast Gallery was consolidating in nature. Graduate students at the University of Oxford carried out documentary work on the existing collection (ibid.: 315).

*Figure 3.g **B213**, one of the Ashmolean's oldest extant casts. It represents the Calydonian Boar. 09/05/2019.*

Today, the Cast Gallery does not have a budget for acquisitions, but the collection is still continually augmented by means of purchase and exchange. Since Smith's tenure as Cast Gallery curator began in 1995, the cast collection has swelled by over one hundred pieces. On some occasions, casts have simply been exchanged, in particular with galleries in Germany,[23] with no money changing hands. When purchases are made, the money is often raised by the individual efforts of the Cast Gallery curators. In the case

[23] Casts **H37** and **H58** were acquired as part of exchanges with Göttingen and Munich respectively in 2004. **H71**, **H72**, **H73** were acquired as part of an exchange with Berlin in 2006 and **H97** came to the Ashmolean as part of a 2007 exchange with Freiburg.

of the recent acquisition of cast **H113**, which represents the *Albani Antinous**, the funds to make the purchase were given by the Friends of the Ashmolean.

3.1.2 Display history

Although casts were never entirely removed from display at the Ashmolean, their position within the Museum was renegotiated many times throughout their history. When the Ashmolean Museum building was still known as the University Galleries, the Randolph Galleries to the left of the entrance (Fig.3.h) were dedicated to the display of both plaster casts and ancient sculptures (Kurtz 2000: 193). At this time, the casts were perceived as one of the main highlights of the University Galleries' collections (ibid.). However, in 1861, when a drawing school opened within the University Galleries, space was severely limited and original plaster works made by the aforementioned sculptor Francis Chantrey began to be moved into the space previously occupied by his casts from ancient sculptures (MacGregor 2010: 72). A negative attitude to the display of plaster casts is not thought to have prompted the decision to remove them. It may have simply been due to the terms of Lady Chantrey's bequest of her husband's plaster works to the Galleries, which mandated their continual display (Kurtz 2000: 184), that led to the plaster casts from ancient statues being supplanted. In later decades, the situation was reversed. By 1882 the drawing school had been expelled from the Galleries and the plaster casts were redisplayed (Penny 1991: 262).

Figure 3.h The Randolph Galleries' display of ancient statuary. 09/05/2019.

In 1890, a new extension was constructed to the rear of the University Galleries building and four years later, the casts were moved there, with the Randolf Gallery at the front of the Museum now being dedicated entirely to the display of antiquities (Melfi 2010: 31). The question of where the casts should be displayed was revisited again in 1919 and 1923, when the donation of books from private libraries, including the Haverfield Bequest, threatened the space occupied by the casts (Kurtz 2000: 286). Prior to 1954, the casts were displayed across six rooms in the Ashmolean's extension, but due to the diversification of the museum's fine art and archaeological holdings, the space allocated to them was diminished (ibid.: 301).

The casts were entirely removed from the main galleries in 1961 when they were relocated to make way for new Eastern Art displays (MacGregor 2010: 72). They were placed in a satellite building which forms the current exhibition space, which at the time was not connected to the main museum. Concurrently, the Ashmolean also underwent a restructuring and was divided into the five departments in which it is organised today: Antiquities, Western Arts, Eastern Arts, Heberden Coin Room, and Cast Gallery. The Cast Gallery was labelled solely as a teaching collection and placed under the auspices of the

Lincoln professor of Classical Archaeology: unlike other departments it had no archives, no tradition of independent existence, and little to no budget for conservation (Melfi 2010: 32).

It was not until the Museum's major regenerations in 2010-2011 that the Cast Gallery building was connected to the museum proper, with the sliding doors being added to allow access from the main premises (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 2). As well as being displayed in the Cast Gallery, casts can now be seen elsewhere in the Museum. Casts **A59** and **B4**, representing the central figure of Apollo from the *Temple of Zeus at Olympia** and a mythological figure named *Biton** respectively, occupy the Ashmolean's central atrium (Fig.3.i), leading some to declare that casts have returned to the "heart of the Museum" (Marchand 2012: 135). However, the casts' current display in the Museum has not been without reproach. Critics have argued that casts are displayed reductively, with little information presented to the public about the history of the casts, their date of production, provenance, or manufacturers (ibid.: 136), although this information is known.[24]

Overall, the Ashmolean Museum provides the ideal venue for research into casts. This is due to the fact that the objects have enjoyed a long and relatively uninterrupted history at the institution, yet have still been subject to some of the vacillations in popularity that characterise cast histories more generally. The size of the collection, its dedicated display space, and the Ashmolean's continual reframing of its casts, making connections to contemporary artists and the latest archaeological research, also makes for a dynamic and noteworthy case study.

[24] Information about the Ashmolean's casts is widely available in Frederiksen and Smith's 2011 catalogue.

*Figure 3.i Casts **A59** (left) and **B4** (right) displayed in the atrium. 09/05/2019.*

3.2 Methodology

This section sets out my methodological approach to investigating my research questions. In short, I employ qualitative methods, use a single case study approach, and borrow from the techniques of grounded theory. My choice of these methods was motivated by three key emphases that are central to my study:

- My study is fundamentally concerned with *how meaning is made*,
- It is *in-depth, specific, and exploratory* in nature,
- The *context* of the Ashmolean Museum is of great importance.

I will now demonstrate how each of these priorities influenced my choice of methodology.

3.2.1 Making meaning

On a very basic level, my research is concerned with the making of meaning: it seeks to understand perceptions of value. Qualitative research is ideally suited to answer these kinds of questions. Explained in simple terms, it is an interpretive approach concerned precisely with meaning: the investigation of the "why?" and "how?" of social and human phenomena. It is often defined oppositionally to quantitative research, which employs mathematical and statistical techniques, asking the questions "who?", "what?" and "how much?" (Creswell 1988: 15). Qualitative research methods are thus most appropriate for my study.

My methodological approach can be further described as interpretivist. The interpretivist paradigm focuses primarily on recognizing and narrating the meaning of human experiences and actions (Fossey et al. 2002). It accepts the equal reality of multiple meanings (Levers 2013: 3) and acknowledges that "objective reality can never be captured […] only know[n] through representations" (Denzin and Lincoln 2005: 5). Since I am interested in how value is constructed and perceived by each individual that I encounter, and since I believe that no single respondent's perception is any more

"correct" than that of any other, the interpretivist approach aligns with the primary focus of my study.

3.2.2 In-depth, specific and exploratory

As outlined in section 2.4, little research has been conducted into visitor perceptions of casts, so my project is exploratory in nature. This makes it sensible to undertake an in-depth study into the subtleties and particularities of the phenomenon under investigation in order to understand it to the fullest possible extent. Qualitative research is again highly appropriate to achieve these aims, as it is especially suited to discovery rather than verification (Ambert et al. 1995: 880).

The exploratory nature of my work also motivated my choice to borrow from the methodology of grounded theory. I describe myself as "borrowing" from grounded theory and not as straightforwardly conducting grounded theory research since my aims are not to produce theory. Instead, I drew inspiration from its main guiding principles, which are ideally suited to achieving my research objectives. For example, grounded theorists do not begin with a hypothesis to be tested but instead, through the simultaneous processes of data collection and analysis, focus on developing a theory that is solely based or "grounded in" the data (Oliver 2009: 111). Theory evolves during the research process (Strauss and Corbin 1994: 273) via constant comparative analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967: vii), aimed at moving away from a verificationist approach which seeks to validate hypotheses generated prior to the study (Seale 2012: 395). Following these tenets of the grounded theory approach is methodologically appropriate for my exploratory study as it will enable my findings to emerge directly from my data.

My choice to adopt a single case study approach was also motivated by the exploratory nature of my study. Single case studies are best suited not to generalisation but particularization (Stake 1995: 8). They permit the most thorough and exhaustive type of investigation, resulting in precise models (ibid.). Since my work is exploratory, thorough research of a single case conducted in this manner will be best placed to provide full and in-depth answers to the research questions.

3.2.3 Context

Understanding context is central to my work: I am interested in the specific case of casts within a university museum. Qualitative approaches are a well-established method for researching an audience's situated experience (Symon and Cassell 1998: 2) through the observation of the subjects in their natural settings (Creswell 1988: 15). Again, this fits well with the aims of my investigation. Likewise, case study research is highly situated, enabling in-depth investigations of phenomena within their real-life contexts (Yin 2009: 14), once more highlighting the appropriateness of my single case study approach.

3.3 Methods

To explore my case study, I used semi-structured interviews and participant observation to collect and triangulate data. I will now outline these methods.

3.3.1 Interviews

I chose to conduct interviews as this is an established practice for gaining access to respondents' knowledge, values, and experiences (Byrne 2012: 209). The method is also highly compatible with my interpretivist perspective, which foregrounds subjective meaning (Mason 2002: 63). I collected data through face-to-face interviews. Potential respondents are more likely to take part in a face-to-face interview than a self-completion survey, increasing the probability of me receiving responses (Phellas et al. 2012: 182). Face-to-face interviews are also likely to be longer and more detailed as they are more engaging than a questionnaire (ibid.: 183). More detailed answers are also to be expected as interviewees only have to speak and not write down their responses. Furthermore, some of the concepts that I posed to my interviewees, particularly regarding their perceptions of value, were complex. A face-to-face interview was therefore preferable for data collection as these facilitate the asking of such nuanced questions. As well as being beneficial for the purposes of my study, face-to-face interviews are also more rewarding for interviewees as they are being actively

listened to, as opposed to reporting to a faceless researcher in a self-completion questionnaire.

Over the course of six months of fieldwork at the Ashmolean Museum, between November 2018 and April 2019, I conducted interviews with a total of 64 participants, taken from the six key categories of user who frequent the space:

- Members of the public visiting the Cast Gallery
- The curators of the Cast Gallery
- Volunteers who deliver the 'Downstairs in the Cast Gallery' tours
- Students using the collection as a resource for learning about Classical Archaeology
- Classical Archaeology tutors from the University of Oxford who teach students in the space
- Artists using the Cast Gallery for sketching.

I chose to interview users from these varied groups in order to provide a holistic cross-section of possible ways of constructing value for the casts. A breakdown of the precise numbers of users interviewed within each category, as well as key statistics such as their age and gender, can be found in Figs.3.j-l below. This information is not central to my purpose and will not play a role in the discussion of my findings later in this thesis; it is only included here to demonstrate the diversity of users interviewed as part of this study and highlight that my interviews were not unnecessarily biased toward any particular user category, age, or gender.[25]

[25] Visitors are represented somewhat more than any other category of user for the reason that this group is likely to be the most diverse in terms of background, opinion, and experience. The number of curators interviewed was necessarily two because the Cast Gallery has only two staff members occupying this position.

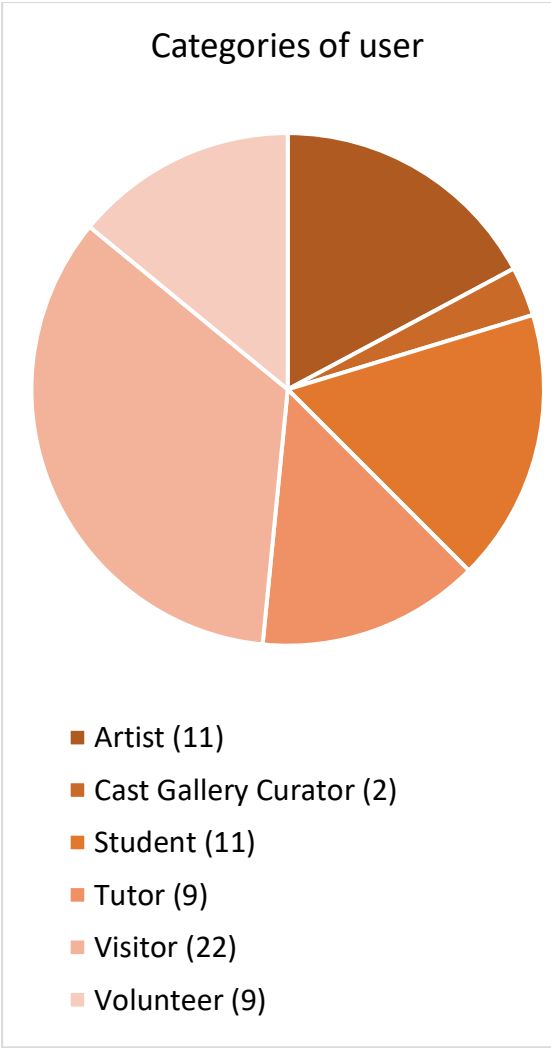

Figure 3.j Categories of user interviewed.

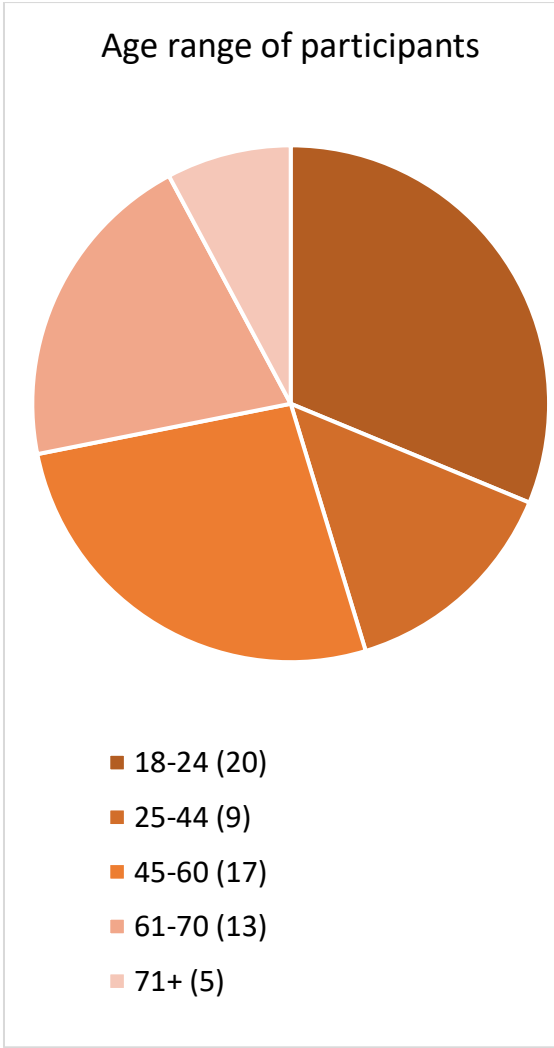

Figure 3.k Age range of users interviewed.

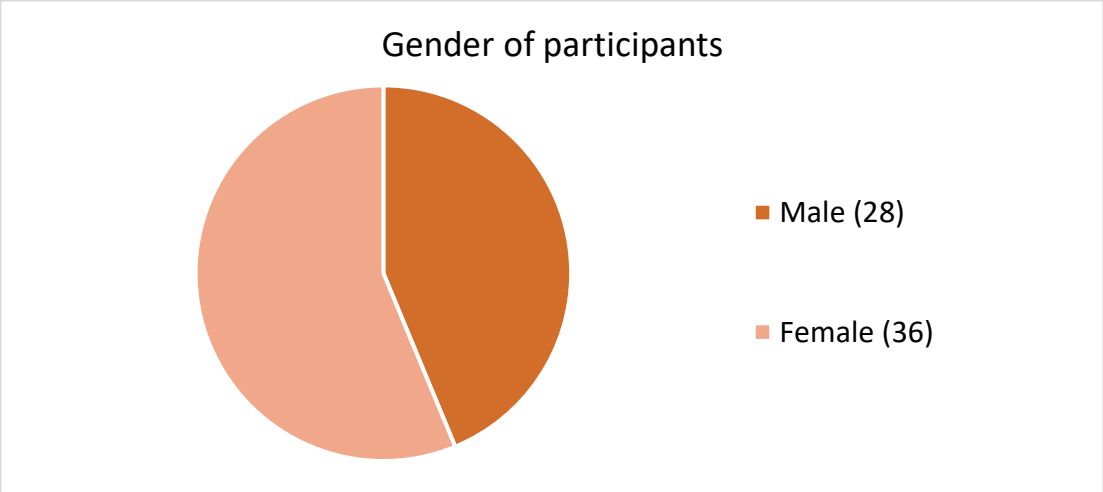

Figure 3.l Gender of users interviewed.

First, I will outline the general methodological principles that applied to all interviews. Following this, I will discuss the specifics of interviewing the particular categories of user outlined above.

My interviewing technique was much informed by Phellas et al.'s 2012 description of semi-structured interviews (Phellas et al. 2012). For each interview, there was a broad structure that I set out to follow but I did not prescribe the exact questions or wording prior to the interviews. The aim of this was to strike a happy medium by ensuring coverage of key themes, whilst also allowing for the exploration of new avenues raised by participants, facilitating a natural "conversation with a purpose" (Burgess 1988: 153). While each interview therefore responded to the unique dynamic between interviewer and interviewee, I funnelled respondents through initial, more general questions about the Cast Gallery, their visit, and the tour, toward more focused questions about the value of the casts and the place of the objects within the Museum.

I used open questions to encourage the interviewees to talk from their own perspectives, since closed and fixed choice questions are more appropriate for studies that seek to confirm or refute existing hypotheses (Phellas et al. 2012: 195-6). An additional benefit to this approach is that a more complex analysis can be undertaken on the respondents' own words, as opposed to those placed in their mouths by a researcher attempting to fit them in to a predefined category (Byrne 2012: 209).

To capture the data collected as part of my interviews, I used a clip-on microphone attached to my laptop computer, with an iPhone recorder as a backup. Field notes were taken alongside the interview process to record non-verbal exchanges (Holland and Ramazanoglu 1994: 141). Body language and non-verbal cues are an important part of conveying meaning so without recording this within the interview transcript, much would have been lost. I collected interview data until the point of theoretical saturation.

Visitor interviews

To recruit visitors for interviews, I made use of the free tours that regularly take place in the Ashmolean's Lower Cast Gallery. Tours occur twice-weekly on Thursdays and Saturdays at 2pm. On each tour, a pair of volunteers takes a group of up to 12 attendees on short visits to the Lower Cast Gallery. When delivering each tour, the volunteers follow a prescribed format, summarised in Fig.3.m. Although the tour follows this plan on each occasion (which is dictated by a training guide produced by the Gallery's curators), volunteers are given the autonomy to choose which casts they present to their tour group.

I chose to base my visitor interviews around these tours because they provided an ideal setting in which to answer my research questions. It is on these tours that visitors are exposed to the dominant value framework of the Cast Gallery setting to the fullest possible extent. This is in contrast to a self-directed stroll around the Gallery, where a visitor might not have their experience shaped in such a major way by the institutional attitude to the objects. Interviewing visitors who had attended broadly the same tours also allowed me to compare meaningfully between individuals with analogous experiences in the Gallery. Although some visitors had prior experience with casts before their attendance on the tour, interviewing visitors after the tours ensured that each interviewee had been exposed to some level of the Ashmolean Museum's chosen interpretation.

Order	Description	Time Allocated
1	Welcome, brief safety overview, and introduction to tour guides.	1 minute
2	"What is a cast?" Introduction to casts, how they differ from ancient originals, and the casting process.	2 minutes
3	Summary of the Ashmolean's collection: number of casts, short history of their display at the Museum.	2 minutes
4	Discussion of three specific objects: guide discusses the original's ancient context (if known), and any stories associated with the original sculpture.	3 x 10 minutes
5	The remainder of the time in the Lower Gallery is given over to individual exploration – the guests are invited to wander around the gallery at leisure.	10-15 minutes

Figure 3.m The schedule of a typical 'Downstairs in the Cast Gallery' tour.

Additionally, the tours aided greatly with participant recruitment. Visitors overwhelmingly enjoyed the tours and seemed to feel that because they had received a free (and often unexpected) behind-the-scenes experience, they were happy to contribute to research on the objects. Furthermore, for those who were first-time visitors or who did not have any previous experience with casts, the tour provided them with some basic vocabulary upon which they might draw to discuss their experiences. This gave them sufficient confidence to undertake an interview with a researcher.

Interviews took place in the Lower Cast Gallery after the tour in the time dedicated to self-directed exploration (no.5 in Fig.3.m), in a quiet space with minimal interruptions. I did not move interviewees into a new space separate from the other tour attendees, since this might cause unease. I set up a few of the Ashmolean's folding stools to enable both myself and interviewees to sit down, ensuring their comfort during the interview.

On each tour, I interviewed as many attendees as were willing to participate, with the exception of those under the age of 18. Interviewees were self-selecting. At the end of each tour, I announced that I was looking to conduct interviews with visitors about their perceptions of the Cast Gallery. I then allowed anyone who was interested in contributing to approach me. This was to ensure that nobody felt under pressure to participate. I allowed the visitors to decide upon the number of people interviewed at any one time. Some preferred to have one-on-one interviews, but others preferred to be interviewed alongside others. However, I made sure not to interview any more than three respondents at once to enable each person to contribute and to prevent the interview from lasting too long.

Artist interviews

To recruit artists for interviews, I attended two of the Ashmolean's monthly open drawing sessions, in which access to the Lower Cast Gallery is given by the Ashmolean's security team. Artists of all skill levels are permitted to visit during this time for self-directed sketching. During these sessions, I greeted the artists at the entrance to the Lower Cast Gallery, introduced myself and my research and asked whether they would be interested in being interviewed while they were sketching. Once the artists had set

up, I gradually made my way around the space, interviewing those who were happy to be involved. Many of the artists also invited me to look through their sketchbooks.

Student, tutor, curator, and volunteer interviews

Student, tutor, and volunteer interviewees were recruited primarily via email. For student and volunteer interviews, I was granted permission to use the University of Oxford Classics Faculty and Institute of Archaeology mailing lists and the Ashmolean Cast Gallery volunteer mailing list respectively, to circulate an email introducing myself and my study, and asking for respondents who had experience with the Cast Gallery to express their interest in participating via a Google Form.

I chose to interview the self-selecting students and volunteers using focus groups. This was the most efficient method of data collection as it allowed me to gain a range of different perspectives in one sitting. It also provided the students with the gratifying opportunity to engage in conversation not just with me but also with others who had similar experiences. Focus group sizes were bigger for these participants, with between three and six respondents in each one. A larger size was justified in this case because, within their groups, the interviewees shared a common background of knowledge and had a more intimate familiarity with the collection than the average visitor. This meant that they could articulate their views more succinctly and allow more data to be collected despite the larger numbers, without compromising every participant's ability to contribute. I defined "students" very loosely in my call for participants, extending the invitation to undergraduate and postgraduate students alike. I interviewed students reading *Literae Humaniores* (Classics), Classical Archaeology, and Classical Archaeology and Ancient History.

In order to recruit tutors and curators to participate in my research, I emailed them directly. Again, I introduced myself and my project and invited them to an interview at a time and place that would suit them. These interviews were conducted one-on-one. My position as a graduate of the University of Oxford was a significant advantage in participant recruitment as many of my interviewees were my ex-tutors. Although I had prior experience of being taught in the Cast Gallery by many of them, I still asked each

the most basic and fundamental questions about teaching in the space. This ensured that the data was not reliant on my potentially biased rememberings of past tuition. Recruiting the Gallery's curators was also straightforward as both Dr Melfi and Professor Smith supervised my research.[26]

3.3.2 Participant observation

My interview data was supplemented by observation of Lower Cast Gallery tours, which were recorded using field notes. This observation was overt: all volunteers and tour attendees were aware that I was present as a researcher. I identified myself and briefly explained my purpose when the volunteers introduced themselves at the beginning of each tour (no.1 in Fig.3.m). I also installed a signage sheet on the existing podium advertising the tours at the entrance to the Lower Cast Gallery to indicate that research observations would be taking place. This gave attendees the option to refuse participation.

My observations recorded basic contextualising information such as the date and time of the tour, the names of the volunteers delivering the tour, a brief synopsis of the introductions to casts given as part of no.2-3 in Fig.3.m, and the three objects around which the tour was based. I also recorded visitors' verbal and non-verbal responses to the tour, expressions of interest or indicators of a lack of interest, as well as the themes of any questions that were asked. Any particularly notable visitor movements, such as a visitor walking away from the rest of the tour group to examine a particular object, were also noted. The triangulation of data gained from observations and interviews ensured the validity of my conclusions, as the central questions could be explored from multiple perspectives (Baxter and Jack 2008: 556).

3.3.3 Data analysis

This penultimate subsection sets out my analytical strategies. I did not make a literal reading of the data, instead reading through it, drawing out inferences and meanings

[26] Although Melfi and Smith supervised my research, this did not cause any conflicts of interest.

(Mason 2002: 149). In order to do this, I broke the data down into manageable chunks using a well-established process known as coding. Coding involves splitting up the data and placing it into categories or codes (Dey 1993). Codes pull together individual words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs from the data (Basit 2003: 144), building a conceptual scheme that enables the researcher to interpret (Coffrey and Atkinson 1996). After comparing the relative merits of manual coding (involving cutting and pasting pieces of paper, colour coding using highlighter pens, and note cards) and computer assisted qualitative data analysis software or CAQDAS, I opted for the software package NVivo.

I chose to employ NVivo primarily because it is designed to facilitate the process of constant data comparison (Bringer et al. 2006: 248), which will be discussed below. Furthermore, using NVivo enabled me to manage and store large volumes of data in an accessible and manageable way, providing a solution to what is considered one of the biggest challenges for the qualitative researcher (Symon and Cassell 1998: 6). Furthermore, the software also allowed me to collate an audit trail that allows rigor to be demonstrated (Bringer et al. 2006: 247). NVivo also enabled me to become more immersed in my data (Welsh 2002). For example, the time-saving search function enabled me to find desired information promptly and without distraction. Importantly, the software did not impair my analysis. Since its primary function is data management (Zamawe 2015: 13), I interpreted my data in the same way as I would have done had I employed manual methods. The software in no way replaced the analytical role of the researcher in the process (Basit 2003: 145). Therefore, I felt confident in my choice to use NVivo.

When coding my data, I followed the principles of grounded theory by avoiding the use of a pre-determined theoretical structure (Corbin and Strauss 2008). I generated, where appropriate, “in-vivo” codes, using my participants’ own words as categorising headings. I felt that this was an appropriate strategy given the priority that my interpretivist perspective accords to participants' own perceptions. However, in order to avoid reinventing the wheel, I sometimes used codes that I had taken from existing

scholarly literature, whilst taking care to clearly emphasise any points of difference between my work and that discussed in other scholarship.

I drew on the constant comparative method when analysing my data. As the name suggests, the method involves the development of themes from data by means of concurrent comparative coding and analysing. My use of the constant comparative method was inspired by Hennie Boeije's description of her qualitative research into the experience of multiple sclerosis suffers and their significant others (Boeije 2002). Like Boejie, I coded my data by starting with a single interview from the visitor category, assigning short passages with a code, and checking codes from within the same interview against one another for consistency (ibid.: 395). I then moved on to a process referred to as axial coding: the coding of interviews with other visitors, comparing codes from within each interview (ibid.: 397-8). I completed this process for each of my categories of user: visitors, students, tutors etc. Next, triangulation took place, as codes from interviews with the visitors were compared with codes from interviews with other categories of user. The aim was to ascertain how each group perceived similar issues, adding nuance to the codes elucidated from the first two stages of coding (ibid.: 398-9).

I conducted coding concurrently with my data collection. This was advantageous because, during the early phases of my data collection, I was particularly struck by the attitudes exemplified by Classical Archaeology tutors and students toward the material of plaster. Because I undertook the processes of data collection and coding concurrently, I had the opportunity to adapt the funnel of conversation down which I led future interviews in light of this interesting phenomenon, allowing me to explore the theme further with subsequent interviewees.

When my data collection was complete, I embarked on a process similar to Strauss and Corbin's selective coding: "the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 116). In this lengthy process, I identified which codes were of greatest relevance to answering my research questions and began using them to explain my results.

3.4 The Researcher

My academic background played a significant role in shaping this thesis. I studied for both my BA and MSt (in Classical Archaeology and Ancient History) at the University of Oxford, learning about ancient sculpture in the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery. During my studies, I also volunteered as a 'Downstairs in the Cast Gallery' tour guide. Consequently, when I first began working on this PhD, I approached the plaster casts from a very particular viewpoint. I recognised the casts' educational value for enabling me to learn about classical antiquity but very little else.

These ingrained pre-existing ideas surrounding the cast collection might have proven a disadvantage for my work, particularly as my chosen methods of case study based, interpretivist research have been criticised for their tendency to result in the verification of the researcher's existing ideas (Diamond 1996: 6; Corbin and Strauss 2008: 303). However, conducting this research has been utterly transformative for me. Through my in-depth interviews with other users of the Ashmolean's collection, my view of casts' values greatly expanded, turning my preconceived notions on their head. I recognise now, through the self-reflexive approach undertaken throughout this study (Mason 2002: 187-8), that my previous view of the casts was somewhat blinkered. I believe that I have not suffered from verification bias as my preconceived notions of casts and their value have been so significantly expanded.

My academic background in fact furnished me with significant additional advantages when conducting this research. As someone who had previously only encountered the Ashmolean's collection as a teaching resource, I was able to relate to participants in my study who perceived the casts similarly. I found myself well-equipped to gently encourage them to consider and discuss other forms of value, without placing words in their mouths. Thus, I believe that my prior experiences with the collection have increased my all-important "sensitivity" (Corbin and Strauss 2008: 304) for the topic and my research participants.

3.5 Ethics

Since human participants were involved in this research, ethical concerns were of paramount importance. I did not directly work with children or vulnerable adults who may have been endangered by my study, but my research was highly person-centric. It was therefore essential to gain ethical approval from the University of Leicester, as well as securing the informed consent of my participants. All of my research was conducted in accordance with the University of Leicester's Research Ethics Statement. I gained approval from the University's Committee for Research Ethics Concerning Human Subjects (Non-NHS).

All research participants were provided with an information sheet (see Appendix 3) that introduced both myself and my research, and gave an insight into what to expect from an interview. The particular information sheet that a respondent received depended on the category of user to which they belonged. Each also received a form to record their informed consent (see Appendix 4). I stressed that all participation was voluntary and never pressed a potential respondent to participate if they expressed reluctance. I also made it clear to all respondents that they were welcome to ask questions at any time, and that the option to withdraw from the study was available. None of the participants requested to withdraw at any stage.

I kept the great majority of respondents anonymous, assigning a code name to each. While the majority of users that I interviewed were able to remain unidentified, the number of tutors and curators within the University of Oxford and Ashmolean Museum was so small that they would be easily identifiable even if assigned a pseudonym. I made this clear to tutors and curators on their information sheets. I offered to either keep them anonymous to the best of my ability or to identify them with their real name. I also offered to send each tutor and curator a full transcript of their interview, giving them the opportunity to make small edits and ensure that their views were represented accurately. While all curators and all tutors except one chose to be identified by their real names, some chose not to review and edit their transcript. The research adhered to all ethical protocol.

Having critically discussed my research setting, design, and methods, the next chapter begins to present my results.

Chapter 4 Categories of Value

In this chapter, I investigate my first research question by detailing the categories of value identified by users in the Ashmolean Museum's Cast Gallery. Two broad kinds of value emerged from my data, which I describe as cognitive and non-cognitive. In the former category, users assign value by means of conscious evaluation and analysis, while the latter relates primarily to value as evidenced through users' reports of their emotions, feelings, and experiences. I begin this chapter by defining cognitive values in general (4.1), before discussing their more specific sub-categories of educational (4.1.1), historical (4.1.2), and representational (4.1.3) values. Next, I describe non-cognitive value (4.2) and discuss how it is embodied in physicality-focused (4.2.1), atmospheric (4.2.2), bridging (4.2.3), and rummaging (4.2.4) responses. Finally, I draw conclusions regarding the intrinsic or instrumental nature of each category of value, and discuss the extent to which these categories of value overlap with those attributed to casts in scholarship, as discussed in Chapter 2 (4.3).

4.1 Cognitive values

I use the term "cognitive values" to refer to those identified by users through their conscious analysis of their Cast Gallery experience. Often users described such values in response to direct questions like "do you think that plaster casts are valuable?". Cognitive value can itself be subdivided into three core categories. The first and most commonly observed was educational value. Educational value is characterised by its focus on using the casts as learning instruments, specifically for enhancing an understanding of the ancient world. The second form of cognitive value can be described as historical. As the name suggests, this form of value prizes the casts' own historic qualities, often relating to the eighteenth- or nineteenth-century context of their creation. The third form of cognitive value can be described as representational. It is unique to the Cast Gallery's artists and relates to how they employ the casts within their artistic practice. I will now discuss these cognitive values in turn, demonstrating how educational and representational values are instrumental in nature, whereas historical value is intrinsic.

4.1.1 Educational value

Broadly speaking, Cast Gallery users presented museum objects that provided them with a learning experience as having educational value:

> *Yuri (visitor): Well, an object has value if… it's something from which we can learn.*

Casts were certainly perceived as possessing this kind of educational value. Many users, including visitor Yuri, presented them as facilitating a deeper understanding of various artistic, social, and cultural aspects of the ancient world:

> *Abbey: And do you think that casts are valuable in that sense?*
>
> *Yuri: I think they make you realise the knowledge that people had such a long time ago. […] You know, the Greeks and the Romans… to make all this stuff. And who they chose to make statues of… the places they put them… all that. Ok, you don't have them in their original context, but you're able to observe, to look at it from different angles and… try to understand, you know?*

Yuri's description of educational value appears straightforward, but this belies the complexity of the concept. I will now show that a user's realisation of educational values in the Cast Gallery is implicitly dependent on their recognition of casts' other values, the most important being the perception of casts as "accurate", or truthful, representations of their ancient referents. Accuracy was presented by many respondents as a value in its own right, although it also functions as the foundation upon which all other educational values were built. A user who interprets the casts as accurate can then layer other, dependent values on top of this, including what I refer to as the secondary value of accessibility. If a user recognises both casts' accuracy and their accessibility, they can then perceive what I describe as a tertiary value, where they value the casts for their reconstructive abilities. Before I outline the evidence for these layered educational values, I first provide a conceptual comparison to fully explain how these values work in practice.

I consider these layered values to function in a similar way to Nancy Munn's concept of the "value transformation" (Munn 1992: 3). Munn's anthropological study, set in Papua

New Guinea, details how Gawa Island communities grew root vegetables like taro and yams, exchanged these for canoes, and in turn exchanged the canoes for prestigious *kula* valuables. These *kula* valuables finally enabled the individual with whom they were associated to acquire fame and prestige. Each product in this chain of value transformation was considered to have value in its own right, but it was the so-called "final value transformation", the acquisition of fame and prestige (Munn 1977: 40), that realised the overall value of the whole exercise (Robbins 2015: 21).

Educational value in the Cast Gallery functions in a similar way: each layer of value is dependent on the previous value lower in the chain. Just as the taro and yams are essential to acquire canoes within Munn's study, so too the perception of casts' accuracy was necessary for my respondents to recognise the secondary and tertiary values described above (Fig.4.a). Were a single element to be removed (for example, either the taro or the casts' accuracy) the values located further up the chain could not be realised.

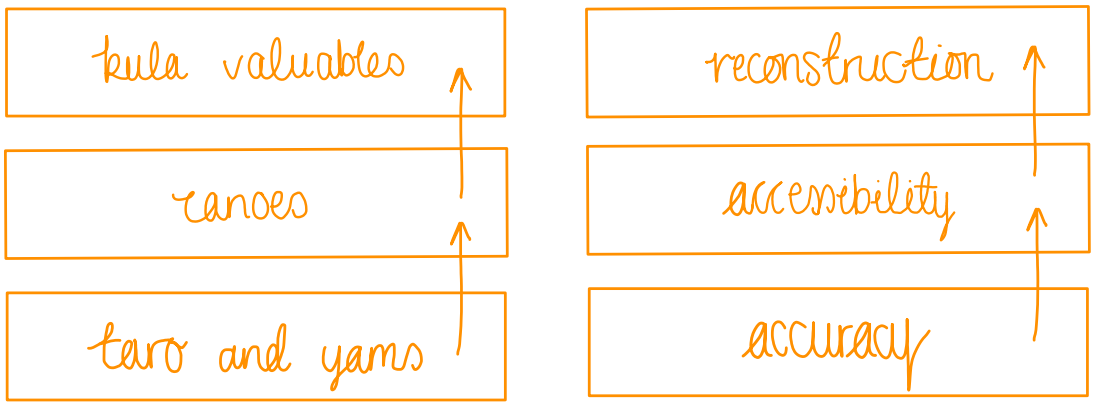

Figure 4.a Left: visual representation of Munn's value transformations. Right: visual representation of the Cast Gallery's educational value transformations.

However, although some similarities abound, there are some important differences between Munn's example and the Cast Gallery's layered values. The movement of value on Gawa Island was achieved in a spatiotemporal sense: value was accrued over time through a succession of different objects. Meanwhile, in the Cast Gallery, educational values are layered within the same object.

Another key difference lies in the location of the final value transformation. While the Gawa Islanders must complete the chain visualised in Fig.4.b to realise their final value transformation, the Cast Gallery's final value transformation, namely the recognition of the overall (educational) value of the exercise, can be achieved at any point in the chain. A user could, for example, derive educational value from either accuracy or accessibility without necessarily recognising the tertiary reconstructive value. Comparing Figs.4.b-c visually demonstrates this key difference.

Having explained the Cast Gallery's layered educational values at a conceptual level, I will now discuss how they were evidenced by my interview data, before demonstrating their instrumental nature.

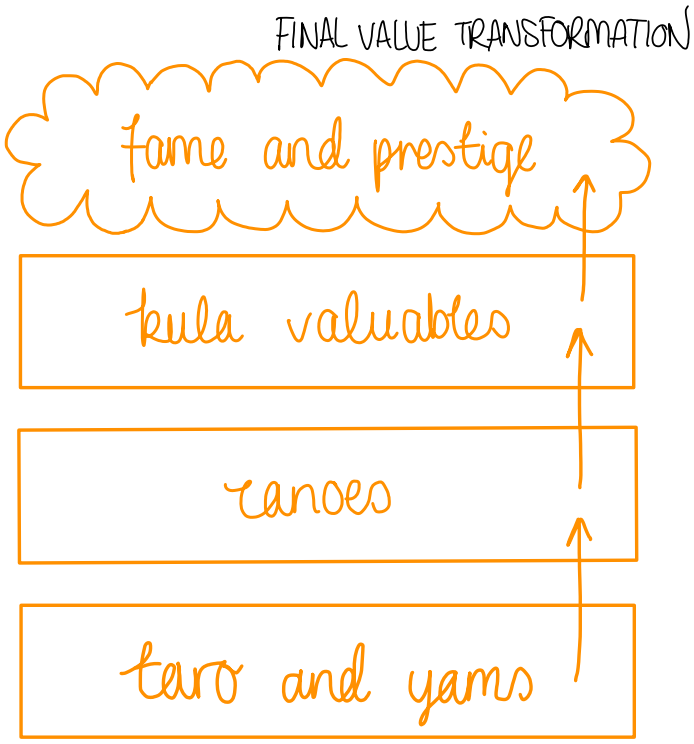

Figure 4.b Visual representation of Munn's value transformation, including the final value transformation.

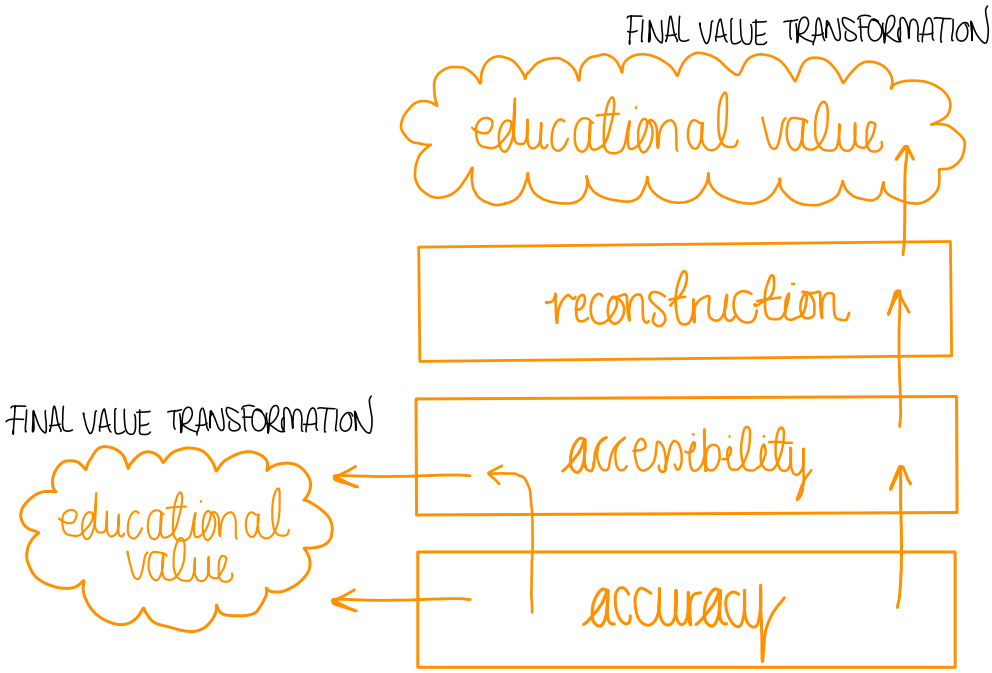

Figure 4.c Visual representation of final educational value transformation in the Cast Gallery.

Primary value: Accuracy

For Cast Gallery users, the objects' primary educational value, the value upon which all others of an educational nature rest, is their accuracy. Accuracy was associated with value by all categories of user interviewed as part of this study. Although I did not pose any specific questions to my interviewees on the subject, discussions of accuracy appeared in almost half of my interviews. Student Frankie's statement on the topic was representative:

> *Frankie (student): I think the fact that they're plaster casts is very nice... and not something else... because yeah, they're a very accurate representation of ancient sculptures.*

Thus, accuracy was an educationally valuable quality because it enabled the casts to be used as surrogates for ancient sculptures. Tutor Peter provided a concrete example of the precise educational benefits that came from using casts as surrogates in this way:

> *Peter (tutor): A lot of our education is so much focused on photographs in books […] so to be able to look at three-dimensional objects and to get a*

> *sense of the scale, to think about style in a three-dimensional way, to develop a vocabulary for talking about ancient objects and sculptures in the round, all of that's really valuable and important.*

Having established the importance of accuracy in a broad sense, I will now define more precisely what it meant for my respondents. Cast Gallery users generally felt that a cast was "accurate" if it adhered to the form of its ancient referent. However, within this broad definition, a cast could be accurate in one of two ways. First, a cast could be perceived to accurately recreate the form of the ancient sculpture upon its archaeological discovery. Second, a cast could have ancient historical accuracy, when it was perceived to replicate the form that the statue took when it was used/displayed in the ancient world. These definitions of accuracy are reminiscent of the two (often opposed) approaches to the post-excavation treatment of archaeological finds: conservation and restoration. The former aims to maintain the object *as is*, meaning in the state in which it was excavated, and the other works to rebuild the object to make it appear *as we think it might have been* in the ancient world (Podany 2015: 27). I will now consider both of these forms of accuracy in turn.

The view that casts were valuable when they replicated the form which an object took upon its excavation was best exemplified by volunteer Oscar:

> *Oscar (volunteer): I think there was a time, and I may be wrong, when the casts in the Ashmolean collection included quite a lot of additional bits. Like an arm was added on. And then the Ashmolean changed its views on this. And these were taken away. We get back to a position where everything you saw was what emerged from the ground. While some galleries around the world which have got the original piece have added an arm in, the Ashmolean hasn't. So, you are likely if you travel to different places to see a slightly different sculpture although both claim to be the same thing. There's a danger of it becoming a sort of Disney World if things are smartened up and polished like that.*

Oscar presented accuracy as a form of archaeological truth. To place his comments into context, from the Renaissance until the eighteenth-century, viewers preferred the so-

called "perfection" of a complete sculpture to a broken fragment (ibid.: 33). This led to the widespread reassembly of broken pieces of the same sculpture, and the creation of sculptural pastiches from ancient fragments taken from multiple different originals (Ramage 2002: 62). However, in the nineteenth-century, the refusal of renowned sculptor Antonio Canova to restore the Parthenon Marbles caused the unrestored fragment to become "the new artistic standard" (Hamilakis 1999: 308). Restorations generally began to be viewed as misleading distortions (True 2003: 1). This resulted in the later 1960's and 1970's trend for de-restoring ancient sculptures on a large scale (Hughes 2011: 2). Oscar perceived restorations, whereby "*additional bits*" are reattached to the sculpture post-excavation, as a source of devaluation both for casts and for ancient sculptures, as they threaten the objects' adherence to their excavated form. Since Oscar perceived the Ashmolean's cast collection as having been de-restored, he credits it with being of greater than average value.[27]

Next, I demonstrate how other users perceived accuracy as relating to a form of ancient historical truth:

> *Greg (visitor): To me a museum object has value if it is one that is presented in the way in which it would have been used or seen… and recreates the past as people would've seen it back then in the ancient world.*

Greg viewed individual casts as accurate, and therefore valuable, if they precisely replicated the ancient sculpture in the form that it was seen by its original audience. Additionally, the collection as a whole was also presented as having this kind of accuracy:

> *Bert Smith (curator): The Cast Gallery is quite crowded like the hot spots of ancient monument use were. If you went to an ancient temple or sanctuary or later on into an agora or forum, you would have found it very, very busy.*

[27] De-restoration work was indeed carried out at the Ashmolean in the 1920's (Kurtz 2000: 292), but many casts still retain their modern additions. For example, cast **B97** has a restored nose and left foot (Frederiksen and Smith 2011:102). These restorations likely remain as they were affixed to the original sculpture when the moulding took place, meaning that they cannot easily be removed from the cast.

> *And, of course, the Cast Galleries are very, very busy places visually. […] The upstairs, I think, is probably quite a good representation of what it felt like to be inside the cella of a successful temple.*

The *cella* to which Smith referred is the central room of an ancient Greek temple, often used to house a cult statue as well as votive offerings, including (but not limited to) other sculptures and figurines. Smith viewed the main Cast Gallery as an accurate reflection of this particular ancient context, likely due to the number of sculptures displayed there. In this way, the casts as a collective embody Pearce's definition of what makes a collection, in that they are an entity "greater than the sum of its parts" (Pearce 1994: 158). However, Smith was the only respondent to mention this kind of accuracy with relation to the cast collection as a whole. Users more frequently discussed the ancient historical accuracy of individual casts along the lines of Greg above.

Taking both archaeological and ancient historical accuracy into consideration, "accuracy" in the Cast Gallery can therefore be defined as accuracy in the scientific sense of the term, in which one compares a measurement against a correct or accepted value. The correct or accepted value in this case is the perceived form of the ancient sculpture, but at what phase in the antiquity's history the "correct" form is located can differ. In addition, both of these perspectives on accuracy rest on the assumption that there is a single "true" form that an ancient sculpture ought to take. There seems to be an inherent belief that the cast ought to replicate this truth and provide an unimpeded window into antiquity. If the cast is perceived to achieve this, it is deemed accurate and therefore valuable. The Ashmolean's casts were overwhelmingly presented as being accurate and this assessment formed the basis upon which other educational values could be built.

Secondary value: Accessibility

Ancient sculptures are geographically dispersed in museums across the globe, meaning that a great deal of travel and effort would be necessary to see a large number of pieces. On the other hand, the accuracy of the Ashmolean's casts meant that they could be

valued for providing a form of access to a great number of ancient works in a single location:

> *Fabio (visitor): They're valuable in that they are here and you can actually see them. I mean otherwise we wouldn't have these examples that we could go and look at. You'd have to travel to Greece and Rome or whatever to see them. Or other museums.*
>
> *Michael (visitor): Yeah! You've got so much in one place right here.*
>
> *Fabio (visitor): It's just really great to... get them all together.*

These views were also representative of the Cast Gallery's tutors, students, and curators. They specifically valued the casts for enabling them to view a conspectus of ancient statuary without necessitating worldwide travel. The sheer number of casts within the Ashmolean's collection, and the fact that the collection was deemed representative of extant ancient works, was also perceived as adding to this kind of value, as it facilitated comparisons between many different ancient sculptures:

> *Peter (tutor): The benefits of having the representative works from different periods of sculptural production and across Greco-Roman Antiquity are huge […] They make available instantly in one spot the sculptures that are dispersed across the world's museums in such a way that you can make a comparison of them […] It provides a way to […] present different works from different periods altogether in such a way that it's easy to take a student and show them stylistic differences, show them why sculptures look the way they did in one particular period and how they change.*

Peter's fellow tutor Maria showed that casts did not have to be formally presented to an audience of students for their value to be impactful:

> *Maria (tutor): With the casts you have a chance, especially if they're collected together, to check things together and, you know, also your eye can… get very familiar with aspects of a period's style or a sculptor's style without necessarily noticing it.*

Maria perceived being in the same room as representations of ancient statuary on the scale available at the Ashmolean as being subconsciously educational. She described

spending time in the Cast Gallery as having an osmosis-like effect, where the exposure to styles attributed to so many different ancient artists and eras implicitly can bring about a greater familiarity with the ancient world, even if this is not the explicit aim of a visit.

Regardless of how the casts are perceived to function, the value of their accessibility was predicated on the users' recognition of their accuracy. Had Fabio, Michael, Peter, or Maria perceived the casts as inaccurate, it is highly unlikely that they would have valued the casts' accessibility in the manner expressed above.

However, while the great majority of respondents who discussed accessibility presented the Ashmolean's casts as having this kind of value, other users felt differently:

> *Greg (visitor): Well, I suppose… [casts] are valuable because not everywhere can have the original. So, it gets people to see them. But then because there's limited possibility of coming down here to see them… their value is kind of compromised. Maybe if they were reaching a wider audience, they would be even more valuable than they are now. Yeah, like if they could be in the wider museum, I think that would make them more valuable.*

Here Greg made reference to the fact that most of the collection was only viewable by the public on the Lower Cast Gallery tours. Greg presented casts in general as possessing accessibility value, but noted that their specific display location within the Ashmolean could cause that value to be diminished.

Tertiary value: Reconstruction

I will now detail how casts' accuracy and accessibility imbued them with another source of value, which I call reconstructive value. Casts have reconstructive value in two senses. First, they have the power to reunite lost ancient statue groups in cast form. Second, they are capable of bringing about a reconstruction of a single fragmentary ancient object. I will now discuss each of these in turn.

Reuniting statue groups is sometimes necessary when different ancient objects that originally comprised a single group are not located in the same museum. This is the case with casts **C71** and **C72**. Collectively, these represent an ancient statue group comprised of the mythological figures *Athena and Marsyas** which was displayed in ancient Athens (Fig.4.d):

> *Oscar (volunteer): I'd rather we had the originals here, that would be preferable. But considering we can't have that then it's much better to have copies of the originals […] Yes, it saves us the trouble of going to ten capital cities and different museums. We can see it all here and it's especially valuable when ones like the Athena and Marsyas which are split up can be brought together in the Ashmolean.*

The best-preserved ancient Athena sculpture from the Athenian statue group is exhibited at the Liebieghaus' sculpture museum in Munich and the equivalent Marsyas is displayed at the Vatican Museum. Oscar presented the casts' ability to reunite the Athena and Marsyas as adding to their educational value. The value of this function also seemed apparent to visitors attending the Lower Cast Gallery tours. When I observed volunteers discussing how **C71** and **C72** reunite an ancient statue group, visitor interest seemed especially aroused. I noted many verbal (e.g., responses like "*mmm*" and "*oh yes!*") and non-verbal signs of interest (e.g., nodding, and craning around to gain a closer look). This may well indicate that visitors experienced an increase in their perception of the casts' value as a result of this discussion, as they seemed especially keen to dedicate time to looking closely at these objects.

At the beginning of this section, I outlined two ways in which accuracy could be understood, in terms of both archaeological and ancient historical truth. The particular educational value that casts **C71** and **C72** possess rests on the perception of accuracy associated with ancient historical truth. Visitors and volunteers alike seemed to value the Athena and Marsyas casts for indicating how this original group may have appeared to an ancient audience.

*Figure 4.d Casts **C71** (left), which represents Athena and **C72** (right) which represents Marsyas. 09/05/2019.*

Casts' qualities of accuracy and accessibility also gave rise to another kind of tertiary, reconstructive value. Users valued the casts for facilitating the reconstruction of fragments of single, broken objects in ways that would not be otherwise possible. Due to the circumstances of their excavation or subsequent museum politics, sometimes fragments that originally belonged to the same sculpture come to be displayed in geographically distant institutions. This is the case with the figure of an old fisherman from the site of Aphrodisias, Turkey. The fragments that make up the fisherman were widely scattered across its archaeological discovery site, meaning that they were excavated by different authorities (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 275). Consequently, the fisherman's torso is located in Berlin and his head, legs, and plinth are in Turkey (ibid.). It is only through the casting and reconstruction of the various pieces that one can gain

a sense of the sculpture's appearance.[28] The Ashmolean's cast **H35** represents the reconstructed figure (Fig.4.e).[29] Travis was one of two visitors who made reference to the fisherman cast when asked about the value of the Ashmolean's collection:

> *Travis (visitor): You do learn such a lot [from casts] which you can't if the piece in question… like the head is in Vienna and the torso is in New York and what's left is in the British Museum. But here you can actually take in the whole thing. Like the fisherman upstairs. No, it's great.*

The ability of the cast to bring about a reconstruction clearly imbued the piece with value. However, this is a different kind of value to that discussed above with reference to casts **C71** and **C72**. I showed that those casts were valued for their ability to reconstruct a complete statue group. Conversely, cast **H35** is displayed at the Ashmolean in his incomplete form: his arms, left lower leg and right thigh have not been discovered as part of the Aphrodisias excavations and have not been creatively restored. The goal with this cast is to bring about a reconstruction resting on archaeological accuracy or "truth": replicating exactly what is archaeologically extant.

These layers of educational value offer users a myriad of ways in which to value the casts. The objects can be appreciated as accurate objects, objects which enhance accessibility, and as reconstructed ancient works, or as all three. Yet the key focus at every level in this chain of values is the same: the emphasis is placed on learning about the ancient world.

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[28] The original fisherman torso is on display in Berlin's Altes Museum, to which a plaster cast of the sculpture's head has been attached. A close viewing of the piece reveals the difference in surface quality and texture between the original marble and the plaster cast (Fig.4.f).

[29] This cast is peculiar to the Ashmolean due to the connections of Bert Smith. As well as serving as the Cast Gallery's curator, Smith is the lead excavator at the Aphrodisias site.

*Figure 4.e The Ashmolean's cast **H35**. 09/05/2019.*

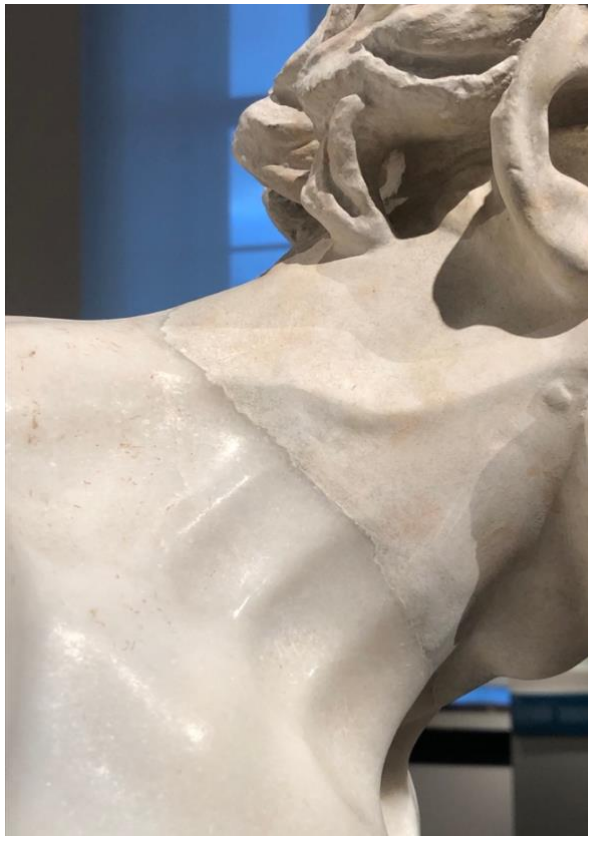

Figure 4.f The seam between the original fisherman's torso and the adjoined plaster cast head at the Altes Museum. 10/01/2020.

Overall, educational values can be considered instrumental in character. This was emphasised by my discussion with visitor Chloe:

> *Chloe (visitor): I feel like the thing that's important with [the casts] is the form and the shape and the image they recreate, and it does capture that […] It captures all the, like, essential parts of the sculpture. It might have slight imperfections like with those lines and all the dirt and the dust but it does still give the image. You know, to someone who is untrained you might not even be able to tell the difference.*

Chloe clearly valued the casts in an educational sense, appreciating the objects' accurate replication of "*the essential parts of the sculpture*", by which she evidently means the ancient sculpture. The unique features of the casts that did not aid her understanding of antiquity, including the flashlines (described simply as "*those lines*") and the "*dirt and the dust*" that had built up on the objects over time, were presented almost as flaws. Any aspect of the casts' own uniqueness was presented as a source of devaluation:

Chloe seemed to perceive them as a distraction that somewhat obscured the objects' true educational purpose. This demonstrates the instrumental nature of these educational values. The casts are presented as functional tools, objects to look *through*, to understand the ancient world.

4.1.2 Historical value

Above, I discussed how users located educational value in the casts' ability to provide a learning experience relating to a very particular era of history: classical antiquity. However, the casts were not only valued for their connection with this ancient realm. Other users valued the casts as objects with their own heritage, entirely divorced from antiquity:

> *Stewart (visitor): I loved realising that [the casts] were souvenirs. That it was like a cultural phenomenon with the Grand Tour. I never understood that before. I didn't realise that they had a particular moment in history.*
>
> *Brooke (volunteer): They're valuable because… they have a history. They explain… why did people start casting things? Well, because they were rediscovering classical statues and they wanted to display them around the world and then it became fashionable in Victorian… in the 1800's. So, there's a whole history there of casts.*

Stewart and Brooke's responses have much in common with what Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson have described as a "historically oriented intellectual response" (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson 1990: 51). When discussing museum practitioners' responses to works of art (which they define very broadly as anything from sculpture to a piece of music), Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson describe historically oriented intellectual responses as those in which participants find an object's historical context to be "an integral part of the work itself" (ibid.). Likewise, for Stewart and Brooke, the casts' defining feature is their historic status, and this value was highly situated in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century context of their creation. The importance of historical situatedness was also emphasised by visitor Bethany.

Bethany had joined the Cast Gallery tour late: she missed the tour's introduction in which the casts were introduced as historical objects in their own right. She only heard the casts being used to tell stories related to antiquity. Consequently, Bethany was initially quite disparaging of the casts during our interview, presenting them as lacking any real kind of value aside from the educational: "*They're not really that valuable… but educationally, yes, absolutely. Really valuable in terms of that*. *Because otherwise you've got to do a lot of travel to see these*." However, later in our interview the conversation naturally turned to the history of the Ashmolean's collection. Upon learning that many of the Museum's casts were products of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, Bethany reconsidered her judgement:

> *Bethany (visitor): Oh! You see, I didn't know that. Now I might look at these things differently. Because… I like the thought that you can… put them in a timeline almost. Like… here's the ancient Egyptians, here's the Tudors, you know, Henry VIII and that [laughs], and then there's the casts, and then there's like… World War One! [laughs] I mean, there's lots of stuff in between that obviously… but I like the thought that I can place them in time. I know when they're from and I can understand them better. I guess now that casts themselves are valuable… because of that.*

Bethany's response again highlighted the importance of specificity: it was her ability to place casts' particular "*moment in history*" (to use Stewart's phrase) in a chronology of other familiar historical events that secured the objects' value. In addition, Bethany's discussion emphasised the power of historical value. *Prima facie*, Bethany saw the casts as somewhat lacking in value in general, aside from their educational function. However, learning of their historic status fundamentally changed her perception of their overall value: their value was greatly augmented by their position in history.

Furthermore, Bethany brought to light a key difference between educational and historical value. Educational value was distinctly pedagogical in nature, in that users directly related it to the acquisition of knowledge. Conversely, while both Bethany and Brooke presented themselves as learning something from the casts, with Brooke seeing them as having the power to "*explain*" historical trends and with Bethany articulating

the importance of being able to "*understand them better*", learning was not at the heart of their valuation of the casts. Instead, the casts' historic status was something that held value in its own right. It was presented as a source of intrinsic interest and satisfaction for users.

The users described above all presented historical value as being associated with objectivity. This was evident in the importance that was placed on the dating of the casts to a very particular point in time. However, for other users, historical value was not something that could be pinpointed on a timeline, but was instead a more generic quality. This became clear when volunteers Lily and Ralph discussed the relative merits of the older and younger casts[30] within the Ashmolean's collection:

> *Lily (volunteer): Perhaps another question is what do we think about... the modern casts? The shiny new ones.*
>
> *Ralph (volunteer): The shiny white ones that have been made with silicone [moulds].*
>
> *Lily: And the ones that can be made with 3D printing going forward. Would I think the same about them as these? I don't know...*
>
> *Ralph: They need to acquire a patina of age before… for me to be excited about them. […] They need to be a bit chipped. They need to have lived a little somehow.*

For Lily and Ralph, the precise historical age of the casts seemed to be less consequential than the fact that the objects simply looked old in some way. Their views contrasted markedly with those of visitor Chloe discussed in section 4.1.1. Instead of viewing the casts' unique features as a source of devaluation, Lily and Ralph suggested that value was in fact accrued by the physical markers of time present on the objects' surfaces.

[30] The age hierarchy that existed between materially older and younger objects in the Cast Gallery was an important and complex issue. It is a matter to which I dedicate a proper discussion in Chapter 7.

At first glance, one might consider Ralph's response to be indicative of what Alois Riegl described as "age value" (Riegl 1982). According to Riegl, age-value is a type of time-imbued value that manifests "in the erosion of surfaces, in their patina, in the wear and tear of buildings and objects" (ibid.: 31-2).[31] Typically, age-value is associated with how people non-cognitively / emotionally experience old things (Appelbaum 2007: 104). Indeed, Ralph's emotions do seem to have been roused by his description of the casts' patina: he spoke of being "*excited*" by the older casts. However, Ralph's discussion of his emotions appears more cognitively founded than the truly non-cognitive responses that will be discussed in section 4.2. In contrast to the users that we will encounter later, Ralph did not seem emotionally awed by the objects during our interview; instead, he cognitively analysed his experience of excitement. For that reason, I still consider the form of value that he described to be chiefly cognitive in nature.

Ralph's response broadly had the same historic values at its heart as Stewart, Brooke, and Bethany above. Each of these users presented the casts as possessing intrinsic value in their own right, derived from their historic status. Where precisely the casts' "history" was located was simply differently in each case: for Stewart, Brooke, and Bethany, historical value was highly situated, while Ralph's form of historic value was a more generic quality, located not in the casts' connection to a particular era but in the signs of physical wear and tear on the objects' surfaces.

Overall, educational value and historical value have commonalities. Both tend to demonstrate an interest in very particular pockets of time: the ancient world and the context of casts' own creation. However, while the former looks *through* casts as instrumentally functional objects that aid an understanding of the ancient world, the latter presents them as objects to look *at*, emphasising their identities as intrinsically valuable objects in their own right. In what follows, one further similarity between educational and historical values will become apparent. Above, I described how

[31] A large body of scholarly literature, drawing on the work of Riegl, also discusses the manifestation of age-value in precisely the physical signifiers (e.g., patina) discussed by Lily and Ralph (Lowenthal 1985: 151; Woodward 2001; Holtorf 2013: 435-7).

educational value is comprised of successive layers of different values, beginning with the primary value of accuracy. I will now show how, instead of being itself composed of multiple layers of value, historical value as a whole acts as a kind of primary value. Two further categories of value take historical value as their basis. I describe these as biographical and historiographical value.

Biographical value

To begin, I provide representative statements from two users who associated casts with biographical value:

> *Lois (volunteer): I mean they're a stage in the life of an artifact really. Like I would have all the stages of the archaeology of the Acropolis recorded instead of clearing it right the way down to get to the bit that everybody was interested in, the level where there was a Pericles going around.*[32] *Each bit had its own value. Likewise, the casts are a stage in the history of an artefact… we should look at them in the same way.*
>
> *Esther (volunteer): Certainly the cast becomes part of something larger. You can't just replace them if they get broken up. If you just make a new one, the time they've been through… it would be missing. You know so I think that there is lots of value there. We talk about the original artworks but there are steps after that and you know I think the cast almost… they're just part of that history. They are just, you know, part of that whole process.*

Lois and Esther's views of the casts have much in common with the concepts of object biography (Foster and Curtis 2016) and object itinerary (Joyce and Gillespie 2015).[33]

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[32] Investigations of the Athenian Acropolis, to which Lois refers, often privilege the site's fifth-century BC archaeology, in particular the building programme attributed to contemporary statesman Pericles. For example, the Acropolis' principal temple, the Parthenon, was converted into a mosque under Ottoman occupation in the fifteenth-century, but this era of its history has not received as much scholarly attention. The Parthenon mosque is said to have occupied "a cultural blind spot" since the nineteenth-century (Key Fowden 2018: 263).

[33] Both of these approaches owe a debt to the work of anthropologist Igor Kopytoff, who argued that an object cannot be fully understood if only one phase in its existence is considered (Kopytoff 1986).

Such approaches[34] are fundamentally concerned with the linear "life" of the object (Holtorf 1998: 23). They do not isolate a single period in an object's life, from its original use or function to its inclusion within a museum collection or display today, as being of sole importance. Instead, the journey that the object has undertaken through time is considered (Joyce 2015: 29). In line with scholarship on the subject (e.g., Foster et al. 2014's discussion of the replication of archaeological objects in nineteenth-century Fife), Lois and Esther presented the casts as being an important and valuable element of object biographies. The volunteers do not present the casts as being any more or less important than the ancient statues that they replicate.

However, the casts are not presented as possessing biographies (or biographical value) of their own. Instead, the biographies to which the casts contribute were those of their ancient referents. Thus, the casts' value in this case appears instrumental in nature. Although Lois and Esther prioritised neither the ancient world nor the context of the casts' own creation, fundamentally their focus was on the biography of the casts' ancient referents and not on creating a biography for the casts themselves.

Finally, I consider biographical value to be built upon historical value. Although not made explicit in my data, the identification of casts' connection to biographical value relies on the implicit recognition of their historical value. If casts were not perceived to have their own place in history, then they would not be able to reflect on the continued life of the ancient objects and consequently, could not be associated with biographical value.

Historiographical value

Casts were not only presented as building the biographies of objects but of scholarly disciplines as a whole:

[34] In what follows, in line with Sandra Dudley, I present object biographies and itineraries as mutually reinforcing concepts. Both are fundamentally based upon the same idea: the importance of seeking the value of each phase of the object's "life" or spatiotemporal journey (Dudley 2017).

> *William (volunteer): I think [casts] have value related to the sociological environment and history that they came from. I think they demonstrate the certain archaeological interests of that period and of that period of museums… like the attitude towards the ancient world. Although they are not ancient themselves.*
>
> *Charlotte (tutor): [Casts] have a secondary value to me as… signs of later engagement with antiquity and distribution of artefacts and attitudes to artefacts and I think for underpinning the story of museums and that kind of thing, but for me it's primarily [valuable] as an archaeological teaching resource, I'd put that above that, but they have both kinds of value.*

Due to their focus on valuing the casts for what they could convey about how antiquity has been studied and interpreted over time, I consider William and Charlotte not to conceptualise the objects' value in the biographical sense outlined above. Instead, I describe their focus as being more historiographical, since historiography is defined as the study of the writing of history (Becker and Synder 2018: 65-6). William and Charlotte presented the casts almost as if they were themselves pieces of archaeological evidence. The casts appeared as artefacts to be analysed, with the goal of understanding how past historians have understood and interpreted antiquity, and how museums' interests had developed over time. While the educational perspective looks *through* casts and the historical perspective looks *at* casts, those valuing them in a biographical and historiographical sense present the casts as objects to look *with*.

I consider both biographical and historiographical value to be built upon historical value in the manner expressed in Fig.4.g. Had William and Charlotte not implicitly viewed the casts as historic products of their own time, the objects would not be capable of fulfilling these historiographical purposes. In addition, like biographical value, casts' links with historiographical value can be considered instrumental in nature. This is because these values are primarily related to a purpose external to the objects, namely 1) understanding the biographies of ancient objects, and 2) mapping disciplinary and museological histories. Thus, those who directly imbue the casts with historical value present the objects as possessing intrinsic value. However, as historical value is

transformed into biographical and historiographical value, the objects' intrinsic value becomes less prominent and instrumental value takes precedence.

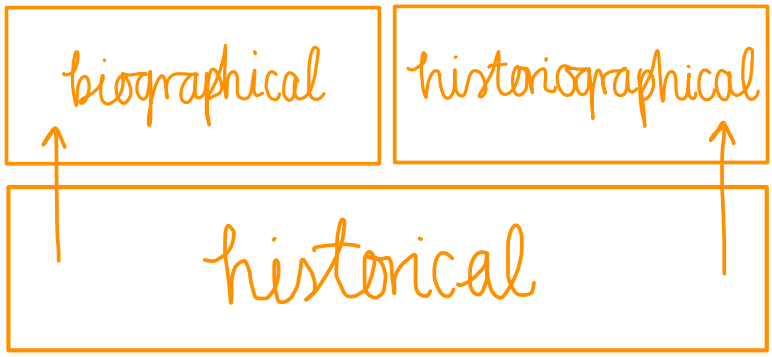

Figure 4.g Visual representation of biographical and historiographical values' dependence on historical value.

4.1.3 Representational value

Finally, I will now consider the very particular cognitive values that casts had for artists who visited to draw the collection. Such users valued the casts for three distinct purposes within their artistic practice, which I broadly refer to as representational values. The objects functioned as 1) representations of real people, 2) representations of classical antiquities, and 3) stimuli for practicing drawing techniques. Each form of this representational value can be further described as instrumental in nature, yet, as I will now show, this instrumental value is negotiated in highly nuanced ways.

Artists Joshua and Xanthe presented the casts as stand-ins for living human subjects:

> *Joshua (artist): Well, I like life drawing, so I like drawing people. And the plaster casts in this gallery… you can get up really close and try different angles. So, you can sit and move around and draw the people and faces from unusual angles or angles that you wouldn't normally be able to see in a normal life drawing session with… you know… a human model [laughs]. I like portraiture and the human… it's a real challenge drawing faces from unusual angles. You have to really understand what's going on.*

> *Xanthe (artist): I mean, I do make certain changes. I sort of agree with the principle that you should try to make things look like a real person. I will sort of stick eyes in and stick in a broken off leg. It's risky because sometimes it doesn't come out looking right. I'm doing my own evil falsification! [laughs]*

Joshua described the value of the casts in very practical terms. For him, the casts functioned in the same manner as human models that one might encounter in a life-drawing class. He also presented the casts as having the additional advantage of flexibility: he could use them to explore new and challenging perspectives for sketching. Meanwhile, Xanthe did not seem to conceptualise the casts as direct stand-ins for human models. She still employed the casts for the same purposes as Joshua, using them to draw "*a real person*". However, she suggested that it was her role as an artist to turn the cast into a real person in her drawing, as opposed to perceiving the cast as a sort of already-living model. Through her statement "*I'm doing my own evil falsification!*", Xanthe presented this act of transforming a cast into a representation of a living human almost as if it were in-keeping with a theme of fabrication or forgery that she had already recognised in the Cast Gallery.[35] However, it was clear that Xanthe made this comment in jest: throughout our interview, she was keen to stress the casts' value as representations of the human form.

In contrast to Joshua and Xanthe, for artist Vanessa, the attraction of drawing the casts lay in that they were not, in her words, "*real people*":

> *Vanessa (artist): I like that they are not real people. I'm looking at them as a study of the classical look... The classical way of representing things. I want to kind of capture that.*

The way in which Vanessa valued the casts has commonalities with the ways in which educational values were described in section 4.1.1: her focus was very much on using the casts as representations of classical antiquity. However, Vanessa's conceptualisation of value cannot be straightforwardly described as educational. This is because learning

[35] Issues arising from the casts' status as copies will be discussed in Chapter 7.

about the ancient world did not seem to be Vanessa's ultimate goal. Instead of acquiring knowledge, she instead wanted to capture a so-called "*classical*" mood or mode of representation in her own artwork. Despite these nuances, the instrumental nature of Vanessa's valuation of the casts was clear. Towards the end of our interview, she flicked through her sketchbook with me, and talked me through some drawings that she had completed on previous visits to the Cast Gallery:

> *Abbey: And on some of them [the drawings] you have some information written on the sides…?*
>
> *Vanessa (artist): It's actually who I was drawing. So, I quite like that. I tend to take down notes of what I'm drawing. And the dates as well, when the piece was dated to.*
>
> *Abbey: Do you ever try anything like the flashlines that are on the surfaces of the casts?*
>
> *Vanessa: No, no. [laughs]*
>
> *Abbey: Is there any particular reason for that?*
>
> *Vanessa: I think I'm more interested in the actual features, I think… the actual subject. Yeah, when you say flashlines, you mean how the plaster's put together? No, I tend not to look at that, I must say. It's not… it's not really what I'm interested in.*

The annotations that Vanessa described all related to the casts' ancient referents. For instance, next to a drawing of cast **B161** (Fig.3.d), she had written "*Augustus, Prima Porta, 20 BC*." In addition to this, like visitor Chloe who I introduced section in 4.1.1, Vanessa was interested in the "*actual features*" or "*actual subject*" of the objects that she was drawing, by which she seemed to mean the features and subject of the casts' ancient referents. Vanessa's reaction to the casts' flashlines was not as dismissive as Chloe's, for she did not describe them as flaws or distractions. Nevertheless, the casts' unique features were still presented as being less significant than the objects' ancient aspects.

Some artists seemed to combine both of the approaches described by Joshua, Xanthe, and Vanessa. For example, Caden seemed to value the casts for their representation of real people, but instead of live models, he viewed the casts as surrogates for real historical figures from classical antiquity:

> *Caden (artist): I think that what I'm doing is actually discovering the individual portrait in the works. So, actually I'm creating two-dimensional portraits from the three-dimensional statue. Pericles, I started by drawing him. And I've done Nero. Next I might take Augustus. It's the historical figures that I want to represent.*

In section 4.1.1, I described how users who educationally valued the casts looked *through* the objects: the focus of their gaze was ancient original statuary. However, Caden seemed to look even further through the casts than this. He looked through both the casts *and* the ancient sculptural image at the historic individual that both represent. Interestingly, he seemed not only to instrumentally value the cast but also the ancient sculptural image.

Meanwhile, for other artists such as Melody and Vanessa, the casts did not seem to act as surrogates to quite the same degree, yet their function was still very practical in nature:

> *Melody (artist): I am quite interested in drawing form and shape. Studying that. Pure line and things like that. I like the lines, the simplicity of line and nothing complicated. Do you know what I mean? Not making an elaborate drawing. Distilling it… getting that pure line.*

> *Dylan (artist): It's just trying to get the proportions right. And then I'm going to spend time getting… I particularly like the women's clothing… with all the folds in the material, you know, rather than the face. I don't … my eye gets drawn more to the material, I think, which is something that I'm interested in trying to develop... showing the light and the dark in my drawing techniques, I guess.*

Neither Melody nor Dylan seemed to view the precise identity or subject matter of the object that they were drawing as being consequential. The casts were not presented as

human models or ancient statues, they merely seemed to provide a vehicle for practicing sketching techniques such as line drawing, understanding proportions, and capturing the play of light and shade across an object's surface. Nevertheless, as with all other types of representational value, these responses were wholly instrumental in nature. Whether they used the casts to access a kind of live model, an ancient historical figure, or as simply a prop for a sketching exercise, all of the artists discussed here valued the casts as a means to an end.

4.1.4 Summary

Overall, I consider the Cast Gallery's cognitive values to exist on something of a spectrum (Fig.4.h). One end of the spectrum is occupied by educational and representational values. Both are instrumental in nature: users discussing these categories of value present the casts primarily as functional tools. Artists valuing the casts in a representational sense described the objects as fulfilling a variety of practical purposes, from being used as stand-ins for live models to providing a subject for practicing sketching techniques. Similarly, those who educationally valued the casts used them to achieve the higher purpose of learning about the ancient world. At the opposite end of the spectrum sits historical value. This type of value is fundamentally intrinsic, as the value is located in casts' status as historic objects in their own right. Such historical value can stem from their links to the particular era of their own creation or their physical signs of aging. I consider biographical and historiographical values to be located in-between these two extremes. I interpret biographical value as existing closer to the middle of the spectrum. This is because although biographical value is fundamentally instrumental in nature, the cast is presented as being of equal importance to its ancient referent for constructing the ancient object's biography. Conversely, I locate historiographical value in closer proximity to educational value. In this case, while the casts' historic status as objects in their own right is implicitly important, this history does not seem to be of equal value to the insight that the objects can provide into how both the study of the ancient world and the history of museums has developed. This more pronounced focus on instrumental factors aligns historiographical value with educational value to a greater extent.

As well as existing along a spectrum which stretches from instrumental to intrinsic, educational, historiographical, biographical, and historical values can also be distinguished by the way in which they conceptualise time. Biographical and historiographical approaches present the casts as existing within a broad temporal framework, which acknowledges antiquity, the context of the casts' own creation, and the present day. By contrast, those who value the casts in historical and educational senses tend to be more fixated on a single time period in isolation, either the ancient world or the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries. Biographical and historiographical values might be described as having an open view of time, with educational and historical values being characterised by their closed, compartmentalised approach.

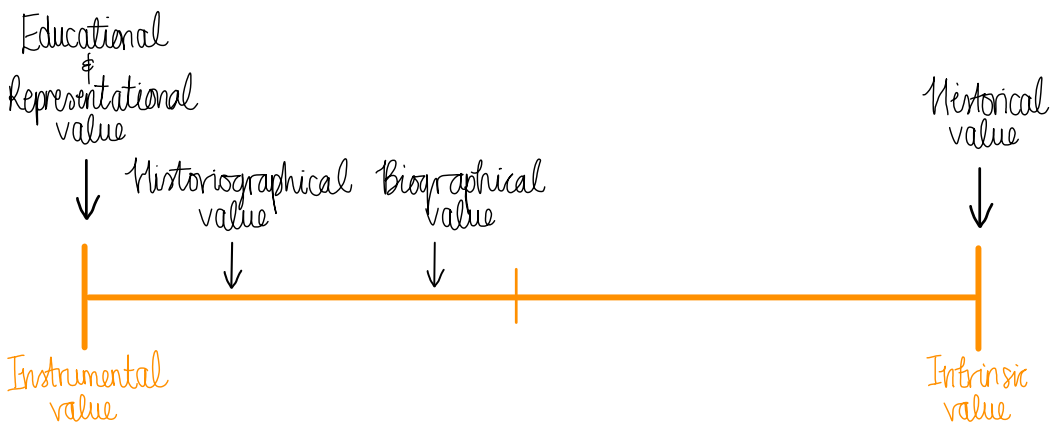

Figure 4.h The spectrum of casts' cognitive values.

To conclude this discussion, I will now describe how, in addition to understanding time in a very different way, educational and biographical/historiographical perspectives also differ in their conceptualisations of the ancient world. To best explain this important distinction, I draw on an archaeological comparison, namely the theories of processual and post-processual archaeology.

Prior to the 1960's/1970's, the interpretation of archaeological objects was dominated by the so-called "culture history" approach (Shanks and Hodder 1995: 3). This approach fundamentally aimed at *describing* cultural differences across space and time.

Processual archaeology was developed in response to this, aiming not just to describe but to *explain* and *interpret* the archaeological record, using methodologies based on objective, scientific principles (ibid.). However, in the 1980's, processual archaeology faced considerable criticism and another new approach, that of post-processual archaeology, was developed (Chippindale 1993: 27).

According to post-processual archaeologists, processualists presented both archaeological objects (and past cultures in general) as being passive (Yoffee and Sherratt 1993: 4). For instance, a processual archaeologist might track a stone tool through successive episodes of flaking and grinding, focusing on the way its shape and function change as it gradually becomes smaller (Gosden and Marshall 1999: 169). In this example, the object itself is given no agency: it is an inert thing that is the recipient of human action. In addition, processual archaeologists are also commonly described as being concerned with objectivity. Inherent in the processual method is the belief that 1) there exists objective "facts" about past peoples, cultures, and objects, and 2) that the archaeologist can discern these so-called facts by taking a scientific reading or interpretation of extant material culture (e.g., Childe 1925: xiv).

Meanwhile, post-processual archaeologists did not present objects as being passive (Hodder 1985: 3), positing that objects are not merely the "stage setting to human action" but are in fact integral to it (Gosden and Marshall 1999: 169). As well as considering objects themselves to be "social agents" (Gell 1998: 7), post-processualists rejected the notion that any objective facts can be discerned about past cultures from the material record (Shanks and Hodder 1995: 5). Instead, they saw every act of archaeological interpretation as being a product of the context in which it is interpreted, impacted by the archaeologist's own cultural norms and paradigms (Hodder 1985: 8).

Those who valued the casts in a biographical and historiographical sense can be described as viewing both the objects (and, by extension, the ancient world) with

something of a post-processual perspective.[36] Such users seemed to view antiquity not as something that can be objectively recovered through material culture but as something that has been constructed over time. In this view, the casts were not merely passive images of the ancient world but actors that have played a role in influencing how antiquity is interpreted. Casts were presented as being part of a historically constructed lens through which the ancient world is viewed. Conversely, those exhibiting educational values demonstrated a somewhat processual view. In this case, the casts were presented as passive representations of ancient forms from which definitive "truths" about antiquity could be extracted. Thus, those valuing the casts in an educational sense might be described as taking an objective view of the ancient world. This contrasts with those exhibiting biographical and historiographical values, who viewed antiquity in a more subjective sense.

Having outlined the cognitive values identified by Cast Gallery users, I will now move on to discussing the non-cognitive values that were in evidence.

[36] The concepts of processual and post-processual archaeology are not direct synonyms for educational and biographical/historiographical values. Processual and post-processual archaeology are very broad theories of culture and have a far wider reach beyond the subset of material culture discussed in this thesis. Although sufficient commonalities do exist to make drawing a comparison with my work useful and interesting, there are other aspects of the theories that simply do not and cannot apply to the specific case of plaster casts. This justifies the tentative nature of the links that I have drawn here.

4.2 Non-cognitive values

In contrast to the cognitive values discussed above, non-cognitive values are less to do with thinking, assessment, and evaluation and more to do with feeling, emotion, and experience. Within this broad category, a wide spectrum of values can be observed. Often, they were not explicitly identified by the interviewees, but were instead evident from their descriptions of their *responses* to the casts. I have subdivided these non-cognitive responses into the following categories: physicality-focused responses, atmospheric responses, bridging responses and rummaging responses. I will now discuss these in turn.

4.2.1 Physicality

The first kind of non-cognitive responses that I observed were related to the form and the physicality of individual objects:

> *Polly (visitor): Like when she [the tour guide] was explaining about the Nike and the... you know, the details on the body and the anatomy and the clothes and the... I just love that. […] Amazing. I loved standing there… [here Polly gesticulated as she searched for words] in front of her… soaking that in.*

Polly was clearly struck by cast **B140a** (Fig.4.i), which represents the *Nike of Samothrace**, and spoke rapturously of its physical form. This was a common response to this cast. I often witnessed tour attendees approaching **B140a** taking sharp intakes of breath, and other users in interviews described the cast as having a certain "*wow-factor*". Volunteer Esther told me: "*how could you not feel wow? She's so big and towering!*". However, it was also notable during our interview that Polly, who was a first-time visitor to the Ashmolean Museum, and many of the other users who discussed similar physicality-focused responses, often struggled to put their experience into words. Again, this is common: other scholars have noted that the very nature of emotional museum encounters defies easy or clear description (Latham 2013: 12). However, artists such as Gabrielle seemed to possess a greater vocabulary for describing the aspects of form that provoked a response in them:

> *Gabrielle (artist): I've done a watercolour of this chappie [gestures to **A91**]. I think it was the most difficult thing I've ever done in my life. If you just *look**

> *at him compared to the kouroi, the kouroi are straight. And if you look at this one, there's just such a subtle change of the plane. You try and draw that… wow. Bloody difficult.*

Cast **A91** represents a nude, male figure reclining on a rock (Fig.4.j), his body twisted in a three-quarter view. Gabrielle drew a comparison between this cast and the "*straight*", purely frontal *kouroi** sculptures, to demonstrate her appreciation for the cast showing the more "*subtle*" modelling. When she described **A91** in this way, there was real emotion in Gabrielle's words that is difficult to convey in a written transcription. As she spoke, she impassionedly gesticulated to the casts that she was referencing, making hand movements that reflected the aspects of form that she was discussing: she gestured straight up and down when discussing the *kouroi*, switching to an undulating movement when discussing cast **A91**. That the physicality of the sculptures was truly impactful for her was beyond doubt.

*Figure 4.i Cast **B140a**, which represents the Nike of Samothrace. 26/05/2021.*

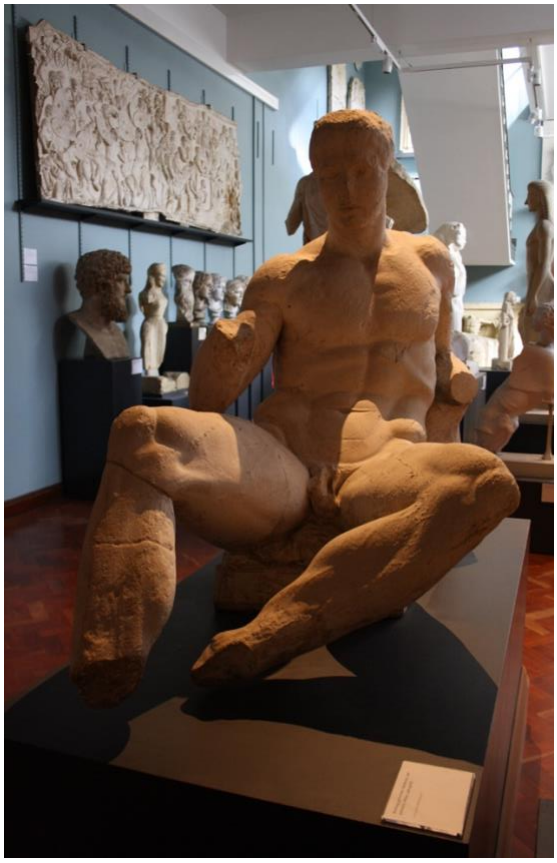

*Figure 4.j Cast **A91**, which represents a nude reclining male. 26/05/2021.*

Cast Gallery curator Bert Smith demonstrated that this kind of response transcended many categories of Cast Gallery user. During our interview, Smith described a past discussion with the Ashmolean's former director Christopher Brown, which took place during the Museum's major 2010-2011 regenerations. Smith and Brown consulted on choosing a cast to occupy the central space in the Museum's new atrium and settled on **A59** (Fig.3.i):

> *Bert Smith (curator): He [Christopher] was looking for something with scale and monumentality that would… have a presence in that wonderful new space, that would be a kind of iconic figure. […] We discussed various ones and he really liked the kind of directionality of this pointing figure. He's looking directly at you. But he's also pointing to the way you need to go in the museum. It's also an incredibly arresting image.*

Once more, the physicality of the casts was recognised as impactful, with the form of **A59** being perceived as sufficiently eye-catching to influence visitor movement. This

quote, along with those from Polly and Gabrielle, also exhibits a marked characteristic of physicality-focused responses to the Ashmolean's casts. These responses do not straightforwardly relate to the object that the respondent saw in front of them. The physical elements described (form, posture, style, and pose) are features of the plaster casts displayed in the Ashmolean, but are also characteristics of their ancient sculptural referents. This begs the question of how precisely to describe the values laden within such physicality-focused encounters. Such responses could be described as indicating intrinsic value, where the features of the cast are being appreciated for their own sake, or the value could be instrumental, and the viewers could be implicitly using the cast to appreciate an ancient form. Perhaps the distinction cannot be made in the case of this kind of response: users did not explicitly differentiate between the cast and the original piece when describing this kind of experience. Instead, neither intrinsic nor instrumental value could be at play, but a kind of amalgamated value, whereby the cast and ancient form are almost indistinct. In the case of such responses, the cast and the antiquity (and, in Bert Smith's statement, the architecture of the building) have united to produce an emotive experience unique to the Ashmolean Museum.

The fact that these physicality-focused responses do not differentiate between cast and ancient statue might also result from the fact that the Cast Gallery's objects mostly take a human form.[37] This is suggested by the consistent use of pronouns such as "*he*", and "*she*" to refer to the casts in the responses discussed above. Such pronouns implicitly personify the objects described, in stark contrast to the more impersonal deictic language that could be used, such as "it".

Both history and mythology are replete with stories of human-form sculptures eliciting great emotion, suggesting that the embodied nature of the Ashmolean's casts is indeed likely to be powerful. In ancient Greek myth, a sculptor named Pygmalion fell in love with a female statue that he had created and, with help from a goddess, was able to kiss

[37] The Ashmolean's collection also includes some casts of animal figures, such as **B60** (a hunting dog) and **B214** (a boar). No user explicitly described such casts as eliciting physicality-focused responses.

her to life (Hersey 2009). A similar tale is preserved from the eighteenth-century: antiquarian Henry Quin was supposedly so struck by the Venus de Medici (a Roman variant of the *Aphrodite of Knidos**) that he would visit the Uffizi Galleries daily to kiss her marble surface. Quin described how the sculpture became "real flesh and blood" in his eyes (Classen 2017: 32).[38] Consequently, sculptures that take an embodied form may well have a propensity for inspiring such fervent emotive reactions that they are rendered almost human. This could suggest that Cast Gallery users too see neither a cast nor an ancient sculpture in particular in front of them during physicality-focused encounters: they are perhaps connecting to the very human form of the objects instead.

4.2.2 Atmospheric

While the users discussed above responded to the particular physicality of individual casts in front of them, other users seemed struck by the cumulative impact of the cast collection as a whole. Such users exhibited what I call atmospheric responses. I will now show how the Cast Gallery's emotive atmosphere was created by two factors: first, the sheer number of casts present in the space, and second, the Gallery's low lighting.

That the quantity of casts was impactful became evident from volunteer Esther:

> *Esther (volunteer): Downstairs in the Cast Gallery just blows my mind every time because you could never have the originals in a setting like this ever. And it is a sort of madness that you can have all of these casts… these artworks, they're incredible… just like crammed down there and it creates such a special atmosphere. I think that yeah, it's hugely exciting. They're really, really cool.*

Esther not only highlighted the emotive impact of the Lower Cast Gallery's special, crowded atmosphere but also made an interesting comparison between the casts and

[38] Touch was a key factor in these encounters. This tactile experience was not presented as necessary by my respondents for the casts to endow a physicality-focused response. Artist Barbara commented: "*I do visually touch them anyway*."

ancient sculptures. She noted that ancient statuary is very unlikely to be displayed in crowded settings such as the Lower Cast Gallery: a great deal of space is usually left around originals to allow them to be seen in the round and reduce the risk of any damage from pieces knocking into each other, or from visitors accidentally getting too close. Contrastingly, the Lower Cast Gallery is densely packed with objects. Esther implied that this crowded display of casts made these objects more emotionally stimulating than typical displays of ancient pieces. In section 4.1.1, those who subscribed to educational values tended to compare casts negatively with ancient original sculptures,[39] whereas Esther presents the idea that the casts offer more possibilities than originals. Thus, in the case of atmospheric responses, the casts are presented as possessing greater value in general than their original referents.

Esther was by no means the only respondent who demonstrated atmospheric appreciation prompted by the casts' number. When observing tours, I noted that one particularly enthusiastic visitor exclaimed: "*it's like a forest!*" when descending the stairs to the Lower Cast Gallery. However, other atmospheric factors were just as impactful in producing an emotive response:

> *Susan (visitor): I think there's an element of the uncanny about all these figures. I imagine on your own at night, it could be quite creepy down here.*
>
> *Brian (visitor): I like them and I think there's something spooky about them as well. It's like a plaster party of heroes or villains or something down here, isn't it?*

Through their mentions of "*all these figures*" and the collective term "*plaster party*", Susan and Brian both suggested that it was the particular crowded nature of the space that prompted their responses, but another notable feature of their discussions was their allusion to the Gallery's "*creepy*" and "*spooky*" ambience. Although it was not something explicitly identified by any of my respondents, this is likely to be a reference

[39] This was most notable in Oscar's quote in section 4.1.1, when he described a museum having ancient sculptures on display as "*preferable*".

to the low light levels in the Lower Cast Gallery (Fig.4.k). The Gallery is lit by spotlights which are unsystematically positioned, illuminating some of the objects' surfaces more than others and casting deep shadows. Since museum lighting is well-known to impact upon emotive experiences (Kottasz 2006: 114; Pallasmaa 2014: 243), it seems reasonable to suggest that this factor is likely to have influenced Susan and Brian's non-cognitive responses.

Figure 4.k Atmospheric light conditions of the Lower Cast Gallery. 26/05/2021.

I consider these atmospheric responses to indicate intrinsic value. The emphasis placed on the unique viewing conditions that their castness facilitates suggests that the objects are valued for their own sake.

4.2.3 Bridging

I now introduce another form of emotional engagement exhibited by my respondents, which I call "bridging" responses. Such a response was exemplified by volunteer Brooke:

> *Brooke (volunteer): I think it's absolutely fascinating. I just love the incredible optimism and enthusiasm of all these people in the 1800's that they were actually going to copy Trajan's Column. Can you imagine just sitting there and thinking "oh I think we'll just take a plaster cast of Trajan's Column"?! The mad idea. And I like trying to convey that to people.*

For Brooke, casts **A150-1**, which reproduce scenes from *Trajan's Column**, sparked a transcendental response: she imagined herself almost as if she were a nineteenth-century plaster caster, about to undertake the monumental task of casting the expansive ancient column. She seemed to experience viscerally the mood of the caster's workshop, namely its "*optimism and enthusiasm*". Brooke's response might be described as somewhat cognitively informed: without her knowledge of casts' unique histories, it is unlikely that she would have connected to this particular era. However, the evident emotion in her response means that I still classify it as non-cognitive.

Many terms in existing scholarship might be employed to describe this kind of Cast Gallery encounter, but none are entirely satisfactory. First, Brooke's response has much in common with Cameron and Gatewood's description of the "numinous experience", which they describe as a visceral response that enables a viewer to feel a personal connection with times or persons past (Cameron and Gatewood 2000: 110). However, numinous experiences are more multifaceted than suggested by this initial description. They are comprised of four key "themes" (Latham 2014: 552), many of which were not exhibited by Cast Gallery users. For instance, users did not describe the requisite spatial/bodily engagement: e.g., becoming numbed or tingly, or having butterflies (Latham 2013:10). One might also consider Brooke's statement to have commonalities with Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson's description of "communicative" responses to museum objects (Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson 1990: 62). Such responses are defined as those in which a respondent pictures themselves in the workshop of the artist, or

living in their historical or cultural time-period (Villeneuve 1993: 121). However, I conceive of the responses of Cast Gallery users as being distinct from these communicative experiences, thus requiring their own name of bridging responses. This is because, although Brooke exhibited a communicative response as described by Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, using casts **A150-1** as a metaphorical bridge to communicate with the era of the casts' own creation, other users used the casts as a bridge to other historical contexts, namely classical antiquity.

Visitor Connor, for example, experienced a bridging response to cast **C172**, which reproduces the *Aphrodite of Knidos** (Fig.4.l). This response saw him connect not to the period of the cast's creation but with the workshop of Praxiteles, the fourth-century BC sculptor who produced the ancient original. Praxiteles allegedly used his mistress, a courtesan named Phryne, as a model when sculpting the famous Aphrodite (Havelock 1995:9) and it was with her story that Connor seemed particularly struck:

> *Connor (visitor): It was very moving. A very moving moment to be there and to feel… to imagine the way that she and the sculptor would have been together in the studio. Well, with the real one, you know. There are lots and lots of stories about her, mostly written by men, mostly some of them slightly off colour, as you probably know. And it really is interesting to see actually how the sculpture depicted her as being sublimely beyond us, beyond our grasp. Actually. I guess that was a warning to me to be very careful not to bring her too much into more problems if I were to write about her.*

Connor imagined himself almost as a fly on the wall in Praxiteles' studio, gaining a privileged insight into the relationship between the sculptor and his muse. This demonstrates the casts' ability to build multiple transcendental bridges: the same cast might offer the opportunity to metaphorically travel to many periods of time.

The values that are implied by these two distinct kinds of bridging response are highly divergent. In the first case, where Brooke was drawn into the era of the casts' creation, the values expressed can be described as intrinsic, as it was the casts' own historic qualities and connections that were impactful. Conversely, Connor seemed to implicitly

value the cast in an instrumental sense. In his case, the cast functioned merely as a representation of antiquity, an unacknowledged surrogate that facilitated a feeling of connection to the ancient world.

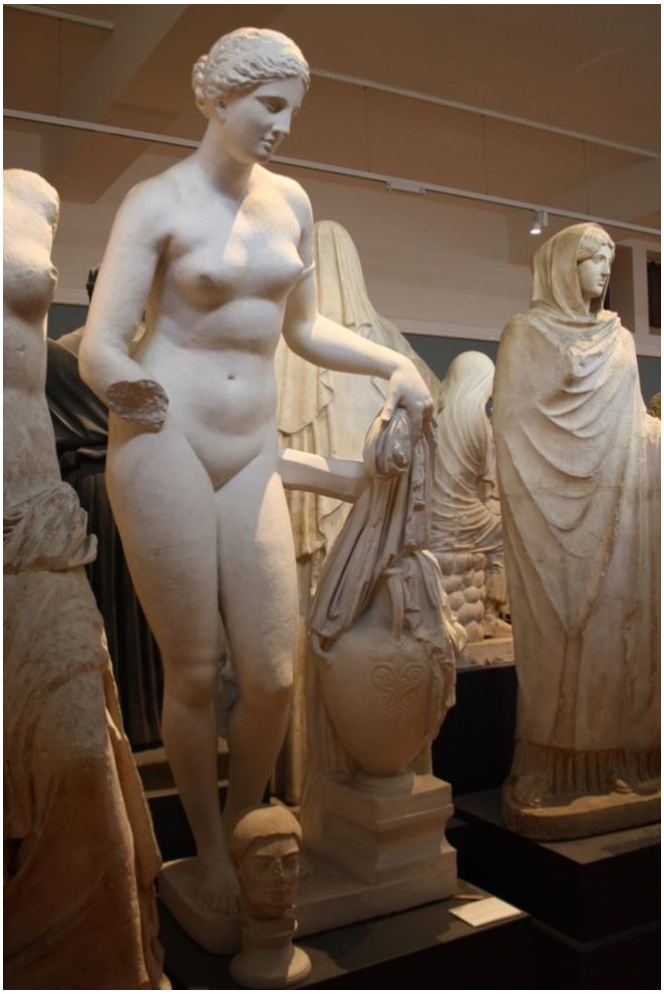

*Figure 4.l Cast **C172**, a cast of a composite Roman copy of the Aphrodite of Knidos. 07/10/2020.*

4.2.4 Rummaging

Thus far, I have described how physicality-focused and bridging responses are primarily prompted by encounters with individual objects, while atmospheric responses are triggered by the impact of the collection as a whole. The final kind of non-cognitive response to casts combines aspects of each. In this case, both individual objects and the overall atmosphere of the Cast Gallery space are impactful. I call this a "rummaging" experience. A useful starting point for considering this kind of response was provided by the following exchange between married couple Travis and Rose:

> *Travis (visitor): The stories that the tour guide recounted, the Marsyas and Athena, were great. I've never thought about those two pieces... I'm familiar with both of those pieces but I had never learned about them as a group, so that was a bonus.*
>
> *Rose (visitor): Yes, that is interesting but it's the conglomeration of bits and pieces that's so fascinating. It's a bit like wandering into a junk shop, treats in every corner!*

Travis identified cognitive, educational values for the casts: the value that he derived from his time in the Cast Gallery seemed to stem primarily from increasing his knowledge of ancient statue groups, and particularly that of Athena and Marsyas discussed in section 4.1.1. Conversely, while Rose did not dispute the educational values identified by her husband, the value of her visit to the Cast Gallery was located in the atmospheric qualities of the Lower Cast Gallery. I was intrigued by Rose's description of the Gallery as being "*like a junk shop*". Although this could be interpreted as a pejorative statement, as junk shops are often associated with discarded items of little value, Rose did not seem to be devaluing the casts in her assessment. Her description of the Gallery as having "*treats in every corner*" evoked the sense of rummaging through items in a thrift store, conjuring up a feeling of excitement at the latent potential that these spaces have for enabling unexpected encounters with delightful or surprising items. Another visitor, Susan, exhibited a similar response:

> *Susan (visitor): [The Lower Cast Gallery] gives a really cool effect. Just sort of looking through at all these sculptures. You look round and there's a marvellous face… beautiful clothes… and it's just extraordinary. Like an experience. What is that thing over there [points to **A105**] with something on her head?*

Susan identified a special atmosphere or "*cool effect*" in the Lower Cast Gallery and described a process of visually rummaging through the sculptures, occasionally stopping to hone in on the physical features of individual pieces that piqued her interest, such **A105** (Fig.4.m). Although seated for the interview, she turned her head across the Gallery and gestured around while mentioning all of the "*marvellous*" faces and

clothing. The rummaging process seemed to generate enthusiasm and excitement in users exhibiting it.

*Figure 4.m Cast **A105**, which represents a caryatid (a pillar sculpted into the form of a female figure). On her head rests a column capital. 26/05/2021.*

Such experiences have commonalities with Woodall's work on rummaging as a form of imaginative engagement with museum collections (Woodall 2015). Woodall describes how Manchester Art Gallery invited students from the city's School of Art to physically rummage through their Mary Greg collection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century domestic objects in order to "inspire new creative work" (ibid.: 136). Very much like Susan above, Woodall described the rummaging students as adopting a "scattergun" approach (ibid.: 136), and that their experiences were "inspired purely by curiosity"

(ibid.: 139) and not any explicit cognitive goals.[40] Additionally, as with both Susan and Rose, Woodall's rummaging experiences were enhanced by the atmospheric conditions of the space in which it occurred (ibid.:138). The key difference between Woodall's rummaging and that discussed here is the tactility of Woodall's experience: the students that she described were able to physically touch and sort through objects from the Mary Greg collection, whereas users of the Cast Gallery experienced the casts purely visually. Nevertheless, Woodall's broad definition of rummaging as "museums opening up their collections and allowing for the unknown, the serendipitous and the unexpected to take place" (ibid.: 133) is still a fitting way to describe this similar experience in the Cast Gallery, where users find value in metaphorically combing through the different works that are not normally available for public viewing. This provides an interesting counterpoint to Greg's statement in section 4.1.1. Greg, who valued the casts in an educational sense, found the casts' value to be limited by the fact that most are not on public display. However, with rummaging responses, value seems to instead be enhanced by the clandestine nature of the Lower Cast Gallery experience.

One further difference between my work and that of Woodall is the categories of user for whom this rummaging experience is thought to contribute value. Woodall presented rummaging as being of particular value to higher education students (ibid.: 139) for the reason that it "allows an equality of access and interpretation not often paralleled in usual curator-visitor relationships" (Woodall et al. 2011: 43). Conversely, my data showed that those exhibiting rummaging experiences overwhelmingly tended to be visitors. No students, tutors, or curators described an encounter of this nature. This indicates that for the Cast Gallery, a different range of categories of user might be considered to find value in rummaging.

To ascertain whether this rummaging is intrinsic or instrumental in nature, I compare my visitors' experiences to passages from George Orwell's short essay 'Just Junk – But

[40] Increased knowledge of the collection and the development of professional skills did result from the rummaging experiences that Woodall describes, but these were incidental and were not the overall aim of any student's visit to the collection (Woodall 2015: 144).

Who Could Resist It?', published in 1946. The essay takes as its focus Orwell's own frequentation of London's junk shops. He described how the shops' "finest treasures are never discoverable at first glimpse", and how sorting through a pile of items is necessary. On the final page, he concluded:

> *But the attraction of the junk shop does not lie solely in the bargains you pick up. […] Its appeal is to the jackdaw inside all of us, the instinct that makes a child hoard copper nails, clock springs, and the glass marbles out of lemonade bottles. To get pleasure out of a junk shop you are not obliged to buy anything, nor even to want to buy anything.*[41]

The point made is that the pleasure is not in the purchase or possession of an item but in the search and the experience. Likewise, rummaging in the Cast Gallery is not about acquiring or possessing greater knowledge by the end of the visit. Instead, the focus is on the sheer pleasure of visually rummaging through the different works on display. With this kind of rummaging response, intrinsic values abound. Those who rummage respond intrinsically to the objects in front of them, not using them for any other purpose than truly experiencing and enjoying what they see.

4.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, one can observe two main types of value in the Ashmolean Museum's Cast Gallery. These are cognitive values, which tended to be those that users explicitly identified through their own analysis, and non-cognitive values, which tended to be those that the user experienced and implied through their statements but did not explicitly describe as "values" in their own words. I have demonstrated how the broad category of cognitive value can be further broken down into educational, historical, biographical, historiographical, and representational values, while non-cognitive value can be subdivided into physicality-focused, atmospheric, bridging, and rummaging responses.

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[41] https://www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-foundation/orwell/essays-and-other-works/just-junk-but-who-could-resist-it/ Accessed 29/06/2021.

Many of the categories of value evident from this chapter echo those described in Chapter 2. My research shows that Cast Gallery users recognised the traditional, educational value of casts described in section 2.1. Through their discussion of historical, biographical, and historiographical values, Cast Gallery users also demonstrated an appreciation of the same types of values that the recent "replication turn" in scholarship has attributed to the objects, as outlined in section 2.4. Although these categories of value are broadly comparable, my analysis nevertheless contributes useful nuance to their understanding. It achieves this by demonstrating how these values, particularly those of a cognitive nature, are constructed by users. I showed that cognitive values tend to be comprised of superimposed layers of value: it was necessary for users to (either implicitly or explicitly) recognise one form of value before others could be realised. For example, I showed in section 4.1.1 that educational values rest on the primary value of accuracy, and in section 4.1.2 I demonstrated that the recognition of historical value was inherently necessary for users to construct biographical or historiographical value with the casts.

In addition to this, I showed in section 4.2 that casts are also capable of inspiring a number of non-cognitive, experiential responses. Whether or not reproductions in general are theoretically capable of rousing an emotive response is a question that has been much debated in scholarship.[42] My research demonstrates the utility of using visitor studies methods to address such questions. It also highlights the necessity of discussing "reproductions" not as a general group of objects that may or may not evoke emotional effects. Instead, it shows the need to consider the propensity that specific types of reproduction have for creating unique responses. For instance, in the case of physicality-focused responses, users' emotive encounters were sparked by the casts'

[42] Some have argued that no matter how "successful" a copy might be, it will never be able to evoke an experiential response in a viewer (Panofsky 2010: 332-3), and even those who assert the value of reproductions still often deny that they have such emotive qualities, preferring to focus on their documentary value (e.g. Jamieson and Gwynther 2011:50). Conversely, others argue that originals and reproductions are equally capable of producing an emotional response (Grasset 1998: 274).

particular human form. In the case of atmospheric responses, users also directly responded to the castness of the objects.

My analysis also allows useful conclusions to be drawn about how emotive experiences are constructed. I showed that although many non-cognitive values had qualities in common (such as bridging responses, which were both object-centred in the same way as physicality-focused responses and wider looking in the same way as atmospheric responses), they did not appear as co-dependent as cognitive values. Therefore, while cognitive values required significantly more construction through the process of thought and analysis, non-cognitive values can be described as more fluid and immediate in nature.

Placing each of the sub-categories of value into a Venn diagram (Fig.4.n) allows further conclusions to be drawn about the intrinsic vs instrumental nature of value in the Cast Gallery. Fig.4.n shows that cognitive values tend to be instrumental in nature, while many non-cognitive values are intrinsic. I also note that instrumental and intrinsic are not the mutually exclusive categories that my initial definition in Chapter 1 suggested. Physicality-focused responses combined inextricable elements of both.

However, in terms of frequency, non-cognitive responses were in the minority. The most commonly observed of all categories of value was educational: it was discussed by 90% of my respondents. This contrasts to the one third of respondents who described non-cognitively experienced values of any kind. This begs the question of why educational value is so prevalent in the Cast Gallery. I explore this in Chapter 5.

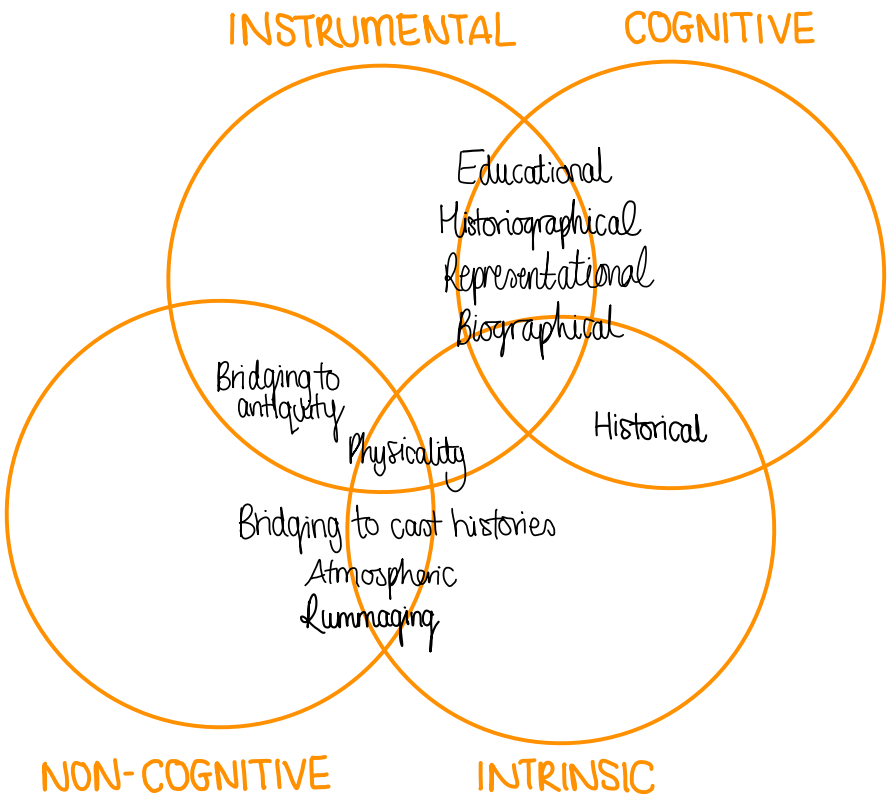

Figure 4.n Venn diagram showing the intersections between cognitive, non-cognitive, intrinsic, and instrumental values in the Cast Gallery.

Chapter 5 Explaining the Educational

In Chapter 4, I introduced the categories of value identified by Cast Gallery users, showing that educational value was observed with greater frequency than non-cognitive values. In this chapter, I address my second research question by outlining the reasons behind this. My approach is informed by the work of Eilean Hooper-Greenhill. Hooper-Greenhill describes two key factors that influence the meanings made by visitors in a museum: first, the "framework" provided by the museum, which stimulates users' experiences (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 19), and second, users' individual interests, agendas, patterns of ideas, knowledge, and skills, all of which shape their interpretations and understandings (ibid.: 11). I therefore begin by considering the framework provided by the Ashmolean Museum for the interpretation of the casts (5.1), which I will show is oriented toward viewing casts as surrogates for ancient sculptures on macro, meso, and micro scales. I will then discuss the significance of users' own personal visit agendas, which comprise their motivation, strategies, and level of focus (5.2). Ultimately, I will conclude that the interaction of users' visit agendas with the museum framework is most consequential for encouraging the educational valuing of the casts (5.3).

5.1 Museum framework

I will first consider the impact of the Museum's interpretive framework on Cast Gallery users. This discussion will be structured in a way that mimics Ashmolean users' physical journeys through the building: I will begin by looking at the framework on a macro scale, considering how the position of the Gallery within the global layout of the Ashmolean Museum might shape users' values and perceptions. I will then zoom in, considering the Gallery on a meso scale, discussing how the way in which the casts are laid out within the Cast Gallery itself impacts interpretation. Finally, I will analyse the Gallery's micro scale aspects by considering its written interpretive text. I will also examine the characteristics of the verbal communication used in the space. I will show that the Museum as a whole encourages users to take an instrumental, educational reading of the casts.

5.1.1 Macro

The location of the Cast Gallery within the Ashmolean Museum as a whole encourages users to value the casts instrumentally as surrogates for ancient objects. The Museum is organised in a broadly chronological framework over five floors of exhibition spaces. Level -1, named 'Exploring the Past', acts like a meta-museum: visitors learn about the origins of the Ashmolean as an institution and about the means by which they can access the past during their visit, e.g., through written texts, coins, and textiles. Following this, as the visitor moves up the floors of the Museum, they journey not just through space but through time. They begin in the 'Ancient World' of the Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, and Etruscans on Level G before visiting medieval / early modern Mediterranean and Asia through the 'Asian Crossroads' galleries on Level 1. Subsequently, on Level 2 they experience art from across Europe and Asia from AD 800 to 1850 as part of the 'West Meets East' displays. Their visit culminates in the 'European Art' galleries on Level 3, which covers the nineteenth-century to today. Within this overall layout, the Cast Gallery is part of a suite of display spaces on Level G, which have an exclusive focus on antiquity (Fig.5.a).

Aegean World **20**
Ancient Cyprus **18**
Ancient Egypt and Sudan **22-27**
Ancient Near East **19**
Cast Gallery **14**
China to AD 800 **10**
Chinese Paintings **11**
European Prehistory **17**
Greek and Roman Sculpture **21**
The Greek World **16**
India to AD 600 **12**
Italy Before Rome **15**
Rome **13**

Figure 5.a Plan of the Ashmolean Museum's Ground Floor.

The Cast Gallery is well embedded in these ancient world focused spaces. It is located in Room 14, at the very rear of the Museum. In order to access the Cast Gallery from the entrance, one cannot avoid travelling through spaces dedicated to the display of antiquity. For instance, if a user takes the recommended one-way route around the Museum put in place due to COVID-19 restrictions in August 2020 (see the red arrow in Fig.5.b) they will have visited five spaces focused on the ancient world prior to entering the Cast Gallery. Even when users follow the most direct route to the Cast Gallery, via the least number of doors (see the blue arrow in Fig.5.b), they still pass through three ancient world focused spaces, many of which feature pieces of original ancient sculpture. That a user's journey through successive museum spaces can influence their expectations of what is to come is established by Marshall, who demonstrates that the transition from small anterooms in the British Museum to the far larger gallery containing the Parthenon marbles "concomitantly raises the visitor's expectations of the importance of the giant room that they are entering" (Marshall 2012: 44). Consequently, an Ashmolean Museum user might, consciously or otherwise, expect to see a continuation of displays focused on antiquity in the Cast Gallery, given that they have moved through a series of spaces dedicated to the ancient world before entering the space. Thus, the Cast Gallery's position within the global museum layout may well encourage an instrumental valuing of the casts.[43]

[43] It must be noted that the location of the Cast Gallery within a wider network of antiquity-focused rooms is not an intentional curatorial choice. It results from the architectural development of the Ashmolean Museum. When the satellite building that forms the Cast Gallery space was connected with the museum proper in 2010-2011, access was granted from the main premises via Level G, which was likely a practical rather than an interpretive decision. However, regardless of the intent behind the Cast Gallery's position

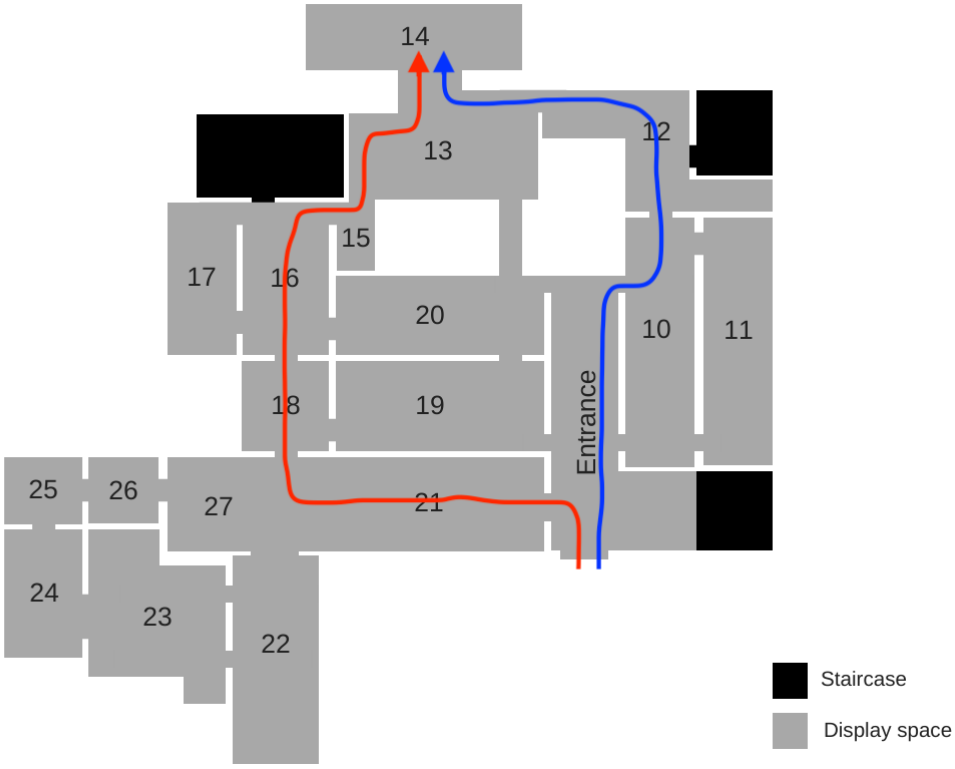

Figure 5.b Plan of the Ashmolean Museum's Ground Floor, indicating two potential pathways that a user could take to reach the Cast Gallery.

5.1.2 Meso

Having explained how the global layout of the Ashmolean might influence the values that users attribute to casts, I will now narrow my focus, considering the ways in which casts are implicitly presented as stand-ins for ancient pieces through their physical organisation in the Cast Gallery space. I also draw, where appropriate, on comparative examples from the casts' published catalogue.

Within the Cast Gallery, the casts are displayed in thematic groupings. The same thematic groupings are evident throughout the wider Museum: they also motivate the display of particular casts in the Museum's entrance. I will first present an analysis of the casts that occupy the entrance, identifying the two core themes that influence their

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in the overall layout of the Ashmolean, users approaching the Cast Gallery are likely to anticipate seeing objects from the ancient world in this space.

display in this space: the setting and genre of their ancient original referents. I will then demonstrate how multiple different ancient settings and genres likewise dominate the physical organisation of the casts within the Gallery itself.

The casts from the Ashmolean's entrance have already been introduced: a selection of casts which recreate the frieze from the *Temple of Apollo at Bassae** occupy the Grand Staircase (Fig.3.f),[44] and casts **B4** (a *kouros** figure thought to represent *Biton**) and **A59** (which represents the figure of Apollo from the pediment of the *Temple of Zeus at Olympia**) stand in the atrium (Fig.3.i). All of these casts are linked by an Apollonian theme, namely their ancient originals are all connected in some way with the Greek god of music, Apollo. Cast **A59** represents Apollo himself, so is an obvious candidate for inclusion,[45] but the justification for displaying the frieze casts and **B4** in this space highlights the two key themes around which the Cast Gallery is also organised: ancient setting and ancient statue genre.

Both the frieze casts and **B4** are linked to the Apollonian theme through the context in which their original referent was found. The frieze reproduces scenes from Temple of Apollo at Bassae. Meanwhile, the original object on which **B4** was based was discovered at the *Temple of Apollo at Delphi**. Both settings have a clear Apollonian link. **B4** is additionally relevant to this space due to its genre: the kouros has been linked with Apollo since the first archaeological discovery of the type. Ancient poetic descriptions of Apollo, in which the god is presented as a youthful man with long hair and an athletic figure, correspond to the form of the kouros sculpture (Spivey 2013: 42). This, combined with the fact that very many kouroi were found in sanctuaries dedicated to Apollo, meant that kouros sculptures were originally believed to represent Apollo himself (Boardman 1993: 22). Today, kouroi are no longer thought to depict the god (ibid.), but their history of being linked with Apollo means that cast **B4** may also be considered

[44] These casts do not have a catalogue number as they are not accessioned within the Museum's collections.
[45] As well as being appropriate on account of its representation of Apollo, cast A59 was also chosen to occupy this space due to its physicality, as discussed in section 4.2.1.

relevant to the overall theme of the Ashmolean's entrance due to the genre of its ancient statue type. Thus, the display of these particular casts within the Ashmolean's entrance is motivated by two thematic factors: first due to their original's setting and second through their ancient statue's genre. These themes also dictate the ways in which casts are organised in the Cast Gallery space and in the Ashmolean's cast catalogue.

Within the main Cast Gallery, ancient setting and statue genre dictate the objects' organisation. Casts of objects from sanctuaries, cemeteries, public spaces, and Roman villas are displayed together, as are casts of sculptures that represent athletes and those that reproduce examples of Roman portraiture (Fig.5.c). Along the same vein, within the Ashmolean's cast catalogue, ancient setting and genre also determine the ways in which casts are classified. The catalogue organises the casts using the following ancient settings and genres as headings: 'architectural sculpture', 'Greek statuary and Roman portraits', 'Roman statuary in Classical style', 'funerary and votive reliefs', and 'smaller bronzes'.[46]

[46] The organisation of the Ashmolean's catalogue has historic roots: it broadly employs the same organisation established by Professor John D. Beazley's 1940's catalogue of the collection (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 3-5).

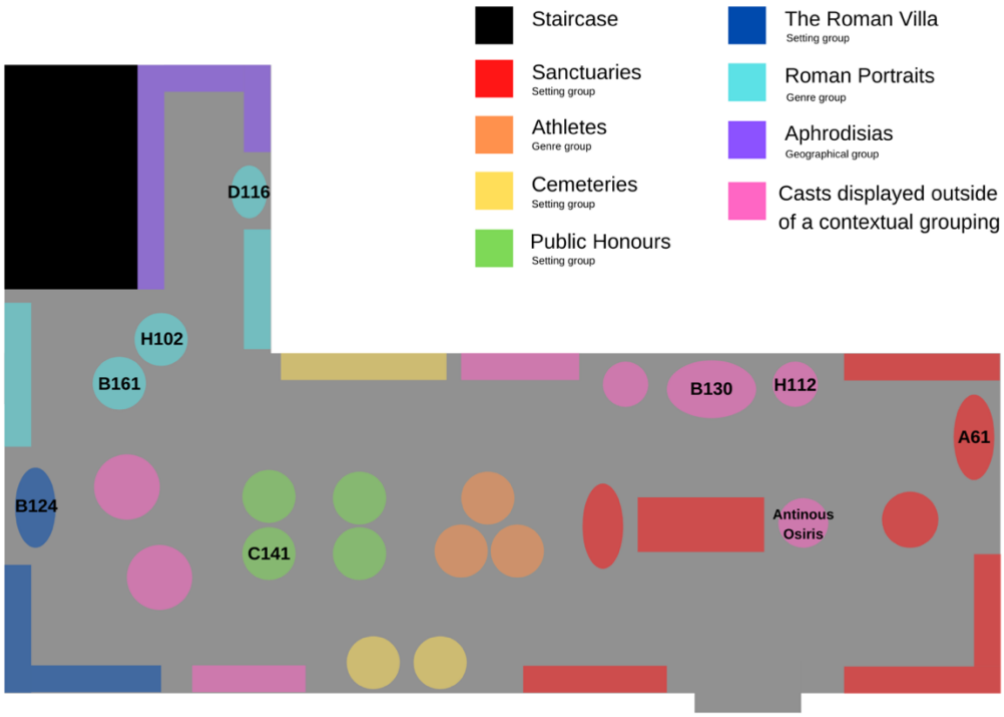


Figure 5.c Plan of the Cast Gallery (not to scale) demonstrating the groupings of objects within the space. The location of individual casts discussed within this chapter are indicated by their accession numbers.

The thematic groupings of casts within the Gallery are reinforced by seven section labels. These section labels consist of a large wall panel positioned adjacent to the relevant group of casts (Figs.5.d-e). The text of these labels reinforces the focus on antiquity by working to contextualise ancient sculptures. Casts are not explicitly discussed: the labels provide an introduction to the spaces in which the original sculptures would have been found, and the social, political, religious, and ideological significance of the featured settings and statue types.

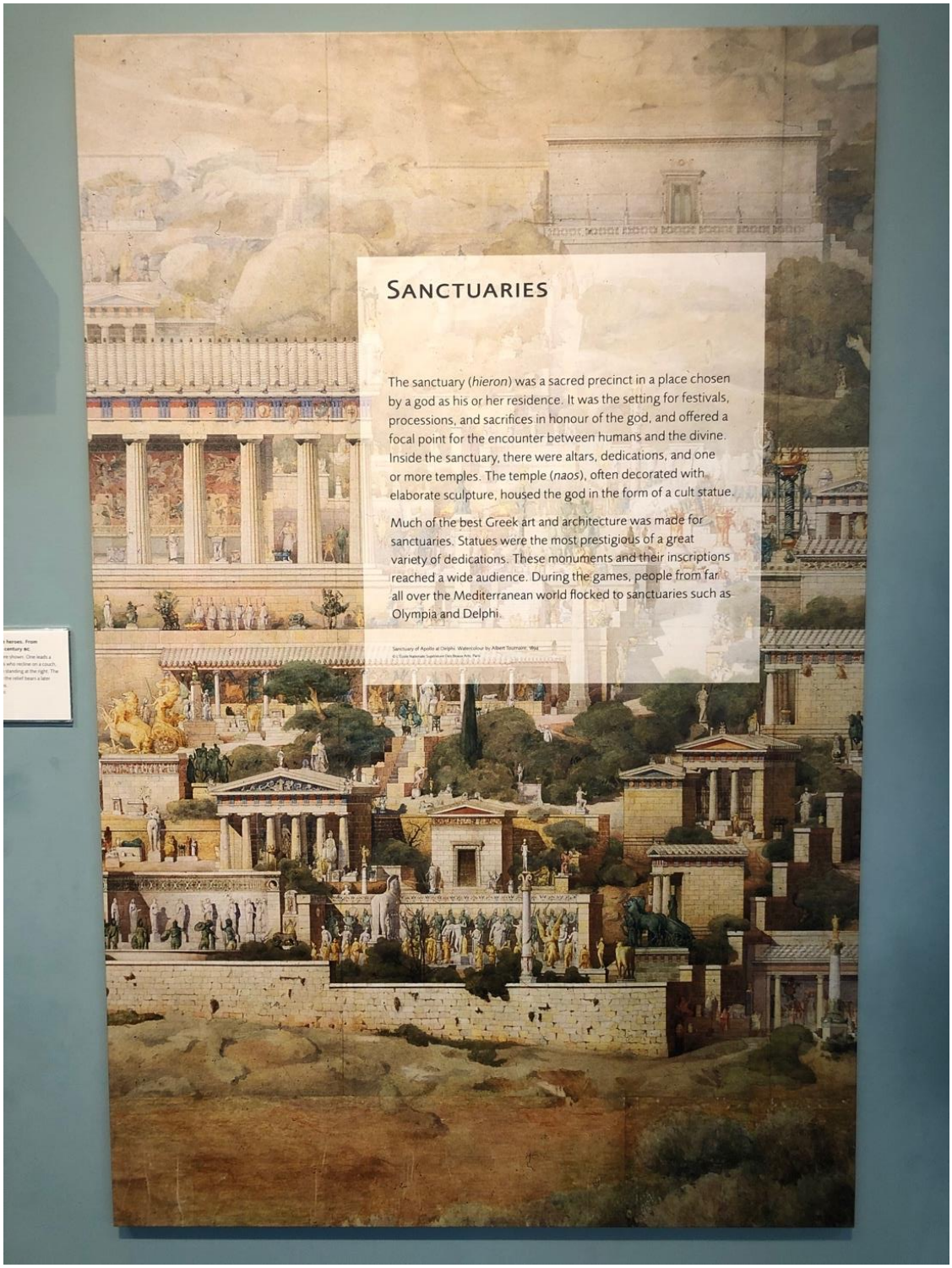


Figure 5.d Section label for the Sanctuaries section of the Cast Gallery. 26/06/2021.

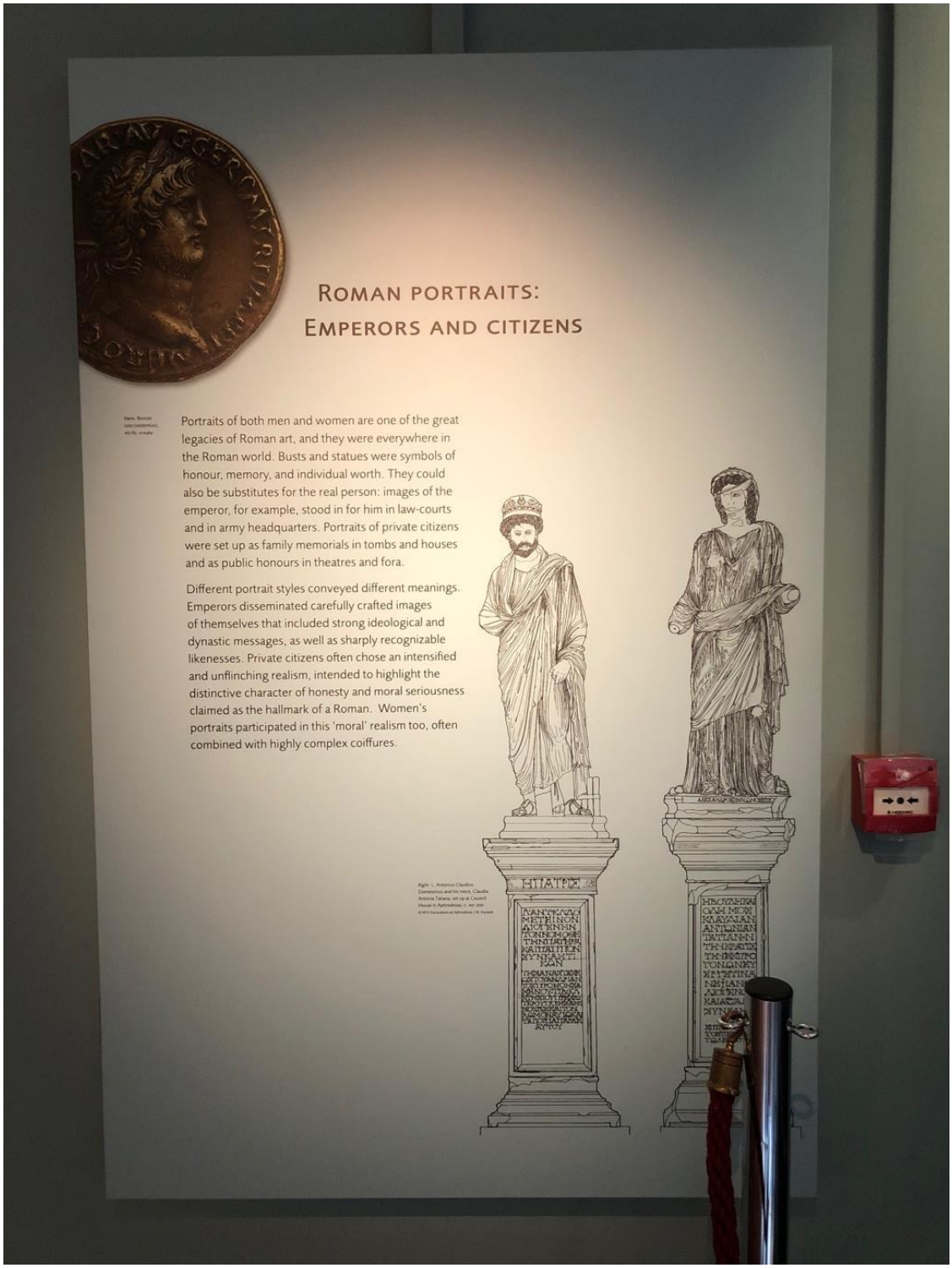
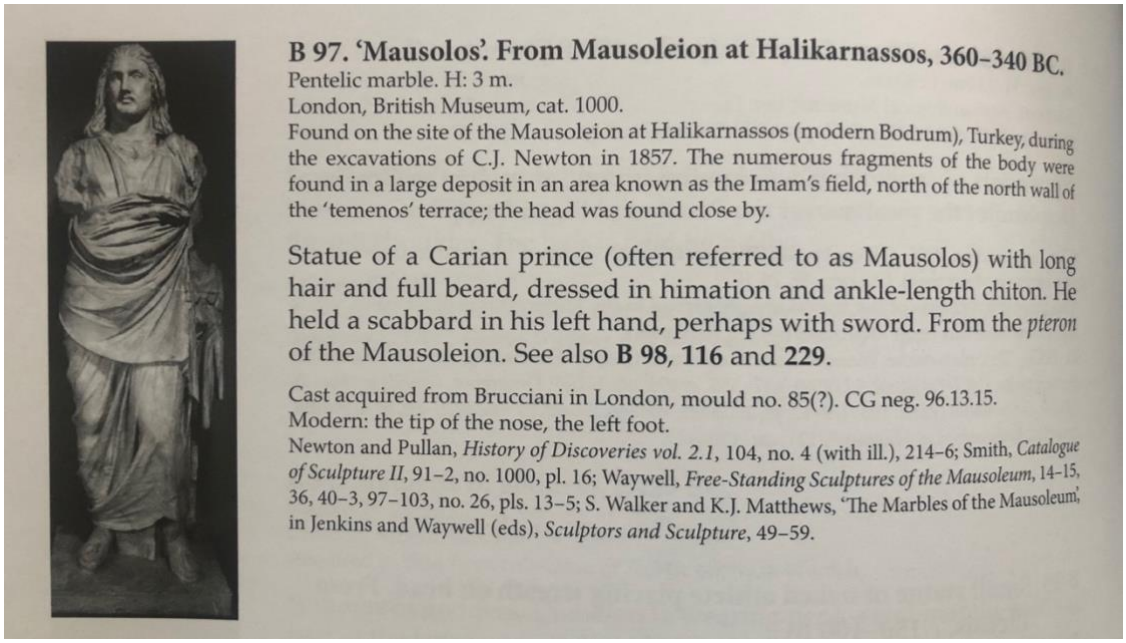


Figure 5.e Section label for the Roman Portraits section of the Cast Gallery.26/06/2021.

Setting also influences cast placement in a slightly different way. Instead of being linked by the context's broad theme, a group of casts adjacent to the Cast Gallery staircase are displayed together on account of their shared geographical setting: all were taken from originals found at the ancient site of Aphrodisias, Turkey (Fig.5.f). Links between casts

in the catalogue are also made on the grounds of ancient geography. For example, cast **B97** (Fig.5.g), is linked to casts **B98**, **B229**, and **B116**. All of the originals from which these casts were taken are thought to come from the same site: the *Mausoleum of Halicarnassus**.

Figure 5.f The Cast Gallery's Aphrodisias display. 26/06/2021.



B 97. 'Mausolos'. From Mausoleion at Halikarnassos, 360–340 BC.
Pentelic marble. H: 3 m.
London, British Museum, cat. 1000.
Found on the site of the Mausoleion at Halikarnassos (modern Bodrum), Turkey, during the excavations of C.J. Newton in 1857. The numerous fragments of the body were found in a large deposit in an area known as the Imam's field, north of the north wall of the 'temenos' terrace; the head was found close by.

Statue of a Carian prince (often referred to as Mausolos) with long hair and full beard, dressed in himation and ankle-length chiton. He held a scabbard in his left hand, perhaps with sword. From the *pteron* of the Mausoleion. See also **B 98**, **116** and **229**.

Cast acquired from Brucciani in London, mould no. 85(?). CG neg. 96.13.15.
Modern: the tip of the nose, the left foot.
Newton and Pullan, *History of Discoveries vol. 2.1*, 104, no. 4 (with ill.), 214–6; Smith, *Catalogue of Sculpture II*, 91–2, no. 1000, pl. 16; Waywell, *Free-Standing Sculptures of the Mausoleum*, 14–15, 36, 40–3, 97–103, no. 26, pls. 13–5; S. Walker and K.J. Matthews, 'The Marbles of the Mausoleum', in Jenkins and Waywell (eds), *Sculptors and Sculpture*, 49–59.

*Figure 5.g Catalogue entry for cast **B97**. Source: Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 102.*

In addition to the thematic categories discussed above, the Ashmolean's casts are also grouped chronologically. Chronological groupings are always made in terms of the date attributed to the ancient original. For example, within each of the catalogue's thematic groupings (e.g., 'architectural sculpture'), casts are listed starting with the earliest dated casts and moving toward the latest. The same chronological framework can be observed in the layout of Lower Cast Gallery. Casts of Prehistoric sculptures are located at the point of entry at the bottom of the stairs, with casts of Hellenistic and Roman pieces being positioned along the far wall.[47]

Thus, each element of the Cast Gallery's meso-scale presentation of its objects is largely oriented towards antiquity. The thematic and chronological groupings of the casts with reference to their ancient antecedents implicitly encourages users to look *through* the casts. They are presented as objects that are primarily instrumentally valuable for their link with antiquity. Those encountering casts within this layout are prompted to imagine the ancient contexts and significance of the pieces.

5.1.3 Micro

Finally, I will show how the Cast Gallery influences users' valuation of casts on a micro level, through its gallery communication. The Cast Gallery communicates with its users through both written and verbal means: the former via object labels assigned to each individual cast, its introductory panel text, and through entries in its catalogue, and the latter through volunteers' and tutors' oral presentations to visitors and students respectively. In this section, I will demonstrate how, regardless of the category of user at which these communications are aimed, all forms of Cast Gallery interpretation are modelled on the method used by tutors and students. I will now outline this dominant system of communication, as exemplified by tutors' interactions with their students, and analyse its impact on wider gallery communication.

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[47] The chronological layout of the Lower Cast Gallery is not rigidly adhered to. Since this space functions as open storage for the many objects that cannot be placed on display, many are simply placed wherever they will fit.

Tutor-student communication

The way in which tutors communicate to their students about casts is composed of two distinct phases. They were best summarised in my conversation with tutor/curator Bert Smith:

> *Bert Smith (curator): I always start with the castness of the things we're looking at. Of course. You have to explain how casts are made, what the tradition of collecting them is, what drives our cast collection, how it came to be, what a strange thing it is. What a strange and magical thing it is. But after I would say, I would talk for 20 minutes or half an hour about that and then I say from now on, I'm going to treat all of these things as the antiquity in question.*

First, there is an introductory element to Cast Gallery visits, where the objects' "*castness*" is discussed. Second, casts are presented as surrogates for their ancient sculptural referents. I will now discuss both of these phases in turn.

Turning first to the introductory phase, Smith's description is representative of most tutor/student communications in the Cast Gallery: seven of the nine tutors interviewed judged it to be important that students had an initial introduction to (in the words of tutor Peter) *"what we were looking at"*. However, what it meant for Smith to discuss "*castness*" with his students and what it meant for other tutors to achieve this same goal, differed. While Smith presented knowing about castness as comprising a discussion of casts' identities as copies ("*the castness of the things*") and details of their histories, material, and manufacture ("*how casts are made, what the tradition of collecting them is…*"), other tutors considered this to be split into two levels of knowing, each associated with a different level of importance.

For example, tutor Dominik told me that students could simply be informed that *"well, this is a plaster cast, it's not the original"*, presenting this as the most fundamental thing to be known about casts. He then demonstrated that this fundamental knowledge could be built upon with more detailed, extended information about casts' own functions and

histories. He stated that users could be told that: *"this cast, by the way, was created in the eighteenth-century because someone was really interested in the Laocoön and they just wanted to have one example here for teaching purposes or just to entertain their guests."* While for Smith, both fundamental and extended knowledge was required for a student to know about casts, for the majority of tutors only the fundamental level of knowledge of castness was seen as integral.[48]

Tutors presented extended knowledge as being of limited relevance to students' true objective in the Cast Gallery: furthering their understanding of antiquity. This was shown when I asked tutor Alison whether she spoke with her students about castness:

> *Alison (tutor): I mean, yeah, when it's relevant, but actually within the courses themselves, there's not much scope within how they are currently set out for bringing in how we study these things nowadays. You do a little bit… so if you're doing something with Trajan's Column, we think about how is it we can know exactly what's in each scene? Well because at some point someone came and took casts and put them all in a row. So, there are certain objects that lend themselves to that but there's not much… Certainly the courses that I teach focus on the ancient quite exclusively […] There's a lot of Roman sculpture in the Roman art course of which several examples are in the Cast Gallery, but it never really strays beyond the sculpture and its original context because, well, certainly for that course because there's so much to fit in it, it's a huge course… AD 14 to AD 337, it's all Roman art within that period, in all the provinces. So, you naturally have to be selective.*

Alison presented the demands of the syllabus requirements for the module as being so intense that she was required to dedicate all of her time in the Cast Gallery to the

[48] No clear-cut reason behind this discrepancy between Smith's and the tutors' attitudes to discussing castness was evident from my data. Naively, one might ascribe the greater importance that Smith places on extended knowledge to his position as the curator of the Cast Gallery: he might be considered to have more experience with "*castness*" than the average tutor who used the space largely as a teaching resource. However, as I will detail in Chapter 6, tutor Dominik also had considerable experience with cast collections outside of a teaching role, yet still presented fundamental knowledge as key and extended knowledge as of lesser importance. Therefore, I remain agnostic about the reason why Smith's view differs from that of most tutors.

ancient historical elements of the course. However, she did note that certain casts in the Gallery forced the issue of their castness to be discussed in greater depth. This was a common theme in my conversations with tutors. Dominik was one of several tutors who mentioned casts **B161** and **H102**, which both represent the *Augustus of Prima Porta**, as inviting the topic of castness to be discussed:

> *Dominik (tutor): If you see the juxtaposition of two casts of the same original statue and they are very different in style or they have a different appearance or surface treatment and things like that such as the Augustus of Prima Porta then I think it's a natural thing to talk about. Without that juxtaposition sometimes it perhaps doesn't really occur naturally to you to mention that but most of the time students would mention that if they see something… like this particular juxtaposition of the Augustus of Prima Porta, then they would mention it. They would ask questions.*

The visual cues provided by these almost-identical casts, displayed side by side at the top of the stairs leading to the Lower Cast Gallery (see Fig.3.d), prompted students to question the identity of the pieces and request extended knowledge from their tutors about castness. Thus, it appears that while the majority of tutors did present the fundamental knowledge that casts were copies to their students during an introductory element of their visits, extended knowledge of castness only became sufficiently important to warrant discussion when the issue was forced by salient objects.

Having completed their introduction, most tutors took the same line as Smith and presented the casts as surrogates for their ancient referents. This was notable when tutor Charlotte discussed her use of casts **A152-4**, which represent panels from *Trajan's Arch at Beneventum** (Fig.5.h-i):

> *Charlotte (tutor): We stand back in the Rome gallery and look at it… And then you show them the picture, which is great, the reconstruction of where they are on the Arch. […] I mean, I'm not sure who picked which panels have been cast but they're really good because the one on the left which has the handing of the lightning bolt has so many of the deities and we can play identify the deity. We can play attribute bingo and some of them struggle and some of them really get it and that's a really useful one. Then we can go*

> *over and play find the emperor and find the province and "what's he doing in this?" and "this is the bridge". As a warm up to going into the Gallery that works really well, then we can go to Trajan's Column.*

During her tutorials, Charlotte focused on using the casts to identify key elements of Roman iconography and its ancient historical significance. Notably, when referencing moving her students from the Arch casts to a discussion of Trajan's Column, she also referenced the cast of the Column in the Gallery as if it were the original. This manner of speaking among tutors was common, and it also seemed to have trickled down into those listening. Florence, a Classical Archaeology Masters student, mirrored this language when speaking about the relative benefits of using casts over using photographs to learn about ancient sculptures:

> *Florence (student): You can look at photos of like that Laocoön statue but when you're actually in front of it here… you can get like a feel for the just immense size of it and I think getting the kind of physicality of these pieces is very important… an aspect to it that you can often forget when you're just looking at pictures.*

In referencing being *"in front of it [the Laocöon] here",* Florence spoke as if she were looking at the ancient Laocöon in the Vatican Museums, the same piece captured in the photographs, and not the plaster cast version held at the Ashmolean (Fig.5.j). Describing casts as if they were the original in this way was a kind of verbal shorthand used by both tutors and students. In so doing, they implicitly presented the cast as being an object of secondary importance to the ancient object.

*Figure 5.h Cast **A152**, which reproduces a scene of Roman deities from the Arch of Trajan, Beneventum. 26/06/2021.*

*Figure 5.i Cast **A154**, which reproduces a scene of Emperor Trajan in Dacia from the Arch of Trajan, Beneventum. 26/06/2021.*

*Figure 5.j Cast **B130**, which represents Laocoön. 30/06/2021.*

Overall, in the vast majority of these communications, educational values were most prevalent. This was evident in the fact that the focus of most dialogue surrounding the casts was antiquity. Casts were explicitly described throughout tutor/student communications as if they were ancient objects and any discussions of castness were notable for their brevity. I will now discuss how similar themes emerge when one considers how casts are presented in the Gallery as a whole to a wider spectrum of users.

Wider gallery communications

I will now discuss how the Cast Gallery's written introductions (which take the form of the Gallery's introductory panel and the introduction in the casts' published catalogue) follow the same trends exemplified in tutor/student communication outlined above. Fundamental and extended knowledge of castness is provided for users, but the overall emphasis is placed on the ancient world.

The Cast Gallery's introductory panel is located outside of its entrance, to the right of the glass doors that lead in from the adjacent Rome Gallery (Fig.5.k). It presents both fundamental and extended knowledge of castness. The second paragraph of its text (Fig.5.l) begins with a statement of fundamental knowledge:

> *casts are exact plaster replicas and reproduce the precise scale, effect, and style of three-dimensional objects and figures.*

Extended knowledge is provided by the latter two paragraphs of the panel's text, which focus on the techniques of cast making and the history of the casting phenomenon respectively. The Cast Gallery catalogue devotes more space to extended knowledge. It dedicates its opening pages to describing the beginnings and development of the Ashmolean's collection, the acquisition history of casts, technical details of manufacture, and descriptions of pertinent restoration work (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 1-9). This discussion is more detailed than that found on the panel but the aim of both introductions appears to be the same: to identify the casts as replicas, outline their making process, and place the history of cast making in context.

However, while these introductions do present both fundamental and extended knowledge in this way, castness is again not their main focus. For example, the first paragraph of text on the Gallery's introductory panel centres the viewer's attention on the statue culture of antiquity. Ancient sculptures made of bronze and marble are described before casts are introduced. This ordering of the subject matter immediately points users to the ancient world as the prime area of interest in the Cast Gallery. The casts are predominantly presented as having instrumental value through their description as "exact" and "precise" reproductions, which defines their importance in terms of their close relationship to the original. Describing them as artists' models and teaching tools for archaeology students also highlights their instrumental functions. The panel implicitly invites one to use the casts to gain an insight into "the ancient Greek and Roman Mediterranean".

Figure 5.k View of the Cast Gallery entrance from the Rome Gallery. The introductory panel introducing the Gallery (indicated by the orange arrow) is located to the right of the glass doors. 09/05/2019.

Therefore, the aim of this written communication and its impact are very different. Although both introductions ostensibly exist to mediate castness to Gallery users, their focus is predominantly centred on the ancient world. Thus, casts are mediated to all Gallery users in the same way as tutors present them to their students: users are invited to look *through* the casts. Their main value is educational in nature.

Figure 5.l The Cast Gallery's introductory panel. 09/05/2019.

Above I showed that in tutor/student communications, once the introduction to castness has been completed, the objects are presented as surrogates for their ancient referents. This format is mirrored in the Gallery's written interpretation. In most of the Gallery's object labels, the casts are described using the principles of the verbal

shorthand that Charlotte and Florence employed above. This can be seen in the written interpretation provided for cast **C141** (Fig.5.m). In both its object label (Fig.5.n) and its catalogue entry (Fig.5.o), **C141** is described as if it were its ancient referent: "Lateran Sophokles". The date and findspot given in both entries relate to the ancient object. Furthermore, the definite articles used in the gallery label: "*The* statue was found [emphasis mine]" point to an ancient sculpture that is not present in the Gallery. Likewise, the catalogue lists the material of the original piece: "marble" instead of the Plaster of Paris of the cast. The catalogue entry is further concluded by a bibliography which relates to the ancient object: excavation catalogues and archaeology handbooks detailing the original piece are cited. All of this presents the cast as a stand-in for the antiquity.

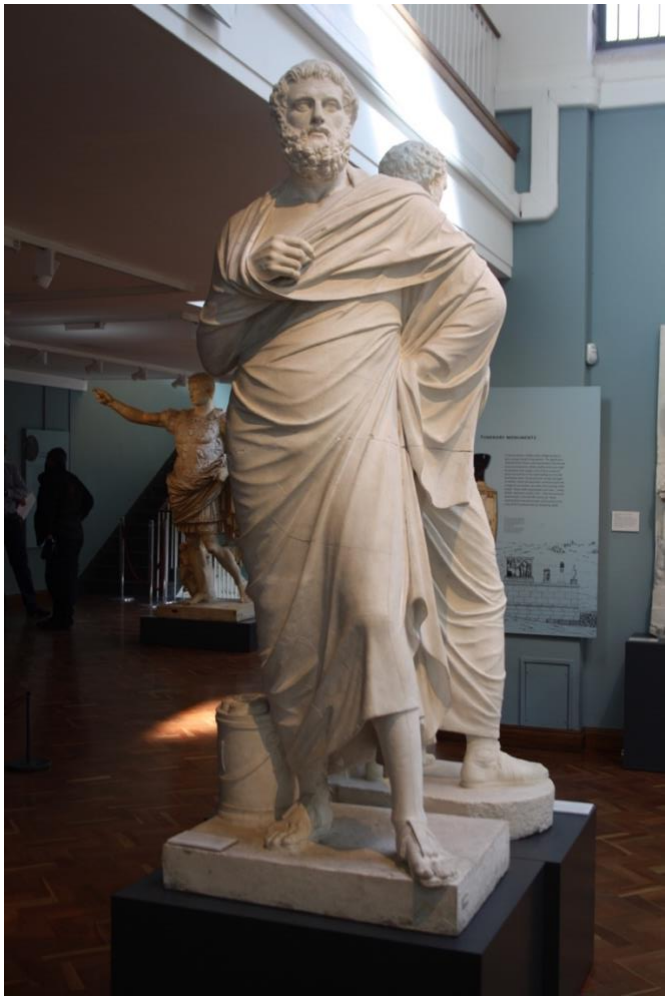


*Figure 5.m Cast **C141**, displayed in the main Cast Gallery. 26/05/2021.*

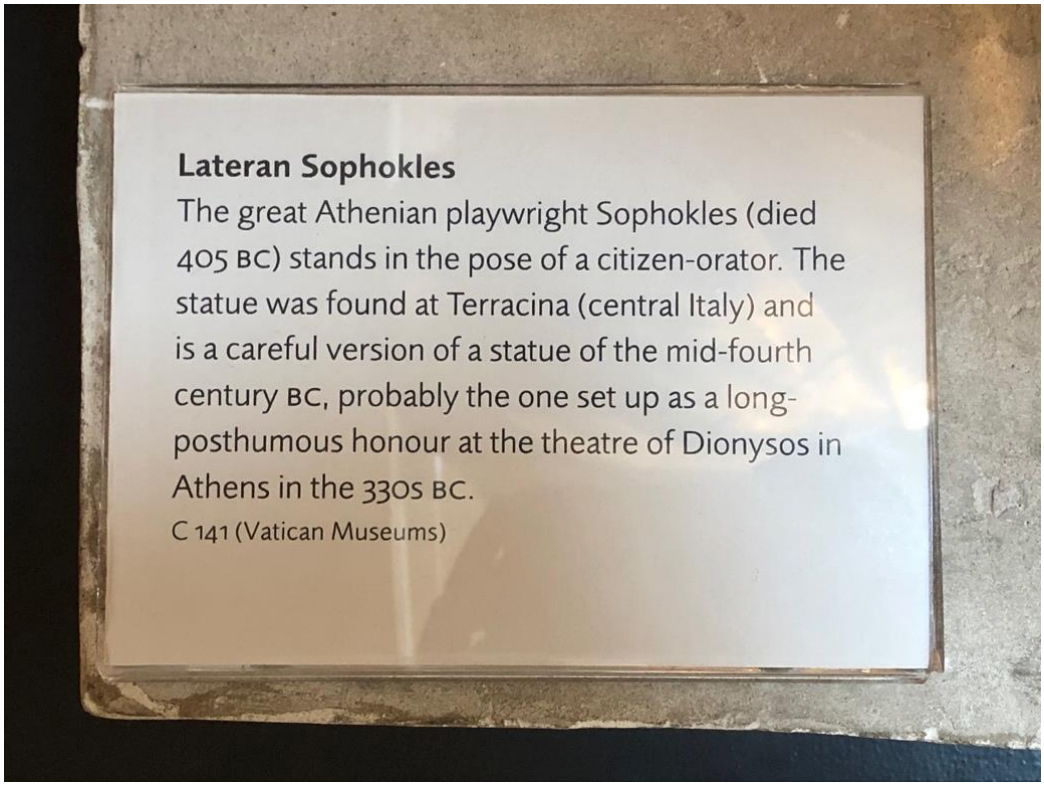
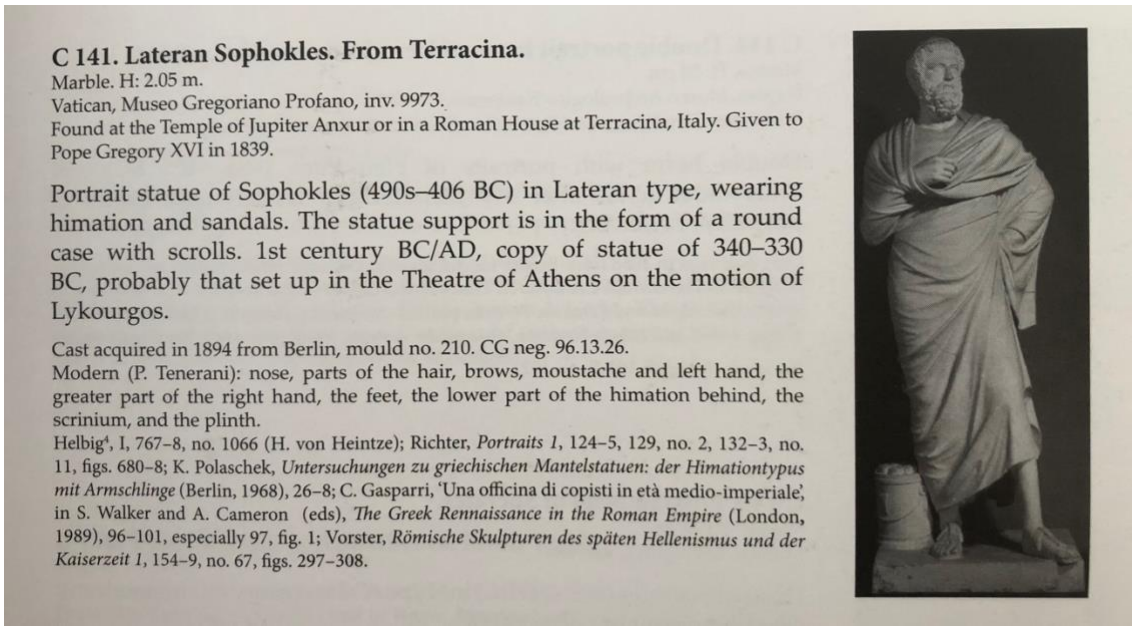


*Figure 5.n Label associated with cast **C141**. 26/05/2019.*



C 141. Lateran Sophokles. From Terracina.
Marble. H: 2.05 m.
Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Profano, inv. 9973.
Found at the Temple of Jupiter Anxur or in a Roman House at Terracina, Italy. Given to Pope Gregory XVI in 1839.

Portrait statue of Sophokles (490s–406 BC) in Lateran type, wearing himation and sandals. The statue support is in the form of a round case with scrolls. 1st century BC/AD, copy of statue of 340–330 BC, probably that set up in the Theatre of Athens on the motion of Lykourgos.

Cast acquired in 1894 from Berlin, mould no. 210. CG neg. 96.13.26.
Modern (P. Tenerani): nose, parts of the hair, brows, moustache and left hand, the greater part of the right hand, the feet, the lower part of the himation behind, the scrinium, and the plinth.
Helbig[4], I, 767–8, no. 1066 (H. von Heintze); Richter, *Portraits 1*, 124–5, 129, no. 2, 132–3, no. 11, figs. 680–8; K. Polaschek, *Untersuchungen zu griechischen Mantelstatuen: der Himationtypus mit Armschlinge* (Berlin, 1968), 26–8; C. Gasparri, 'Una officina di copisti in età medio-imperiale', in S. Walker and A. Cameron (eds), *The Greek Rennaissance in the Roman Empire* (London, 1989), 96–101, especially 97, fig. 1; Vorster, *Römische Skulpturen des späten Hellenismus und der Kaiserzeit 1*, 154–9, no. 67, figs. 297–308.

*Figure 5.o Catalogue entry associated with cast **C141**. Source: Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 171.*

The cast's identity is not entirely absent from either text, but is rarely the centrepiece of the discussion. In the catalogue, information pertaining to **C141**'s castness (its date and place of manufacture and its mould number) is given, but this only appears two-thirds of the way down the entry, after the original has been described. Castness

appears second in priority to the ancient aspects of the piece: of the 20 lines devoted to cast **C141** in the catalogue, just two refer to the castness of the object. Meanwhile, in the gallery label, the word "cast" is entirely absent. The object's castness is hinted at, but only obliquely. A reference is made to the location of the original, which in the case of **C141** is the Vatican Museums. This indirectly signposts that the cast is not the original but something else. This information is given in small text in parentheses at the bottom of the label, with the majority of the label's main text being dedicated to a description of the ancient versions of the sculpture. Label and catalogue text can be considered to operate in the same manner as the students' and tutors' verbal discussions of the casts seen above: each presents casts as surrogates for their ancient referents. The underlying message is that casts are primarily valuable for educational purposes.

Likewise, while observing Cast Gallery tours, I also noted instances of volunteers speaking about casts as if they were the ancient pieces, using statements like: *"This is the Aphrodite of Knidos".* This might be due to the emphasis placed on using the casts to engage viewers with the ancient world in their training documents. In their training guidebook, produced for the volunteers by curator Milena Melfi, nine casts (or groups of casts) are presented as case studies. Volunteers are encouraged to draw on this case study information when presenting individual objects as part of their tours. Each case study begins with a photocopy of the relevant catalogue entry (Fig.5.p). Then, the guidebook expands on each catalogue entry with a lengthier description of the ancient original. This includes information on its condition, display context, excavation history, attribution to an ancient sculptor, and historical or mythological stories associated with the statue. The ancient piece is the object that guides are encouraged to discuss, constructing the cast as a kind of prop to facilitate this storytelling. Again, casts are imbued with educational values.

Victory of Samothrace (c. 190-180 BC)

B 140a.

Parian marble. H: 2.95 m, W: 3.28 m.
Paris, Louvre, inv. 2369.
Found in 1863 at the highest point of the sanctuary terrace in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods at Samothrace, Greece. Brought to the Louvre in 1864. The base and additional fragments were found later.

Colossal statue of winged Nike wearing chiton, belted high under the breasts, and himation. The goddess was part of a monument commemorating a naval victory.

Cast acquired in 1914. CG neg. 96.38.27-8.

This exceptional monument was found in countless pieces in the island of Samothrace in 1863. The goddess of Victory (Nike, in Greek) is shown in the form of a winged woman standing on the prow of a ship, braced against the strong wind blowing through her garments. With her right hand cupped around her mouth, she announced the event she was dedicated to commemorate. The colossal work was placed in a rock niche that had been dug into a hill; it overlooked the theater of the Sanctuary of the Great Gods. This niche may also have contained a pool filled with water in which the ship appeared to float. Given its placement, the work was meant to be viewed from the front left-hand side; this explains the disparity in sculpting technique, the right side of the body being much less detailed. The highly theatrical presentation-combined with the goddess's monumentality, wide wingspan, and the vigor of her forward-thrusting body-reinforces the reality of the scene.

This sculpture is one of the masterpieces of Hellenistic sculpture. The figure creates a spiraling effect in a composition that opens out in various directions. This is achieved by the oblique angles of the wings and the placement of the left leg, and emphasized by the clothing blowing between the goddess's legs. The nude female body is revealed by the transparency of the wet drapery, much in the manner of classical works from the fifth century BC, while the cord worn just beneath the breasts recalls a clothing style that was popular beginning in the fourth century. In the treatment of the tunic-sometimes brushing against the body, sometimes billowing in the wind-the sculptor has been remarkably skillful in creating visual effects. The decorative richness, sense of volume, and intensity of movement are characteristic of a Rhodian style that prefigures the baroque creations of the Pergamene school (180-160 BC).

The statue of Nike perched on a ship wasoffered by the Rhodians to the Great Gods of Samothrace, gods of fertility whose help was invoked to protect seafarers and to grant victory in war. It has also been suggested that this monument was dedicated in commemoration of a specific naval victory. The type of ship depicted and the grey marble used for the prow and base of the statue both suggest that this is indeed a Rhodian creation. If it is associated with a major Rhodian naval victory, the work can be dated to the second century BC-it would have been erected in honor of the battle of Myonnesos, or perhaps the Rhodian victory at Side in 190 BC against the fleet of Antiochus III of Syria.

Bibliography:

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*Figure 5.p Volunteer guidebook entry for cast **B140a**. The section highlighted in orange is the excerpted catalogue entry for this cast.*

In some special cases, the castness of the objects is given more exposure in object labels and catalogue entries. These occur in instances when the cast was given to the

Ashmolean by a prominent donor[49], when a cast is notable on account of its age[50], when the cast is made of a different material to the typical Plaster of Paris[51], or when significant conservation work has taken place on a cast at the Ashmolean[52]. Nevertheless, even in these exceptional cases, the ancient sculpture is still given priority. Castness tends to be referenced either in smaller font at the bottom of the label (as with **H112** and the cast of Antinous Osiris) or at the very end of the main text, with the ancient piece having been discussed first (as with **B124** and **A61**). Representative examples of this convention in labelling are shown in Figs.5.q-r. This once more implies that what is of primary interest about the cast is its representation of its ancient referent, emphasising educational value.

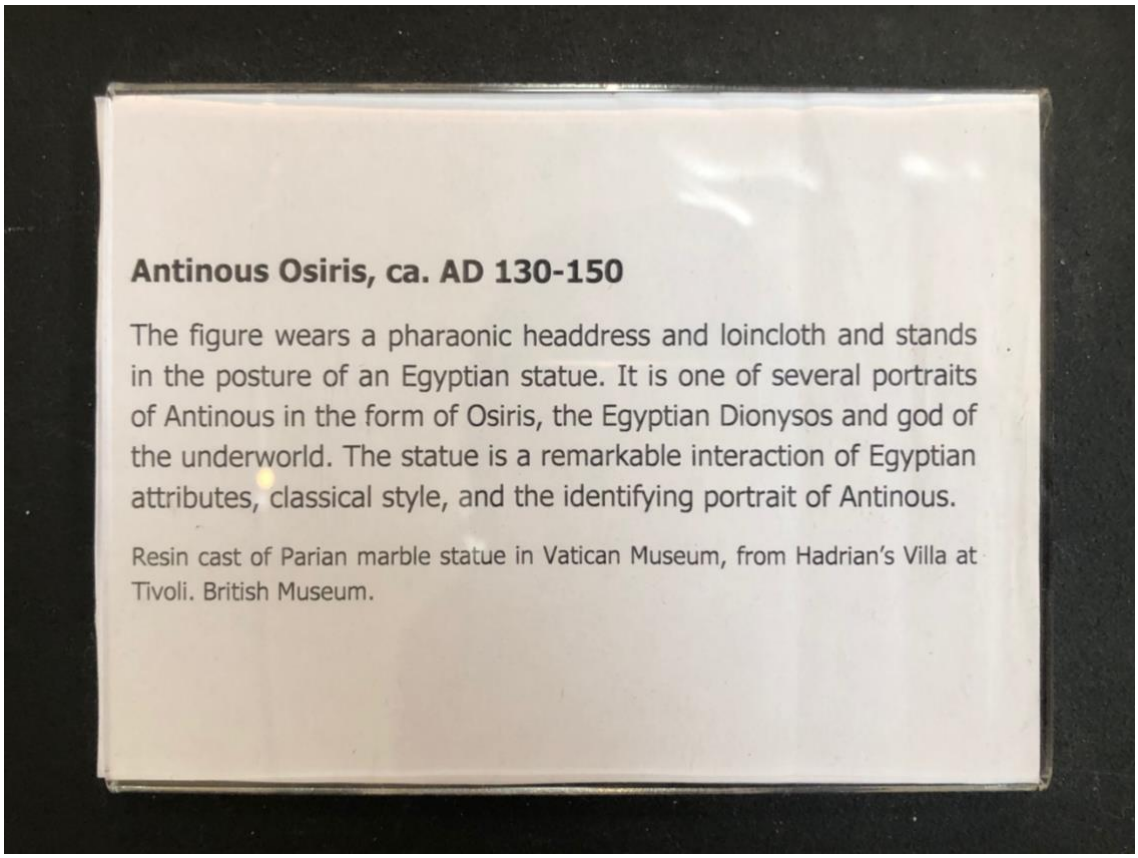


Figure 5.q Label attached to the Antinous Osiris cast. 26/05/2019.

[49] E.g., **H112**, which was presented to the Ashmolean by the Duke of Northumberland.
[50] E.g., **B214**, which is one of the oldest objects within the Ashmolean's cast collection.
[51] E.g., the resin cast of Antinous Osiris displayed in the main Cast Gallery. Note: this cast lacks an Ashmolean acquisition number as it is on long-term loan from the British Museum.
[52] E.g., **A61**, which was the subject of a remounting project at the Ashmolean in 2015/2016.

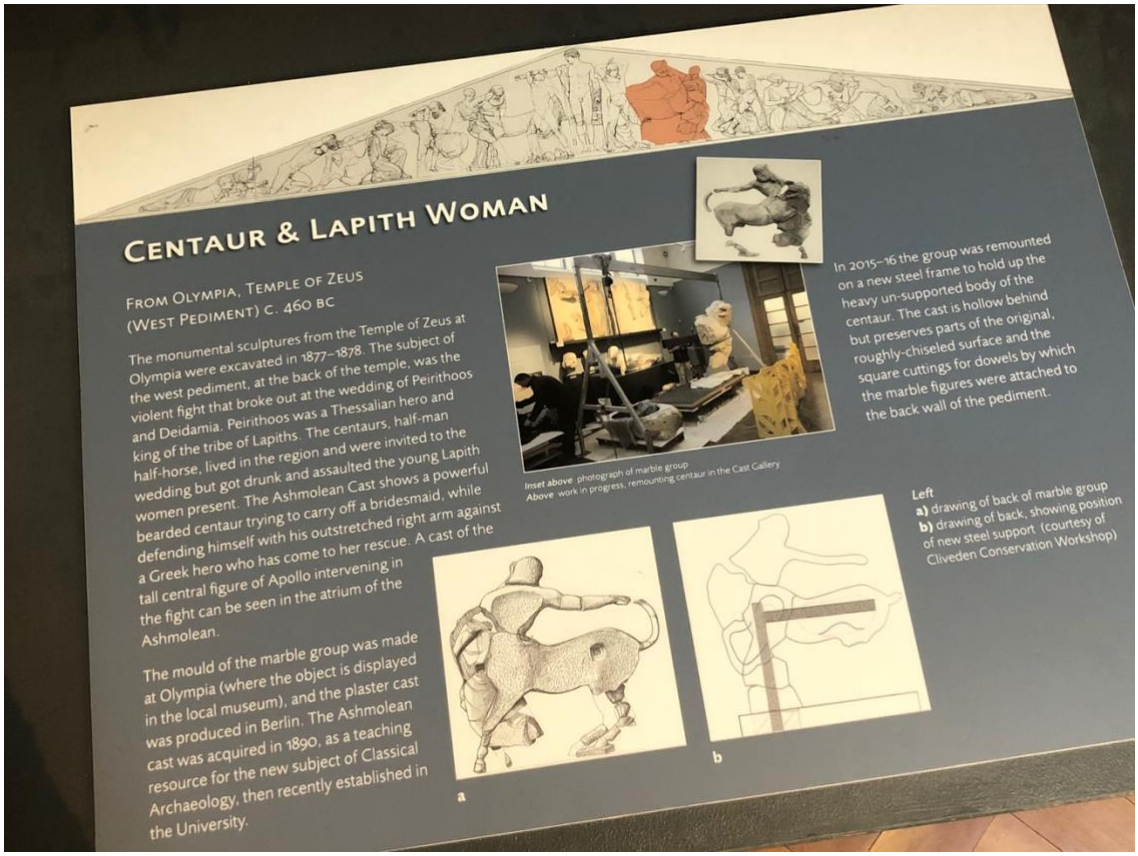


*Figure 5.r Panel associated with cast **A61**. 26/05/2019.*

In a trend that is reminiscent of tutor Dominik's discussion of the Augustus of Prima Porta casts above, castness only appears at the forefront of written communication when this is deemed unavoidable. This is the case with partial[53] and composite[54] casts. Partial casts are defined as those which do not replicate an ancient sculpture in its entirety, instead duplicating discrete parts such as heads[55] from sculptures in the round or selected details from relief sculpture. Meanwhile, composite casts are those moulded from an "original" that is composed of multiple ancient elements (sometimes from different sculptures) that have been fixed together. Partial and composite casts are often described in an upfront way as part of the title of the object because to hide this

[53] E.g., **A146**, **C98**, **C100**, **C102**, **C104**, **C117**, **C139**, **C171**, **C178**, **C211**, **C213**, **C223**, **C246**, **D32**, **D65**, **D68**, **H56**, and **H91**.
[54] E.g., **C25**, **C70**, **C75**, **C79a-b**, and **C97**.
[55] I do not describe casts which replicate ancient heads that were found in a fragmentary state separate from their original body (e.g., **H2**) as being "partial" since they preserve the entire form of the ancient piece upon discovery.

aspect of their identity might mislead those attempting to use the cast as an accurate representation of an ancient piece:

> *Milena Melfi (curator): We discuss it [the castness of casts] […] especially when you have casts which are part of two different sculptures. […] You need to get into the details of how this cast is made to reconstruct our lost original that doesn't exist anymore.*

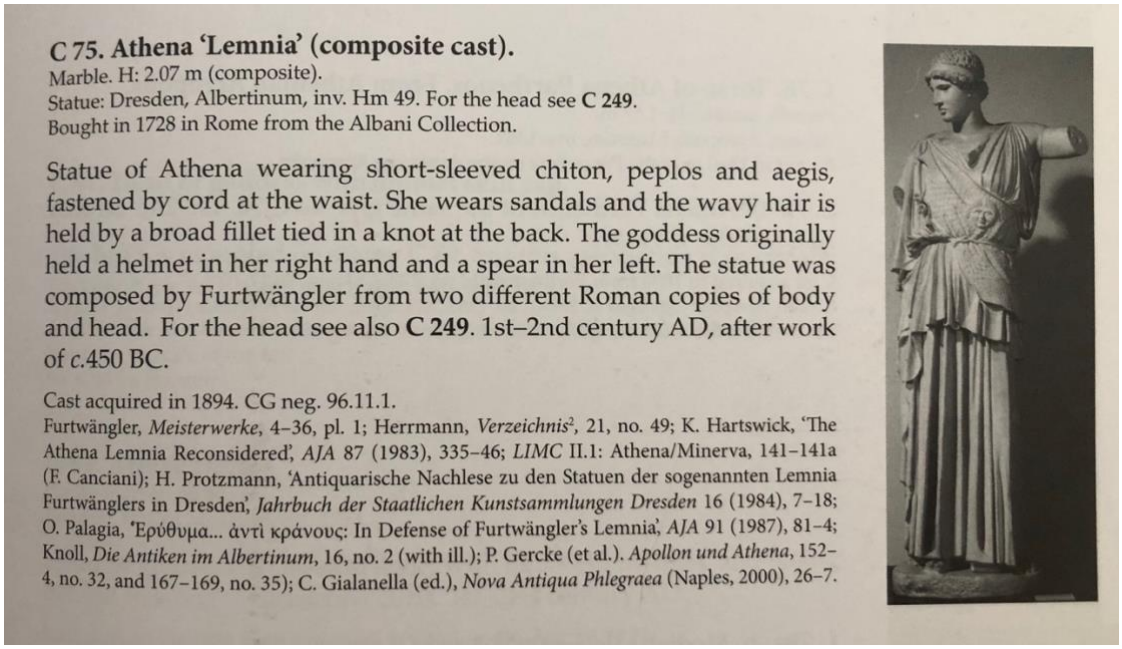
Neither the partial nor the composite cast exactly reproduces the ancient form of the original sculpture: partial casts (of a head, for example) may give the false impression that the original was a bust, unconnected to a sculpted body. Meanwhile, composite casts often do not clearly indicate the joins between the distinct ancient pieces from which they are comprised, instead seamlessly amalgamating them into a single sculpture. The issue of composite casts is complicated further by the fact that many of the restorations undertaken to the original sculptures on which they are based are the subject of debate.

For example, **C75** is a composite cast of the *Athena Lemnia**. The original bronze Athena does not survive today but numerous fragmentary Roman copies, made in marble, are extant. Between 1891-3, archaeologist Adolf Furtwängler attempted to reconstruct the sculpture (Hartswick 1983: 335) by joining the head of one Roman copy of the Athena to the body of another (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 155). To what extent this composite accurately reproduces the ancient original is contested[56] and today, the two pieces joined together by Furtwängler have been separated. The head resides in Bologna, the body in Dresden (Boardman 1985: 204). **C75** preserves Furtwängler's contentious nineteenth-century reconstruction, so its usefulness for acting as a direct surrogate for an original antiquity is somewhat tempered. Thus, as both partial and composite casts run the risk of giving a false impression of the original piece, their identities are clearly labelled (as in Fig.5.s). This example again demonstrates the

[56] Some have argued that the head and the body joined by Furtwängler did not join together (Hartswick 1983) but others found parallel examples which suggest that his restoration was accurate (Palagia 1987).

dominance of antiquity in the Cast Gallery: a cast's role within this context is not to be a cast but a window into the ancient world.

Overall, in this section I have showed that wider gallery communication, which includes written label text and the Cast Gallery's catalogue, follows the trends exemplified by tutor-student communications in the space. The casts are first mediated to users by introductory elements which dwell most heavily on ancient themes. Following this, they are presented as (often) unacknowledged surrogates for their ancient original referents using a type of written or verbal shorthand. All of this works to present the casts as instrumentally valuable tools for accessing the ancient world. Having described these trends, I will now examine the impact that the wider gallery communication discussed here, particularly the casts' labelling, has on other, non-student categories of user.



C 75. Athena 'Lemnia' (composite cast).
Marble. H: 2.07 m (composite).
Statue: Dresden, Albertinum, inv. Hm 49. For the head see **C 249**.
Bought in 1728 in Rome from the Albani Collection.

Statue of Athena wearing short-sleeved chiton, peplos and aegis, fastened by cord at the waist. She wears sandals and the wavy hair is held by a broad fillet tied in a knot at the back. The goddess originally held a helmet in her right hand and a spear in her left. The statue was composed by Furtwängler from two different Roman copies of body and head. For the head see also **C 249**. 1st–2nd century AD, after work of *c.*450 BC.

Cast acquired in 1894. CG neg. 96.11.1.
Furtwängler, *Meisterwerke*, 4–36, pl. 1; Herrmann, *Verzeichnis*², 21, no. 49; K. Hartswick, 'The Athena Lemnia Reconsidered', *AJA* 87 (1983), 335–46; *LIMC* II.1: Athena/Minerva, 141–141a (F. Canciani); H. Protzmann, 'Antiquarische Nachlese zu den Statuen der sogenannten Lemnia Furtwänglers in Dresden', *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden* 16 (1984), 7–18; O. Palagia, 'Ἐρύθυμα... ἀντὶ κράνους: In Defense of Furtwängler's Lemnia', *AJA* 91 (1987), 81–4; Knoll, *Die Antiken im Albertinum*, 16, no. 2 (with ill.); P. Gercke (et al.). *Apollon und Athena*, 152–4, no. 32, and 167–169, no. 35); C. Gialanella (ed.), *Nova Antiqua Phlegraea* (Naples, 2000), 26–7.

*Figure 5.s Catalogue entry for cast **C75**, which alerts readers to its castness through the inclusion of "(composite cast)" in the title. Source: Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 155.*

Wider gallery communications: Impact

The wider gallery communication offered by the Cast Gallery was often confusing for visitors. Many of them mistook the casts for ancient original sculptures. This seems in large part due to their labelling. Above, I noted when discussing the gallery label for cast **C141** that the word "cast" was noticeably absent. This was a deliberate curatorial

choice. Although casts displayed outside of the Cast Gallery, such as **B72A**, a cast made in bronze and displayed in the Greece Gallery (Fig.5.t-u), are described explicitly as casts in their interpretive text, this is not the case in the Cast Gallery itself.

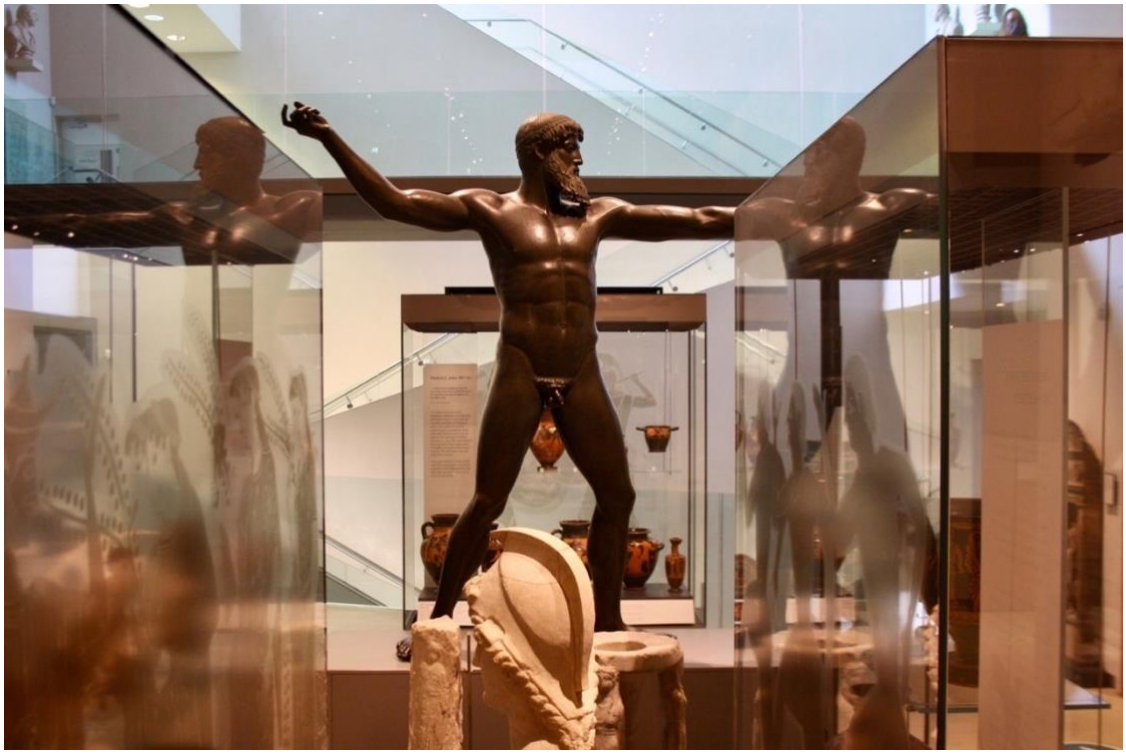


*Figure 5.t Cast **B72A** displayed in the Greece Gallery. 26/05/2021.*

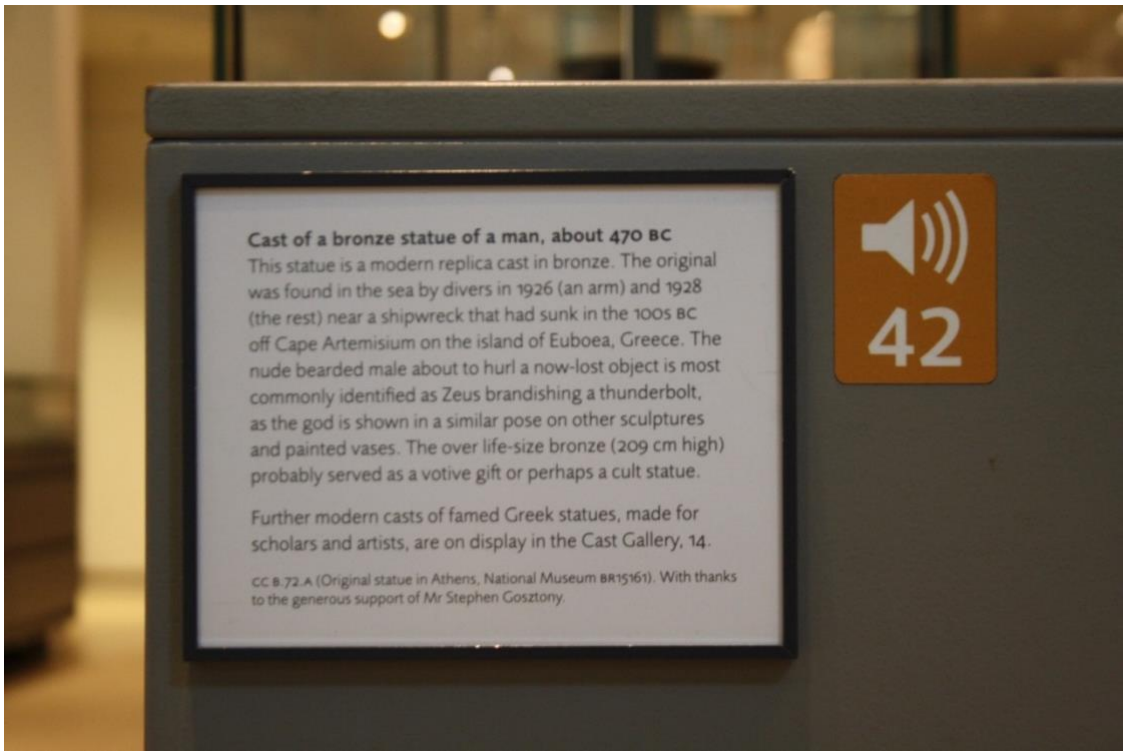


*Figure 5.u Interpretive text associated with cast **B72A**, which explicitly describes the object as a cast. 26/05/2021.*

In the Cast Gallery, the introductory panel is relied upon to reveal the identity of the objects, in order that the shorthand of referring to the cast as the ancient sculpture could be used in the written interpretation. As curator Milena Melfi explained:

> *Milena Melfi (curator): The first panel explains that they are plaster casts and this is as clear as we can get. […] The idea [was] to show them at the very beginning that they are casts.*

That this caused confusion was demonstrated by an exchange between a couple of visitors whom I observed walking around the main Cast Gallery prior to attending a volunteer-led tour. One of the visitors had stopped to look at **D116**, a cast of a Roman soldier's tombstone (Fig.5.v). After stopping to read the label (Fig.5.w), this visitor turned to their companion and exclaimed *"not all of these are casts!"* The second visitor expressed their scepticism and asked for the label to be read aloud. The first visitor did so, afterwards explaining that the label's reference to the sculpture being *"From Colchester"* and *"One of the earliest dated sculptures from Roman Britain"* gave them reason to believe that the object was an ancient piece. Their companion shrugged, voiced their uncertainty about the object's identity and the pair then moved along. Even though the couple had initially noted that the objects in the Gallery were casts (presumably due to the introductory panel), the object label had led them to imagine themselves in the presence of an original antiquity. Indeed, it was often necessary for users to receive a verbal indication from an informed guide for them to identify the castness of the objects:

> *Gabrielle (artist): I came in the Cast Gallery [for the first time] by myself. Just when I was visiting the museum when I first got to Oxford, but I didn't realize it was a Cast Gallery the first time… The first time that I knew that it was actually a Cast Gallery was when I came back with my art teacher but before that I just came in and thought it was real statues.*

An example such as this suggests that although written introductory elements are relied upon by curators to present fundamental knowledge of castness, other labelling in the Gallery counteracts its effectiveness.

*Figure 5.v Cast **D116** on display in the Cast Gallery. 26/05/2021.*

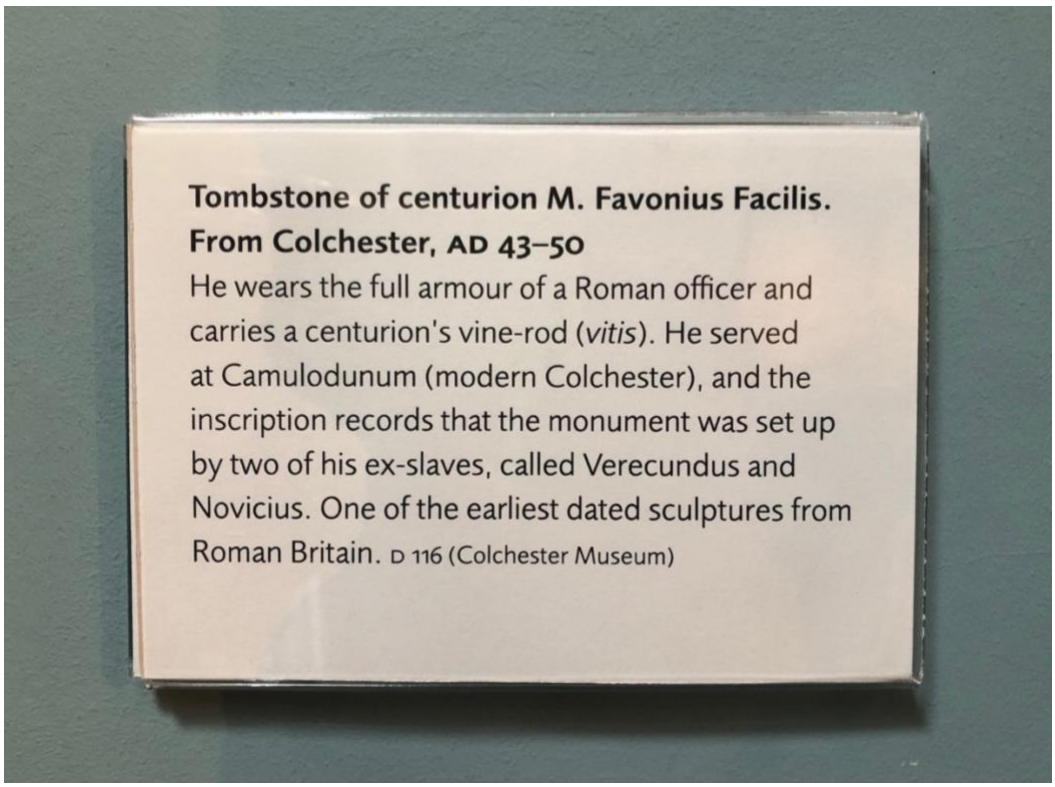


*Figure 5.w Label text associated with cast **D116**. 26/05/2021.*

Similar issues abounded when visitors did not read the introductory panel. This was a common occurrence: the panel seemed to be easily missed. Users from all categories interviewed as part of this study attest to not registering its existence, even a tutor who regularly used the Cast Gallery as a teaching resource:

> *Charlotte (tutor): Can't say I've ever registered that [panel]. I'm someone who really should be alive to this, but I'm not.*

This could be to do with the panel's placement outside of the direct eyeline of users as they approach the Gallery. Volunteer William suggested that the arresting view of the casts from behind the glass doors might be the root of the lack of engagement with the panel:

> *William (volunteer): It's not really a place where people stop. People see the Laocoön… he catches your eye… and they go straight in.*

Based on William's description, the Laocoön cast might be considered a "landmark" piece, a visually remarkable object that draws a user's gaze (Bitgood 2000: 35). Such landmark objects are known to influence traffic by prompting visitors to move toward them, ignoring less salient features (ibid.) in exactly the way William describes. The visual pull of the Laocoön may well result in those visiting the Cast Gallery passing the introductory panel by, accounting for the regularly demonstrated lack of awareness of even the fundamental knowledge of castness.

This problem is particular to visitors for two reasons: first, as discussed in section 5.1.1, due to the Cast Gallery's position in the global Museum layout, they are overwhelmingly likely to expect to see ancient objects when entering the Gallery. Second, they do not possess a comparable amount of background knowledge to other users, such as students, which would enable them to manage their expectations when entering the Gallery. This was highlighted by student Kate, when she reflected on her first visits to the Cast Gallery before she began her undergraduate degree:

> *Kate (student): When I first came into the museum when I was a teenager, I didn't really know that they were casts. […] Obviously it's called the Cast Gallery but I didn't really know what that meant. […] I really, really liked the*

> Terme Boxer* *and I was like "it is THE statue" [laughs], yeah, I was here in Oxford like "I'm looking at THE sculpture" and that's obviously not true. But I think if you're just a layperson and you don't really know much, it's not immediately obvious.*

Kate suggested that it is her more recent experiences as a Classical Archaeology student that have enabled her to manage her expectations when encountering something that looks like an ancient sculpture in museums. Kate's reflections suggest that for users whose expectations may not be checked by this specialist knowledge, the Cast Gallery can unintentionally mislead them into thinking that they are looking at ancient sculptures. The Gallery's curators are not unaware that visitors commonly mistake the casts for originals. However, this was not perceived to be a problem:

> *Bert Smith (curator): No, I don't think it is clear at all. And I'm not particularly… I mean there is a big panel at the entrance if you want to stop and read it, it tells you that you are looking at plaster casts. But obviously a five-year-old child has no understanding of what a cast is versus an original and I don't think it makes any difference if a five-year-old thinks that the Laocoön is in Oxford, I don't think that's an awful thing. And later on, they will learn and it can be explained. […] The casts are all kept with their castness, their aspect as a cast visibly on the surface. So, they have… the old ones have their flashlines, and the new ones are blisteringly white. There's no attempt to say that they're not a cast but on the other hand, there's no attempt to put it in your face all the time that you're looking at a replica because it just becomes very confusing and you know, a cast is in most respects for most people as good as the original.*

One can note in Smith's statement the discrepancy between curatorial attitudes to students' and visitors' understandings of castness. Above, Smith presented fundamental knowledge of castness as being essential for students, but he implied that it is less consequential if visitors lack this knowledge. He suggested that the ambiguity might be a deliberate choice, as castness might be "*confusing*" for visitors. Smith also seemed to feel that there were sufficient visual clues to the object's castness that their explicit identification in labelling was unnecessary. He placed the onus on the users without existing specialist knowledge to follow a precise visit agenda, beginning with

reading the introductory panel in its entirety, to fully understand the Gallery's written interpretation. However, I showed above in the example of the visitors' discussions of **D116** that in some cases this does not accord with visit behaviour, as the introductory panel is regularly missed. The Gallery's curators are aware that fundamental knowledge of castness is sometimes not clearly presented for non-specialist users, but this is not presented as being a problem. From this, one might infer that the Cast Gallery's written interpretation is, to some extent, oriented toward the specialised audience of Classical Archaeologists.

Thus, in the interpretive framework that the Ashmolean Museum provides, casts are presented to all categories of user in largely the same manner in which they are presented to students. Fundamental and extended knowledge of castness was present in Gallery interpretation for those who actively sought this out, but in most cases, it was not at the forefront of either written or verbal discussions. In particular, the verbal and written shorthand used for describing the casts was focused on using the objects as surrogates for their ancient referents. This was the case unless the unique physicality of (for example, partial or composite) casts impacted upon one's ability to directly use the object as a surrogate. This sometimes explicitly and sometimes implicitly encouraged the casts to be valued in an instrumental, and predominantly educational, sense.

However, to conclude that it is entirely the Gallery framework that is responsible for this trend would be to do a disservice to the users interviewed. Museum users do not passively receive and accept all interpretations presented to them; each actively engages in the making of meaning in relation to their existing opinions and experiences (Falk and Dierking 1992; Doering and Pekarik 1996; Pekarik et al. 1999; Falk and Dierking 2000). Consequently, I will now consider what Cast Gallery users brought to their experience and how this shaped the conceptualisation of value in the space.

5.2 Personal visit agendas

I will now argue that another reason why educational values were so prominently observed within the Cast Gallery was due to the personal agendas of its users. Before examining these personal agendas and their impact in detail, I must first outline the factors that comprise a visitor's "agenda".

The work of Theano Moussouri established that visit agendas can be divided into two dimensions: the visitors' motivation and their strategies (Moussouri 1997). Visit motivation broadly translates as the reasoning that brought the visitor into the museum in the first place, which can range from practical issues (where a museum is visited because of external factors such as its free entry or bad weather outside), to educational reasons (where the museum is considered to contribute a learning experience) (ibid.: 75-82). Meanwhile, visit strategies are the priorities that guide a user once they have arrived. Falk et al. describe a visitor's strategy in terms of the amount of "focus" that they display on their visit (Falk et al. 1998: 108-9). They outline a continuum ranging from unfocused to focused strategies. Where a user sits within this range depends on the extent to which their movements around the museum are determined by their individual goals. They characterise "unfocused" users as those who simply wander around the museum and demonstrate an openness to experiencing anything that the museum has to offer (ibid.:108). By contrast, they describe "focused" users as those with very specific goals in mind, which often mean that they visit only their chosen areas of the museum to the exclusion of any others (ibid.: 109). Between these two extremes sits a middle category of "moderately focused" user.

As well as examining visit motivations and strategies, I will also consider one further aspect of visit agendas in the Ashmolean Museum, namely what I call interpretive focus. It has some similarities with Falk et al.'s category of focus outlined above. Focus as described by Falk et al. relates to the focus that a user demonstrates through their *movements* within the museum. However, I propose that there is another important kind of focus that one must consider in order to understand how value is constructed in the Cast Gallery: a user's focus on *interpretation*. This type of focus relates not to *what* a user sees, as determined through their physical movement, but *how* they have

decided to see it when they get there. As I will demonstrate, many users enter the Cast Gallery with a predetermined idea of what they want to see when they arrive. They are focused on interpreting casts in a certain way, most often with an emphasis on the ancient world. To clearly differentiate between focus understood in terms of movement and focus understood in terms of interpretation, I will refer to the former as the users' "strategies" and the latter as the users' "level of interpretive focus".

With the terminology upon which I will draw having been explained, I will now introduce the two broad visit motivations described by Cast Gallery users: educational and recreational. I will show that within these categories, there was significant variation between individual users in terms of their visit strategy and their level of interpretive focus.

5.2.1 Educational motivation

First, I will discuss users with educational visit motivations. The most common motivation for visiting the Ashmolean in general was for educational reasons.

Unfocused strategies

> *Jenny (visitor): Really [I'm here] for the knowledge. Some of it I'll retain, not always. But the older you get, the more fascinating you find life. It's interesting to see all of the different things.*

Visitor Jenny exemplified the views of educationally motivated users, whose motivation was accompanied by an unfocused strategy. When asked whether she had planned to attend the Cast Gallery tour as part of her visit, Jenny replied that her attendance on the tour was almost accidental: she *"didn't even know it [the Cast Gallery] was here."* Coupled with this unfocused visit strategy was an unfocused attitude toward interpretation. While she spoke of a desire to expand her "*knowledge*", the precise nature of what she learned, or what precise objects she used to achieve her learning goal was less important than the fact that some form of educational experience occurred during her visit. One might view Jenny as a "leisure learner", described by

Hooper-Greenhill as one for whom learning in the museum is informal and non-specific (Hooper-Greenhill 1999b: 1).

Visitors like Jenny, who were educationally motivated yet unfocused in other ways, often exclusively espoused educational values, whereby the value of the cast was located in their connection to the ancient world. Why this might the case was indicated by my conversation with volunteer William. During our interview, William recounted giving a tour to a pair of visitors who, like Jenny, seemed to have an educationally motivated yet unfocused visit. William reported that on this occasion, the time that he was able to spend with the visitors in the Lower Cast Gallery was cut short due to maintenance work taking place in the space. He informed me that this pair of visitors were the only group interested in attending the tour on that day, so he offered to give them a tour of the main Cast Gallery that was tailored to their individual interests. However, although William asked the visitors whether they had any preferences for the material covered, he described them as simply being interested in learning in general:

> *William (volunteer): They said they were just interested to learn stuff […] I said "what kind of things are you interested in?" and they just said "anything, tell us about anything." […] So I ended up talking about a couple of the military pieces, but they were just genuinely interested to learn about what the gallery could teach them […] They had such enthusiasm and such an interest in… just absorbing whatever it was. They were very sweet.*

William's description suggests that when educationally motivated yet strategically and interpretively unfocused visitors come to the Ashmolean, they accept the dominant interpretation put forward by the Museum's framework, as it enabled them to straightforwardly achieve their learning goal. They make what Bagnall described as a "confirmatory reading of what the site offers" (Bagnall 2003: 89). In a sense, they "buy" the values that the Museum is "selling" and take on a predominantly educational reading of the casts. Again, this accords with Hooper-Greenhill's definition of the leisure-learner. As well as being unspecific about their learning goal in the museum, Hooper-Greenhill also described the leisure learner as having an experience "based on what is presented to [them] during their visit" (Hooper-Greenhill 1999b: 21).

Educationally motivated yet unfocused visitors might lean towards educational values for this reason.

Focused strategy, focused interpretation

Other users who visited the Ashmolean with an educational motivation demonstrated a much more focused strategy and interpretive focus. These two types of focus often came hand-in-hand, with those who were focused in terms of movement also showing considerable interpretive focus. I will now demonstrate that although the subject of this interpretive focus often differed, users found what they were looking for in the Cast Gallery. First, I will consider the users who were interpretively focused on expanding their knowledge of antiquity, and second, the users who were interpretively focused on learning about castness.

Many users came to the Cast Gallery with a particular interpretation in mind: their goal was to use the casts to better their understanding of the ancient world. Very often, the users demonstrating such focused, educational agendas were students, who regularly visited the Gallery during their leisure time as a complement to their studies. A representative example of this was student Frankie. When describing her visits to the Cast Gallery, she spoke of having a focused strategy:

> *Frankie (student): [I went] to see stuff from the Roman period, kind of obviously I suppose… Because I'm studying the art of the Roman Empire, AD 14 to AD 337 […] But also… the mythological stuff because that's all relevant. Yeah, that was the main reason I was here.*

Students like Frankie who were interpretively focused on the ancient world overwhelmingly found what they were looking for in the Cast Gallery. Like many of the tutors discussed in section 5.1.3, they often demonstrated a focus on what they referred to as "*relevance*", namely the casts' relevance to their study of antiquity. Unsurprisingly, users with this combination of educational motivation and focus on specific, ancient interpretations tended to present entirely educational values for the casts.

Other educationally motivated users who were as strategically and interpretationally focused as Frankie identified different values. One such user was visitor Stewart, who I introduced in section 4.1.2. When asked what motivated his visit the Ashmolean, Stewart responded:

> *Stewart (visitor): To come to the tour! We've been to the Ashmolean lots of times, knew there was a Cast Gallery... saw it was, kind of, advertised... that there was a tour today so we came along. […] I knew [about casts] from the V&A. But I wanted to know… I didn't know much about how it was done.*

Stewart's visit was educationally motivated and strategically and interpretively focused: he seemed to have attended the tour specifically to learn about cast making. As outlined in Chapter 4, Stewart identified historical values for the casts. Like Frankie's above, Stewart's visit can be described as "self-reinforcing" (Falk 2006): he had intended to visit the Cast Gallery to learn about castness and thus viewed the casts as objects in their own right. His intrinsic values accorded with the narrative that he had set out prior to his visit. However, while the users discussed above could be seen as adopting a confirmatory reading of the Ashmolean's framework, Stewart might be considered to have taken a so-called "rejective reading" (Bagnall 2003: 89). Stewart did not explicitly dismiss or disregard the interpretation with which he was presented on the tour (he spoke throughout our interview of his enjoyment of the tour) but the values that he identified did not align with those that are dominant in the Museum framework. Stewart is also unlike Frankie in that he can be considered something of an outlier. Educationally motivated, focused viewers were usually interpretively focused on antiquity, rather than on castness.

Unfocused strategy, moderately focused interpretation

Other users demonstrating the (much rarer) combination of unfocused strategy with moderately focused interpretation also took rejective readings of the Ashmolean's interpretations. One such user was visitor Susan. Susan, a mature student Fine Art, told me that her main motivations for visiting the Ashmolean were educational:

> *Susan (visitor): I'm interested in learning about the transition between art and science. So that also got me here today.*

Abbey: Were there specific objects that you wanted to see?

Susan (visitor): Not really… I'm more interested in just the sort of the fact that it's an institution and I have been considering the fact that a lot of things connected with the institution are taken to be truths yet they contain fantasy at the same time.

Abbey: So, did you plan to spend time in the Cast Gallery at all today?

Susan (visitor): No, I fell into this. [laughs] I was just walking, so no, I had no idea that this was part of my day. So I feel very lucky.

Susan's interpretive focus can be described as moderate and her movement strategy unfocused. She had a broad topic in mind that she wanted to explore (the notion of truth vs. fantasy) yet she was not as focused as Frankie or Stewart on a particular interpretation. Her strategy can also be described as unfocused on the grounds that she spoke of being happy to *"fall in"* to a Cast Gallery tour despite not planning to attend. She seemed keen to encounter anything within the Museum that she could link to her broad theme of interest. In section 4.2.2, I described Susan's atmospheric response to the casts, in which she recognised their intrinsic value. This might be linked to her preconceived ideas for her visit. She described being intrigued by the idea of "*fantasy*" and her atmospheric response seemed to be of precisely a fantastical nature. She imagined herself alone with the casts at night, taking in the "*creepy*" atmosphere. Susan's non-cognitive experience might therefore be considered to align with her visit agenda. This example might show that users who were moderately focused on broad topics that did not necessarily relate immediately to the casts were also capable of making a rejective reading of the Museum's framework, valuing the casts in the ways that aligned with their visit agendas.

Summary

Thus far, I have demonstrated that those who were educationally motivated and unfocused in terms of both strategy and interpretation received a learning experience in the Cast Gallery that seemed to satisfy their visit agenda. As they were presented with a learning experience that was focused on antiquity, these leisure-learners

espoused educational values that located the casts' value in the ancient world. These visitors can be described as having been influenced by the Museum's framework. Meanwhile, educationally motivated users who were focused in terms of both strategy and interpretation also found what they were looking for in the Cast Gallery. They espoused values that accorded with their specific interpretive focus, sometimes historical (where casts as casts were the interpretive focus) and more often educational (where the ancient world was the interpretive focus). The latter users can be considered not as being influenced by the Museum's framework but almost working in partnership with it. The former might be considered to reject the Ashmolean's framework, but only implicitly.

Before turning my attention away from educationally motivated users to their recreationally motivated counterparts, I must comment on one further noteworthy trend that emerged from my analysis: most educationally motivated users (aside from the likes of Susan) usually exhibited only cognitive values. Occasionally, such users recognised that non-cognitive experiences could occur in the Cast Gallery and identified these responses as having value, but they did not report personally experiencing the casts in this way. This was highlighted by student Kate (an educationally motivated user who was both strategically focused and interpretationally focused on the ancient world):

> *Kate (student): I think you can have a response to [casts] that's valuable [laughs]. Whether you're a student or just an ordinary person so yeah, when you see the Laocoön where it used to be downstairs,*[57] *it was like presented in a way that made you have a very strong reaction to it. And that's valuable to have in a museum.*

The detached way in which Kate spoke about this phenomenon was notable. Kate discussed the fact that there could be *"a very strong reaction"* to casts, identifying cast

[57] In 2016, the Laocoön cast was displayed not in the Cast Gallery but at the foot of the staircase that descends into the atrium (which can be seen on the right-hand-side of Fig.3.i.). It is likely to its placement here that Kate referred.

B130, which represents Laocoön, as a key object that might provoke such emotive responses, but her use of the second person "*you*" does not explicitly reveal that this was something she had experienced personally. She seemed reticent to divulge a personal emotive response. The reason why this might be the case is highlighted by considering one final group of educationally motivated users, those who exhibit what I call a "highly focused" interpretive strategy.

Highly focused strategy, highly focused interpretation

Above, I described a type of interpretively focused users as those who entered the Cast Gallery with the intention of using the casts to learn about the ancient world. However, some users demonstrated an even more focused approach than this, that which I call "highly focused". Highly focused users demonstrated a desire to see not just objects from "the ancient world" or "the Roman period" in general but specific individual ancient artworks. Visitors Travis and Connor, who were both introduced in Chapter 4, demonstrated highly focused strategies. Travis reported that he come to the tour specifically to see casts **C86-89**, which represent the *Amazons** from the *Temple of Artemis at Ephesos**. Meanwhile Connor's visit had been motivated by his desire to see cast **C172**, which reproduces the *Aphrodite of Knidos**.

Users like Travis and Connor who exhibited highly focused strategies and interpretation were of especial note because of the way in which they interacted with non-cognitive responses. Connor's non-cognitive, bridging response to cast **C172** was discussed in section 4.2.3. Travis described a similar non-cognitive response when asked what he enjoyed most about his time in the Cast Gallery:

> *Travis (visitor): Of course, seeing the Lemnian Athena, we saw her head fairly recently, well a cast of her head, but maybe it was actually a Roman copy of her head... Wherever it was... But to see the head on the body here was a magical experience […] And being so close to the victory of Samothrace, even though it's a cast... We have seen the original in the Louvre, but somehow that one [the cast] seemed bigger and rather more impressive […] You can actually... you have some inkling of what the original artist had in his mind or her mind when they created...*

Although Travis's statement here was cut short by an interruption from his wife Rose, he seemed to describe a physicality-focused emotive response, similar to those discussed in section 4.2.1. Seeing cast **C75**, which reproduces the *Athena Lemnia**, and **B140a**, which represents the *Nike of Samothrace**, seemed to connect with his previous experiences with other versions of the sculptures, but this was not only impactful in terms of its pedagogical value. Travis's description of the cast as "*magical*" presents it as enchanting and emotionally poignant. His encounter with **B140a** seemed to be especially impactful, to such an extent that his experience with the original in Paris was deemed second-rate.

However, when asked directly about whether the casts had value, both Travis and Connor described exclusively educational values. Connor valued the casts, in his words, for *"the things they carry to us"*. Having been asked to expand on this, he stated that the casts were valuable *"as stores of knowledge about the ancient past."* Like Connor, Travis answered only in terms of educational values: in section 4.2.4, I contrasted the cognitive educational values that he identified to the non-cognitive response of his wife, Rose.

As well as espousing these educational values, Travis and Connor were interesting cases in that they both outright rejected the possibility of precisely the emotive reactions that they had themselves described. When I asked what Connor imagined it might be like to touch a cast, he responded:

> *Connor (visitor): Prosthetic would be the word I'd use. Like [touching] a stuffed animal, it not being the real thing… I have no emotional response to them [the casts], but for… again, the things they carry to us, I'd certainly like to spend some more time in here.*

Connor described himself as being completely emotionally indifferent in the presence of the casts, which seems at odds with his earlier description of feeling moved by the volunteer's discussion of **C172**. Likewise, while Travis was enthusiastic about the Cast Gallery and casts in general, when I asked him whether he would like to touch a plaster cast, he replied:

> *Travis (visitor): I wouldn't. I don't need to touch a plaster cast. If it was a bronze then perhaps I might want to touch it. But I think the thing about the plaster cast is that you look at it and you learn from it but you won't get the same aesthetic kick as you would from looking at either the Roman marble or the Greek bronze.*

Like Connor, Travis did not believe that he shared an emotional experience, or in his words "*the same aesthetic kick*", with the casts. To better understand what appears to be a discrepancy between Connor and Travis's perceptions of their experience and the observed reality, I considered two similar discussions of visitors not wishing to emotionally engage during museum visits (i.e., Bagnall 2003; Reigel 1996).

In their respective studies, Bagnall and Reigel highlighted the fact that while some visitors to museums and heritage sites emotionally engage with the content presented to them, others actively decide not to have an emotional response. In Bagnall's study of visitors to the immersive living history exhibits at Wigan Pier and Reigel's investigation of a 1992 exhibition in Stuttgart focused on post-war Germany, both scholars wrote that some visitors found the exhibition material to be too emotionally resonant for their liking and chose for this not to be a part of their visit. Visitors in each study expressed a preference for cognitive, educationally focused experiences. Many instead wanted to read labels and learn (Reigel 1996: 87). They were "keen to separate, and to mark as distinct, museum education and personal emotion" (Bagnall 2003: 92). However, while the observations from these studies have similarities with my interviews from the Cast Gallery, there was an important difference. Visitors to the Pier and to the Stuttgart exhibition did not seem to *want* to emotionally engage with the exhibition content, and often chose not to visit the rooms of the Pier/exhibition that might stir them in this manner. By contrast, in the Cast Gallery, both Travis and Connor seemed to experience emotional responses, but felt that they *could* not, i.e., were incapable of, precisely these non-cognitive reactions. They rejected the emotional experience in a different way.

In looking for an explanation for this, one might consider the relationship between Travis and Connor's highly focused predetermined interpretation for the casts and the educational framework provided by the Ashmolean. In the case studies discussed above

from Bagnall and Reigel, both the Pier and the Stuttgart exhibition were aiming to emotionally connect with their users through their content. The post-war exhibition in particular made the deliberate choice not to include text panels or labels in rooms that recreated the appearance of a bomb-destroyed cellar in order to "immerse visitors in recreations of war and post-war scenarios" (Reigel 1996: 87). By contrast, the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery seems less focused on emotionally engaging with its users. I have shown throughout this chapter that the Museum's interpretive framework for the casts is educationally focused. In addition to this, the particular "interactional style" that the Museum uses within its communications does not encourage emotive engagement with the objects. I will now explain how this is likely to be impactful.

In her discussion of interactional style, Louise Ravelli outlines two different types of communication, which relate to how the museum positions its relationship with the users engaging with its texts. The first style is characterised by text which simply presents information to be absorbed (Ravelli 2006: 7). Ravelli describes this as an "authoritative" style, which positions the Museum as being distant from its readers (ibid.: 4). The second style is characterised by texts which position the Museum as a "less formal presence" (ibid.), inviting the viewer to provide a response, typically through the medium of questions (ibid.: 7). In the Cast Gallery, the Ashmolean Museum adopts the former style, positioning itself as an authoritative source of knowledge. This can be seen when looking at a representative example of label text, for instance that attached to cast **H112** in the main Cast Gallery (Figs.5.x-y). In Fig.5.y, a factual description of the Roman version of the Aphrodite sculpture is given, alongside an interpretation of her exemplification of "Classical beauty". A response, emotional or otherwise, is not encouraged by such labels. Likewise, the way in which volunteers are trained to deliver Cast Gallery tours also pushes them to take the authoritative stance seen in the texts. From my own experience as a former Cast Gallery tour guide, during training we were not regularly encouraged to engage our audience in conversational tours that invited responses. Our role was to deliver information primarily relating to the ancient world. We were encouraged to mention at the outset of our tours that any questions should be left until the end. Therefore, in a museum that encourages emotional responses, users might feel that building an emotional connection is a

legitimate option during their visit, one that they can choose to accept or reject. However, in a museum that does not encourage emotive engagement, such responses may be perceived by visitors as not being legitimate, further pushing cognitive, educational values to the fore. This explains why users like Travis and Connor, and (to a less extreme extent) Kate, may demonstrate not an unwillingness to emotionally engage but an inability to accept non-cognitive experiences. Overall, in the cases of Travis and Connor, the combination of their highly focused interpretations and the Museum framework could have held them back from identifying any values beyond the cognitive and educational.[58]

[58] Another factor that likely influenced Connor and Travis's behaviour was evident in their repeated references to the casts as copies. That this was an issue for both users was evident when Connor pejoratively described the casts as not being "*the real thing*". Travis implied that he shared similar concerns when he discussed how he would be more inclined to have touch ancient objects instead of "*a plaster cast*". The impact of casts' status as reproductions on user interpretations will be fully discussed in Chapter 7.

*Figure 5.x Cast **H112**, which represents Aphrodite. 30/06/2021.*

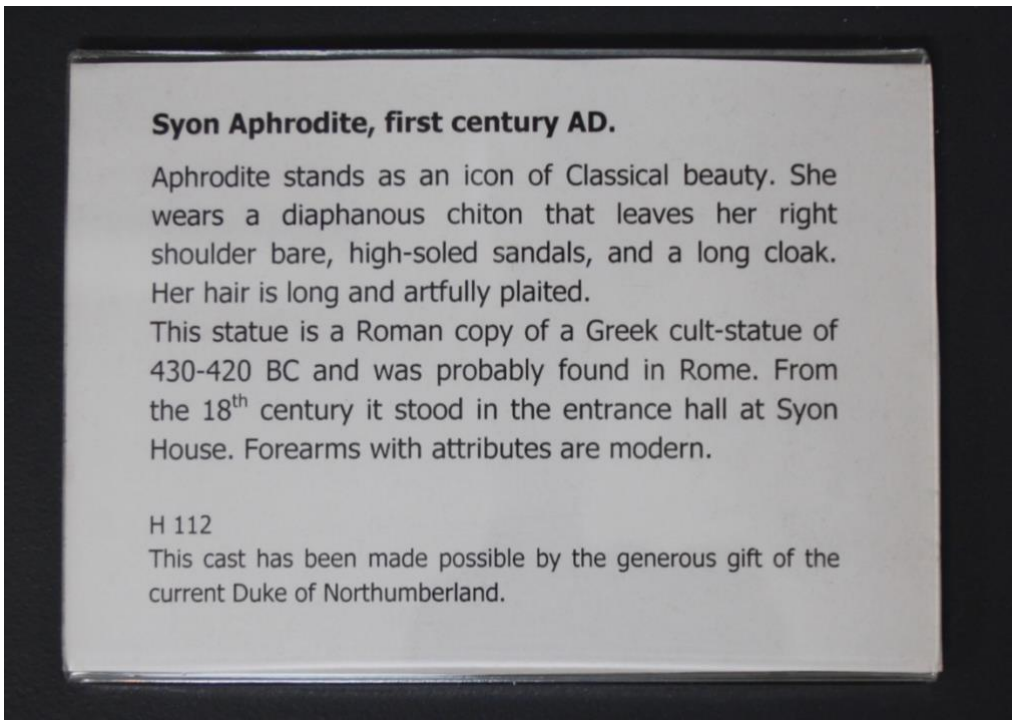


*Figure 5.y Label attached to cast **H112**. 30/06/2021.*

5.2.2 Recreational motivation

I now turn attention to users with recreational visit motivations. While educational visit motivations were the most commonly observed, they could be combined with other types of motivation, which can be described as recreational in nature. Many Ashmolean users demonstrated that as well as learning, the Museum drew them in for other reasons. For example, when asked about why they had chosen to visit the Ashmolean, visitors Travis and Rose replied as follows:

> *Travis (visitor): Well we came here yesterday to look at various things, so today's visit was to look again at, in my case, about ten items that I'd seen yesterday that I wanted to have a closer look at and well… learn more about really. Basically, these were eighteenth-century European paintings and the other main thing, of course, was coming to see the three Amazons. So… I've been trying to do that for the last two, three, four years and now I've managed to do it! For me, obviously looking at the three Amazons together, that was the main thing.*
>
> *Rose (visitor): I'm pretty much the same. It's really the Ashmolean as a whole that I'm interested in. So I just like to keep coming back, sitting somewhere and absorbing something. I find that's the best way to get to know pieces.*

Although this pair visited the Ashmolean together, and Rose saw their motivations as being aligned, Travis and his wife are representative of very different visit agendas. Travis demonstrated educational motivations, and, as we saw above, was highly focused in terms of strategy and interpretation, both inside the Cast Gallery and in the Ashmolean in general. By contrast, Rose's agenda was a lot more varied. She exhibited traits of an educational motivation but with an unfocused strategy. Through her reference to "*getting to know*" objects, she expressed an interest in gaining something from her visit, but this did not necessarily seem to be the acquisition of greater knowledge about particular pieces in the same way as Travis. Through her use of the vague words like "*something*" and "*somewhere*", she presented herself as being happy to take in any object that happened to catch her eye, leisure-learning characteristics comparable to Jenny above. However, unlike Jenny, Rose also spoke of other motivations behind her visit. What seemed of primary importance to her was the

museum context: the act of simply being present in "*the Ashmolean as a whole*". This implied that she derived enjoyment purely from visiting a museum. Rose's visit motivation may also have social elements. Her description of her agenda as being the same as Travis's could indicate her desire to have a shared social experience with him in the Museum. Thus, Rose might be best described as recreationally and socially motivated. This might explain her non-cognitive response, which I discussed in we saw in section 4.2.4. Perhaps her more varied visit motivations meant that she was less influenced by the Museum's educational framework, resulting in her being more receptive than Travis to wider forms of experience and encounter.

This theory finds support when one takes into account that other visitors with mixed educational and recreational motivations, such as Leah, were also receptive to many forms of experience. Leah described her visit as being educationally motivated by her informal studies of the history of art:

> *Leah (visitor): Since I started working part time, I've dragged [laughs and gestures to Sophia] along because I've just started to read about the history of art and I thought I needed to have a basic understanding and so my plan is to do lots of reading but also I wanted to sort of see the art as it were.*
>
> *Sophia (visitor): Yeah, this gives us the opportunity to combine going to interesting places and helping your study.*
>
> *Leah: Yeah. But also, we base weekends away… we are going down to the British Museum next…*
>
> *Sophia: And our holidays this year will be Istanbul to see the Byzantine stuff.*

Leah can also be described as being moderately focused: her interest was in "*the history of art*" in general, and she seemed to be happy to explore any objects or themes that related to this. However, in a similar manner to Rose, Leah and Sophia's motivations were also social and recreational, driven by the enjoyment of spending time together and the pleasure of visiting *"interesting places".* When asked whether she liked the plaster casts, Leah gave the following answer:

> *Leah (visitor): I actually like the fact that you've got them all* en masse *down here. I actually think that that's actually more interesting than the gallery upstairs. Because when you're walking around the gallery, I'm sort of really aware all the time that these are not originals, whereas here the fact that they're casts… it's part of it, isn't it? It's slightly crazy, isn't it? With all of these things, and the fact that they are all moved around and worked on and people are doing projects or whatever… that's what I like more than… kind of like a behind-the-scenes look. About three years ago, going to the Victoria and Albert, they'd got a gallery open where… it was basically things were being renovated there and that was almost more interesting than seeing the exhibitions on display. There wasn't as much in as here and there were some casts there but… I like the fact that this is obviously casts and it's all a bit mad! That's what I like.*

Leah seemed to have experienced an atmospheric response that was generated (like the others discussed in section 4.2.2) by the intrinsic qualities of the casts. Again, a user with both educational and recreational agendas demonstrated a greater ability to engage non-cognitively with the casts.

Meanwhile, users with exclusively recreational motivations were the most likely to experience a non-cognitive response. This included visitor Polly. I introduced Polly in section 4.2.1 when she detailed her physicality-focused response to cast **B140a**. Polly visited with her relative, Stewart. As shown above, Stewart visited the Ashmolean with a specific strategy and focused interpretation, namely attending the Cast Gallery tour to learn more about casts. However, when Polly was asked about her visit motivation, she reported that she had come along for social and recreational reasons:

> *Polly (visitor): Well I'm staying with relatives so I was happy to come along with Stewart.*

Like many other users with similar motivations, Polly's entirely social and recreational visit agenda coincided with an emotional response, of a kind that Stewart, who had educational aims of learning more about castness, did not exhibit. Thus, one might conclude that users with purely recreational motivations, in addition to those with mixed educational and recreational visit motivations, were less influenced by the

Museum's framework and were more likely to experience a non-cognitive response to the casts.

However, there were some users for whom this was not the case. This included visitor Greg. Greg's visit motivation was primarily recreational. He described coming to the Ashmolean in search of a tranquil ambience:

> *Greg (visitor): So I come to the Ashmolean quite a lot. I kind of see it as a relaxing place to come and just be for a bit, you know? […] It's quite meditative. It's very quiet. So nothing specific.*

Greg's visit might also be described as unfocused in terms of strategy: he described the tour as being a *"stumble upon"* experience for him. Based on the discussions above, one might expect Greg, like Polly, to demonstrate a non-cognitive response. However, when I introduced Greg in section 4.1.1, I described the educational values with which he imbued the casts. During our interview, he did not describe anything that might be considered a non-cognitive response. His stance might be to do with his view of the role of museums in general. He explicitly characterised museums as places of learning:

> *Greg: So, I think casts are… because if a museum's aiming to tell a story which I suppose it is, or revealing something of the past, then having the copies lets that happen. So, I think they are valuable.*

Even though his individual visit motivation was not educational, Greg's broader conceptualisation of the museum as a place in which to learn caused him to emphasise the casts' educational values. This cultural view of the museum as a place for learning was widespread in the Ashmolean.[59] Like Greg, many users saw museums in general, and the Ashmolean by extension, as having an overall educational function, with a particular focus on contributing historical knowledge. The following statement from visitor Chloe was representative of this trend:

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[59] The educational role of the museum is well discussed in scholarship (Hooper-Greenhill 1999b; Hooper-Greenhill 2007b), although others have argued that museums have purposes that go beyond the educational (Trofanenko and Segall 2014). In particular, the museum as a socially purposeful place has been explored (Sandell 2007).

Chloe (visitor): Well, the purpose of a museum is mostly education. I feel like the whole point is to sort of help people see and understand the past.

Personal agendas are therefore important in determining the values that visitors identify for casts, but Greg demonstrated that cultural conceptions were just as significant. It is this factor that I will examine in Chapter 6.

5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I posited that the Ashmolean's users overwhelmingly subscribed to instrumental values, particularly those of an educational nature, in part due to the framework provided by the Museum. This framework is oriented toward using casts as surrogates for the understanding of antiquity on macro, meso, and micro scales. The global layout of the Museum establishes the expectation that casts are objects relevant to the ancient world, and the local layout of the Gallery also emphasises ancient themes and contexts. Finally, the written and verbal communication of the Gallery's interpretive text and tour format also creates an ancient focus: these methods of information delivery are based on tutor-student communications. I have argued that this framework is highly likely to explain the preponderance of educational values demonstrated by Cast Gallery users.

I also discussed the significance of users' own personal visit agendas in the skewing of values toward the educational. I noted that educational motivations were among the most common reasons for visiting the Ashmolean Museum in general and the Cast Gallery in particular. Many educationally motivated users were also interpretively focused on using the casts to learn about antiquity. They worked alongside the Museum framework to interpret the casts as surrogates for the ancient statues that held their interest, providing a further explanation for the prevalence of educational value. Educationally motivated yet strategically and interpretively unfocused users also typically espoused educational values, accepting the interpretive framework that the Museum provided. Users who visited the Gallery hoping to learn about casts as objects in their own right also found what they were looking for, but this was not achieved quite

so easily, as these users had to take a rejective reading of the Museum's framework. They were required to explicitly seek a Cast Gallery experience that aligned with their interest in the castness of casts. Meanwhile, users who were more open to non-cognitive experience were able to derive precisely this from their Cast Gallery visits. Although experiencing the casts as intrinsically valuable objects in their own right is not explicitly encouraged by the Cast Gallery, the atmosphere (particularly of the Lower Cast Gallery space) enabled socially and recreationally motivated users to enjoy such emotive experiences. Overwhelmingly, this chapter shows that those who came into the Cast Gallery with a particular motivation or goal in mind were satisfied by their experience, and those who were open to emotional encounters were able to embrace them.

I also noted that within the Cast Gallery, educationally motivated users did not tend to be encouraged to look outside of their visit agenda. Those visiting with highly focused strategies for learning about antiquity therefore found it difficult to embrace any other kind of encounter, leading to some users denying the existence of their own experiences that were indicative of intrinsic value. I argued again that the Museum's framework and methods of communication were key reasons for this, but, toward the end of the chapter, I suggested that wider cultural conceptions of the educational role of the museum might also be a factor. I will explore further socio-cultural conceptions that encourage an educational valuation of the casts in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 The Classical Archaeological Interpretive Community

In Chapter 5, I demonstrated how the Ashmolean Museum's interpretive framework and the personal visit agendas of its users often combined to produce a Cast Gallery experience that emphasised educational value. In this chapter, I will explore one further factor that influences conceptions of value, namely the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists to which many of the Ashmolean's users belong. I begin by outlining the concept of the interpretive community (6.1). Next, I will describe the defining features of the Classical Archaeological interpretive community within the Ashmolean Museum, namely a common attitude to the material of plaster (6.2). I will then demonstrate that these attitudes are emblematic of the discipline of Classical Archaeology as a whole, by highlighting the similar manner in which ancient plaster casts discovered around the Mediterranean and Egypt tend to be interpreted as purely instrumentally valuable objects (6.3). To place these trends in context, I will then outline the peculiar value system to which Classical Archaeologists often subscribe (6.4), before showing how plaster fits into this (6.5). Ultimately, this discussion will enable me to conclude that the same disciplinary background / value system that causes Classical Archaeologists to interpret ancient plaster casts as instrumentally valuable objects also influences members of this interpretive community to emphasise educational values for the Ashmolean's more modern casts (6.6).

6.1 Theoretical background: The interpretive community

The concept of the interpretive community was introduced to Museum Studies by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill.[60] Hooper-Greenhill recognised that although each individual is active in making sense of their own museum experience, these personal factors are

[60] Hooper-Greenhill borrowed this concept from linguists such as Stanley Fish. Fish noted that many readers from comparable socio-cultural backgrounds shared the same strategies for reading and interpreting texts, describing them as hailing from the same "interpretive community" (Fish 1980: 171). Hooper-Greenhill's work also owes a debt to Gadamerian hermeneutics. It was philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer who challenged the idea that any form of meaning was the same at all times and in all places, instead placing an emphasis on the situatedness of the people interpreting and the interaction of their prior knowledge with the making of meaning (Gadamer 1976: 117-133). This philosophical background underpins the ideas of interpretive communities discussed in both linguistics and Museum Studies.

mediated by the "ways of thinking" inherent in the cultural and social contexts to which they belong (Hooper-Greenhill 2007a: 89). She noted that those hailing from similar socio-cultural backgrounds often share similar "interpretive strategies", namely the priority that the group as a whole attributes to particular forms of analysis, the vocabulary that they tend to use to describe objects, and the background and/or specialist knowledge that they possess that enables certain aspects of objects to be perceived (Hooper-Greenhill 1999a: 13). She describes those with interpretive strategies in common as belonging to the same "interpretive community" (Hooper-Greenhill 2007a: 80). These communities are not necessarily defined by demographic, economic background, gender, class, or race, and members of the communities do not even need to know one another (ibid.: 78-9). Instead, it is their comparable interpretation of objects that defines their membership in the community. I will now demonstrate that among the users of the Ashmolean Museum, there is a significant interpretive community formed by those who have a background in the discipline of Classical Archaeology.

6.2 What defines the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists?

My choice to describe the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists within the Ashmolean Museum as "significant" is deliberate. I believe that this is a fitting description for two reasons. First, because of the prevalence of this interpretive community. Many of the Gallery's categories of user: e.g., tutors and students, had a background in Classical Archaeology, as did many volunteers. Second, "significant" is an appropriate descriptor because of the profound impact of this interpretive community, even on users who are not members of this group. For example, the curators who determine the Gallery's interpretive framework are members of this interpretive community.

Classical Archaeologists within the Ashmolean can be considered an interpretive community on the basis of their common disciplinary background,[61] but also because of the interpretive strategies that are peculiar to them. First, members of the Ashmolean's Classical Archaeology interpretive community, like many other Cast Gallery users, predominantly viewed the casts as instrumentally valuable objects. However, their group is distinct in that they often expressed an almost exclusive focus on educational value. Second, many also exhibited a specific attitude toward the material of plaster. This attitude was exemplified in the following response from a Classical Archaeology tutor when I asked whether they would like their students to be able to touch the casts:

> *Tutor: Honestly, no. […] The fact that these are plaster I think removes almost all imperative to touch them […] because basically plaster is plaster and painted plaster is painted plaster. Whereas in other contexts touching porphyry is different from touching limestone is different from touching sandstone is different from touching marble. Polished marble is different from touching rough marble, broken marble is different from touching cut marble. All these differences are absent from a cast.*

Compared to the many possible forms which the material of marble can take (polished, rough, broken, and cut), plaster was presented by this tutor as being materially identical in almost every case. None of the material variations that can be observed across the Ashmolean Museum's cast collection was acknowledged.[62] One student, Felicity, also pithily summarised the attitudes of the Classical Archaeological interpretive community toward plaster when she stated, with a shrug: "*well, they're just plaster, aren't they?*" This led me to question whether Classical Archaeologists within the Ashmolean Museum

[61] While all members of this interpretive community had some form of exposure to the study of Classical Archaeology, this occurred at many different levels. For example, some were students, others were former students, some were tutors, and some were more casual learners.

[62] One user within the Classical Archaeology interpretive community did discuss plaster's variable qualities. This was tutor Dominik, who told me that there is "*a huge difference in surface qualities*" between casts, attributable to factors such as their age and surface treatments that had been applied. Dominik developed this knowledge during his time working as a research assistant at a cast gallery in Vienna, when he had to "*label all the ancient portraits in the Cast Gallery. And so that means we had to carry them around*." This tactile experience with casts seemingly enabled him to acquire an awareness of their heterogeneity.

did not realise the full scope of values for plaster casts because of the material in which they were made.

This hypothesis seemed to be confirmed by a focus group of Classical Archaeology students, when archaeological finds of ancient plaster objects were discussed. I had asked the group how they imagined that touching a plaster cast might feel, compared to a haptic encounter with ancient marble sculpture, and the conversation quickly turned to the students' own tactile experiences with ancient materials. A member of this focus group was Isla, a PhD student in Classical Archaeology. She discussed her experience on an archaeological excavation in Italy, where she decided to take home a piece of marble as a keepsake:

> *Isla (student): Yeah, I did take a piece of marble from the site... [laughs] It wasn't in use! They have this kind of like rubbish dump of just stuff and I was like "oh I'll have a bit of that" [laughs] It had... it was slightly worked, so it was worth taking but I wouldn't take a piece of plaster. No.*

When asked why she would not pick up a piece of ancient plaster from a dig site, Isla responded:

> *Isla: Well, the material itself is kind of uninteresting in itself. And... you know, of course, it doesn't have the object history that we're interested in.*

Like the tutor quoted above, Isla seemed to hold ancient marble in high regard, yet presented the equally ancient material of plaster in a somewhat negative manner. She suggested that it lacks a certain quality, which she vaguely described as "*object history*", that would warrant it being the recipient of archaeological interest and study. Isla's reference to plaster being "*uninteresting <u>in itself</u>* [emphasis mine]" implies that the material's missing quality is intrinsic value. This led me to question whether this was a disciplinary attitude to plaster as a whole.

In order to understand Classical Archaeological attitudes toward plaster to its fullest extent, I began to investigate archaeological plaster finds from the ancient world, considering how they are typically discussed and interpreted by the discipline. This

investigation revealed notable correspondences between how modern plaster casts within the Ashmolean Museum were valued by the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists, and how ancient plaster objects were valued in the discipline more widely. Both ancient and modern plaster objects were viewed primarily as instrumentally valuable. From my research, I gained the impression that the reason for this was the position that the material of plaster occupied within the unique disciplinary value system of Classical Archaeology, a value system that developed from the very inception of the discipline and evolved as a result of its relationships to other fields of study. I will now substantiate these conclusions, by presenting my investigation of the disciplinary value system to which both ancient and modern casts are subject. This will place in context the interpretive strategies that the Ashmolean's community of Classical Archaeologists exhibit in the Cast Gallery, explaining precisely why they value the casts in the ways that they do.

6.3 Disciplinary attitudes to ancient plaster

That the material of plaster might be at issue for Classical Archaeologists becomes clear when one compares the interpretation of ancient objects made in plaster with that of other objects that are proposed to have had the same functions, yet are made in different substances. Take for example Cornelius Vermeule's discussion of miniature bronze versions of Myron's *Discobolos** (Fig.6.a), which have been found across the ancient Mediterranean (Vermeule 1977: 19). Vermeule asserts that these bronze copies could have been instrumentally valued in antiquity as functional models, used by sculpture salesmen advertising their wares or by those planning large-scale sculpture commissions, but he also recognises their intrinsic, aesthetic qualities as decorative objects in their own right, discussing their suitability for household adornment (ibid.).

Many plaster casts that survive from antiquity might be interpreted in the same way as Vermuele's bronze models. However, I will now argue that this interpretation is seldom given serious contemplation, with the ancient objects' purely instrumental functions receiving the lion's share of attention. To make this point, I will discuss three examples of ancient plaster finds, from Baiae, Italy (6.3.1) and Begram, Afghanistan (6.3.2), and another collection currently held at the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum Museum in

Hildesheim, Germany (6.3.3). I will first introduce these casts before showing why they can be usefully considered as comparable to the much more modern casts within the Ashmolean Museum (6.3.4). Then, I will discuss how, like the Ashmolean's plaster casts, they are most often interpreted by Classical Archaeological scholarship as instrumentally valuable objects, despite the fact that other interpretations which emphasise their intrinsic value are possible (6.3.5).

*Figure 6.a Cast **C25**, which represents a full-size version of Myron's Discobolos. It is miniature versions of this sculpture that are discussed in Vermeule 1977. 26/05/2021.*

6.3.1 Baiae

In 1954, a total of 430 fragments of ancient plaster casts were discovered at the Roman city of Baiae in the Gulf of Naples (Opper 1996: np). Many were in a poor state but around 300 were in a suitable condition to permit analysis (ibid.). Studies revealed there

were an estimated number of between 24 and 35 plaster cast statues at the site (Landwehr 1985: 181). Although the casts themselves were likely made in the Roman period, they reproduce life-size bronze sculptures produced in fifth- and fourth-century BC Greece, including the *Tyrannicide Group** (Richter 1970a: 296).[63]

6.3.2 Begram

In the 1930's, a cache of 50 plaster casts was discovered in a sealed basement room in an area of Begram, Afghanistan known as the New Royal City (Mehendale 2011: 131).[64] The majority of the casts (40 of the pieces) take the form of circular medallions, measuring 11-22 cm in diameter (Mairs 2014: 183-4). These casts were taken from a different class of object to the Baiae casts, namely relief-decorated Greek silverware that dated to the second half of the third century BC (Cambon 2011:154). The original metal objects were not reproduced in totality, instead individual figures or scenes were cast discretely (Menninger 1996: 94). The medallions, which have been assigned the tentative date of the first century AD (Mehendale 2011: 132), reproduce a variety of scenes taken from Greco-Roman mythology, including representations of the goddesses Athena and Aphrodite (Mairs 2014: 183). Other casts feature erotic scenes linked with the cult of the Greek god of wine, Dionysos (Taddei 1992: 456) or the heads and chests of single figures. These tend to be executed in much higher relief: in some cases, the head of the figure is almost fully detached from the circular background (Mehendale 2011: 141).

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[63] This section introducing the Baiae casts is intentionally quite short because their find spot is a contentious matter, significantly impacting their interpretation. For this reason, I dedicate more attention to it in section 6.3.5.

[64] There is a great deal of scholarly debate surrounding this context. Due to the interruption its excavation by the Second World War and the piecemeal reports published by the excavators (Cambon 2011: 156), the site is "difficult to understand" (Morris 2017: 7). Some have argued that the complex was part of a royal palace (Ghirshman 1946:28; Hamelin 1953:123) but others say nothing at the site indicates that it served a royal function for any substantial part of the year (Mehendale 2011: 143). However, that the casts were discovered there it is not questioned.

6.3.3 Hildesheim

Finally, 76 ancient plaster casts are held at the Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum in Hildesheim, Germany. This collection is mostly comprised of small reliefs, a few moulds, and in-the-round heads (Richter 1958: 370). Like the Begram finds, these small casts are also believed to have been made in the Roman period from examples of Greek metal objects still extant at the time (ibid.: 371). But unlike the Begram finds, these casts were taken from a wide variety of metal equipment: not only drinking vessels, but also mirrors, weapons, harness fittings, jewellery and the like (Rubensöhn 1911: 6). However, they have no known archaeological context. The majority of the collection appeared on the Cairo art market in 1907 with a few other pieces being purchased later in 1910 (ibid.: 3).[65] However, the casts are often thought to originate from ancient Memphis, on the grounds that the city was well known for its metallurgical production (Reinsberg 1980: 14).

6.3.4 Conversations between ancient and modern casts

I now turn to justifying why the three collections of ancient plaster casts introduced above can be usefully considered alongside those from the Ashmolean Museum. I will show that although separated in time by two thousand years, the ancient casts are not terribly dissimilar from the modern casts held in the Ashmolean: they are made from similar materials, using comparable moulds and techniques, and, in some cases, even possess analogous internal structures. The Baiae casts even reproduce the same subject matter as the casts from the Ashmolean.

Turning first to the material similarities, just as Paris provided the source of gypsum for nineteenth-century cast-makers, gypsum deposits from Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Syria supplied the ancient world (Barone and Vanni 1994: 3). The casts from Baiae (Landwehr 1985: 34), Begram (Menninger 1996: 96) and Hildesheim (Rubensöhn 1911: 6) are all made from gypsum.

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[65] Reinsburg provided convincing evidence that the two separate acquisitions belong to the same group of casts. She demonstrated that some pieces from the 1907 purchase join together with corresponding objects purchased in 1910 (Reinsberg 1980: 14).

The casts' making techniques are also comparable. The majority of the Ashmolean's cast collection was produced using the plaster piece-moulds described in section 1.2. Likewise, evidence from some of the Baiae casts suggests that a rigid mould made of plaster was used in their production (Landwehr 1985: 16). The peeling on many of the casts' seams and joints is cited as evidence of this (Rubensöhn 1911: 3). Likewise, the casts from Begram feature small burrs on their surfaces, indicating their manufacture in a rigid mould (Menninger 1996: 93). Other casts within the Ashmolean's collection were made using plastic moulds. Similarly, bruises evident on two fragments from the Baiae cache, likely caused by their shifting around in a deformable mould, suggest that such moulds, probably made from a substance like bitumen[66], were also used in their creation (Landwehr 1985: 17).

Additionally, both the Baiae casts and those from the Ashmolean were not cast whole but in multiple sections. This is evident from the fact that while the casts at Baiae were discovered in a fragmentary state, not all of them were broken (Richter 1970: 296). The edges of some pieces were not fractured in a way that indicates a breakage; deliberate cuts and seams can be observed, indicating that they were cast in pieces and then joined together (Landwehr 1985: 181). Multi-piece moulds are also posited for some of the more complex casts from Begram (Menninger 1996: 94).

An investigation of the interior of the Baiae casts also suggests that liquid plaster was poured into their moulds and swilled around to ensure that it adhered to all crevices (Richter 1970a: 296). Again, this is precisely the method used by the modern craftsmen who produced casts for the Ashmolean and similar institutions. Traces of bones and iron

[66] Bitumen is a black, kneadable, viscous mixture which could be applied to the surface of a sculpture when in its hot, liquid form, and then removed to be used as a mould once it had become dry and solid. Ancient literary evidence describes the use of bitumen in moulding. An anecdote from Lucian reveals that a statue of messenger god Hermes in the Athenian Agora was "covered with pitch from the casts taken every day" (*Zeus Rants* 33). The "pitch" to which Lucian refers is likely to mean bitumen (Chaniotis 2017: 107).

residue on the Baiae pieces indicate that these materials were used as armatures for ancient casts (Landwehr 1985: 7).

Finally, the ancient and modern casts share similar subjects. Upon their discovery, one of the Baiae casts was immediately recognised as reproducing the face of Aristogeiton from the *Tyrranicide Group**(Landwehr 2010: 35). Later, other pieces were recognised as copies of the *Amazons** from the *Temple of Artemis at Ephesos**, and a sculpture representing *Eirene and Ploutos** (ibid.). The Ashmolean Museum's collection also contains copies of precisely these statues: **C5a-b** reproduce the Tyrranicides (Figs.6.b-c); **C86-9** represent the Ephesian Amazons (Fig.6.d); and **C167** represents the Eirene and Ploutos pairing (Fig.6.e). The Ashmolean even contains exact reproductions of the Baiae casts themselves: casts **B216-21** and **H30** reproduce the ancient casts from the site (Figs.6.f-g).

*Figure 6.b Casts **C5a** (left) and **C5b** (right), which collectively represent the Tyrannicide Group. 26/05/2021.*

*Figure 6.c A frontal view of cast **C5a**, which represents the figure of Aristogeiton. 26/05/2021.*

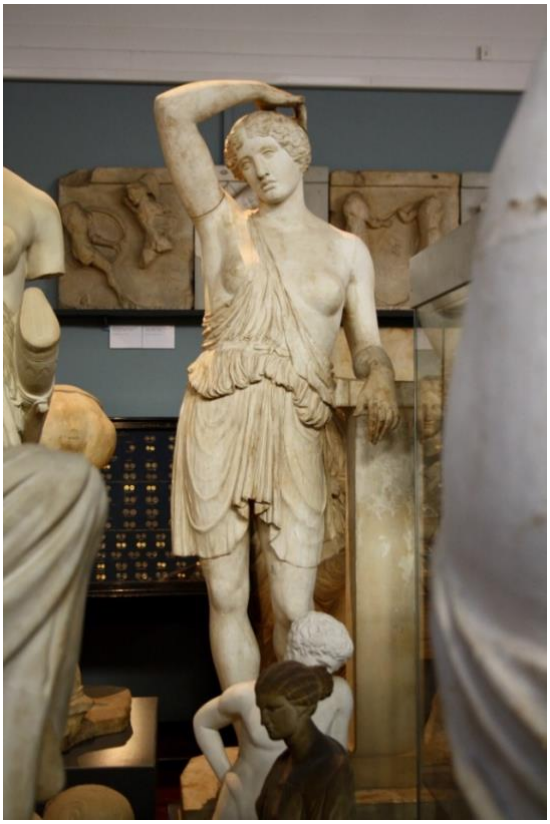

*Figure 6.d Cast **C86**, which represents an Amazon from the Temple of Artemis, Ephesos. 26/05/2021.*

*Figure 6.e Cast **C167**, which represents Eirene and Ploutos. 26/05/2021.*

In summary, these ancient plaster finds can be considered comparable to the Ashmolean's plaster casts on account of their similar material composition, manufacturing technique, and subject matter. I will now outline how these ancient casts are typically interpreted by Classical Archaeologists in the same manner as the Ashmolean's plaster casts: as objects with a great deal of instrumental value, but limited intrinsic value.

*Figure 6.f Cast **B216**, which reproduces the ancient cast of Aristogeiton's face found at Baiae. 30/06/2021.*

*Figure 6.g Cast **B217** which reproduces the ancient cast of Aristogeiton's foot found at Baiae. 30/06/2021.*

6.3.5 Interpreting ancient casts

Classical Archaeological scholarship presents the ancient casts from Baiae, Begram, and Hildesheim as principally serving an instrumental function in antiquity. They are interpreted as tools used within the ancient sculptors' workshop. This is not without good reason: I will now outline that there is convincing evidence to suggest that some plaster casts from the ancient world did indeed fulfil this function.

A single cast from the Hildesheim collection was found covered in a circle of red measuring lines, which are thought to have been used to transfer the image to a new relief (Reinsberg 1980: 259). The cast, which reproduces an image of *Medusa* (a female-bodied snake-haired gorgon from Greek mythology), also bears a series of small holes across its surface. These are thought to have served as reference points used by artists

during the copying process (Burkhalter 1983: 342). Additional evidence comes from an ancient plaster cast of a satyr's head found at Sabratha, Libya. It was discovered in close proximity to a marble head of very similar appearance. The strong resemblance of the facial features and hair on both objects was sufficient for archaeologists to conclude that the marble head was based on the plaster cast (Barone and Vanni 1994: 10-11).

The Baiae casts have also been considered to provide "unequivocal" evidence of the presence of a copyists' workshop in the city (Richter 1970a: 296). This is due to links that have been made between the casts and a marble sculpture of *Aphrodite Sosandra** (Fig.6.h) also found there. Ancient copies of the Aphrodite Sosandra are numerous: they have also been found in Rome, Stabiae, Ephesos, and Crete, to name but a few locations (Stirling 2018: 91-2). The presence of such a well-copied sculpture in Baiae meant that when the plaster casts were uncovered in close proximity, they were interpreted as the intermediary figures in the process of translating Greek bronzes into Roman marble copies (ibid.). This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that the forms of many famous Greek bronzes were also recognised in the Baiae casts: it is possible that they were used as the basis for making Roman marble copies. However, the form of the Aphrodite Sosandra herself was not identified in the Baiae fragments. Today, the Baiae casts continue to be hailed as tools from the sculptor's workshop (Anguissola 2015: 140). They are said to function as a "library of form", from which marble copies of Greek bronze originals could be produced to meet demand (Frederiksen 2010: 20). Classical Archaeologists find it "safe to assume" that the casts were used for this purpose (Landwehr 2010: 35).

*Figure 6.h Cast **C63**, which represents the Aphrodite Sosandra. 26/05/2021.*

Thus, there is evidence to suggest that *some* plaster casts from antiquity could indeed be interpreted as instrumentally valuable models used within sculptors' workshops. However, there is a notable difference between the interpretation of these ancient plaster "models" and the bronze models discussed by Vermuele. Unlike Vermuele's bronze miniatures, scholarship rarely discusses the possibility that the plaster casts from Baiae, Begram, and Hildesheim could also have been intrinsically valuable objects for ancient users.

This is despite the fact that there is evidence that ancient plaster casts might have served as decorative objects in their own right. One example is an ancient plaster head from Seleuceia-Pieria, Turkey. The head, dated to the Hellenistic or early Roman period,

was found near to the House of the Cilicia in an area described as the "Painted Floor" (Padgett 2001: 212).[67] The Painted Floor is judged with some confidence to be a domestic complex (ibid.) The athlete's hair also bore traces of painted decoration upon discovery (Stillwell 1941: 122). Although this paint is no longer visible today (Padgett 2001: 211), it is something that is unlikely to have been present on an artists' model. Others have interpreted this as sufficient evidence that the object was appreciated as a domestic sculpture in its own right (Frederiksen 2010: 24). Thus, the head from Seleucia-Pieria can be considered to provide useful attestation for ancient casts having held intrinsic value for their ancient audience, functioning as decorative objects in their own right. Other archaeological evidence comes from a third century AD Roman tomb at Hama, Syria, where a death mask made in plaster was discovered (Fefjer 2008: 176). The death mask may have been part of the tomb's decorative programme (ibid.: 177).

Ancient literature also suggests that plaster casts held intrinsic value for ancient audiences. In particular, an ancient biographical account of the Roman emperor Septimius Severus describes how, during his reign, three plaster sculptures of Victory were erected "in the customary way" at the circus games (Historia Augusta *10: Septimius Severus,* 22.3). This suggests that plaster statuary appeared routinely in such settings. Hünemörder states that the sculptures referred to in the Historia Augusta are likely to be temporary erections (Hünemörder 2006: np). Although the precise details cannot be reconstructed with any certainty, perhaps we might envisage a set of plaster sculptures that were brought out every year for display at the circus games, or that each year, a new set were manufactured for the occasion.

The Historia Augusta does not make explicit whether plaster casts or sculptures modelled in plaster should be envisaged at the circus games. However, due to their hollow interior, casts would have been a lighter and more portable option than sculptures carved from or modelled in plaster. This means that they could have been

[67] The exact location of this feature is not located on any published plans, making a full investigation of the head's archaeological context difficult.

taken out for the circus games on each occasion with greater ease. In addition, even if new versions were created for each iteration of the games, casts remain the more viable option. Reproducing the images of Victory from moulds would have been a quicker and more cost-effective process than commissioning entirely new sculptures each time. Thus, although the evidence is not explicit, this literary source does infer that plaster casts might have been intrinsically valued in the ancient world as objects in their own right.

Even the evidence from Baiae, Begram, and Hildesheim is not conclusive about the casts' function. There is insufficient evidence to prove without doubt that these pieces functioned only as artists' tools. Although the Baiae casts objects are described as having been found within a "plaster cast factory" (Nichols 2006: 128), their findspot was in fact a first century AD bathhouse complex within an imperial palace (Landwehr 1985: 4). The casts were uncovered in a basement room, a space that could not have served as a workshop on account of its small size (ibid.: 5-6). Instead, it is thought that the casts were dumped into the basement in their fragmentary state along with an infill of soil (ibid.). Therefore, the context in which the objects were found cannot conclusively indicate their purpose. There is also no evidence present on surface of the Baiae casts that betrays their original function. They bear no measuring lines or points, comparable to the Medusa cast discussed above, that might confirm their use as models (Claridge 2015: 110).

Adding to Claridge's scepticism, I argue that the presence of a waterproof coating on the surface of the Baiae casts raises questions about their interpretation. The casts were treated with an emulsion made of wax and oil that rendered them resistant to water and protected them from weathering (Schmid 1985: 203). This waterproof coating is thought to have been deliberately applied rather than being a remnant of a release residue used in the casting process (Landwehr 1985: 23-24). It has been compared to the method of *ganosis** which was often carried out on marble statuary (ibid.) The waterproofing was so effective that it is likely to be part of the reason why the plaster casts survived to this day (ibid.: 6). The casts may have been coated in this emulsion to prolong their life in the sculptors' workshop, but it is also possible that they were

waterproofed for outdoor display. Indeed, the casts show signs of having been located outdoors prior to deposition. The surface of many fragments indicates that water had dripped onto them and it is thought that this occurred in the open air (ibid.: 7). They may well have been abandoned outside in antiquity after becoming obsolete from a sculptors' workshop, but this evidence could also suggest that they were displayed decoratively outdoors. The function of these objects is not as clear cut as it has been presented in scholarly literature.

Similarly, the Begram casts tend to be (rather definitively) described as having been "used in a workshop and not as items of display" (Mairs 2014: 183). Again, this assertion can be challenged. Like the Baiae casts, the context in which the Begram plasters were discovered is not a conclusive indicator of their function. The casts were deliberately secreted away in antiquity alongside the other objects in their cache (Morris 2017: 76), meaning that they were not found inside a workshop that might conclusively indicate their function. Scholars also cite as evidence for their practical function their small size, portability, and their poor condition: some have fingerprints on their surfaces (Mairs 2014: 184). However, I argue that this interpretation overlooks the fact that small, highly portable objects could also have intrinsic value in the ancient world. Items with such qualities made ideal votive offerings. Small, hand-held objects were specifically produced to be left in sanctuaries across the Greco-Roman world by individual dedicants (Hughes 2017: 182). Such objects were often produced in moulds in the same way as the plaster medallions.[68] That a votive role might also be envisaged for the Begram plasters could be indicated by comparative evidence from the site of Aï Khanoum in northern Afghanistan. At the site's Stepped Temple, a plaster cast, a medallion depicting Medusa, was found (Francfort 1984: 35). Stylistically, the original metal object from which the cast was taken is dated to the second century AD (ibid.), and if we assume

[68] Graham discusses mould-made terracotta models of swaddled infants dedicated at Etruscan sanctuaries in Italy from the third to the first centuries BC (Graham 2013: 224). Her work also demonstrates the temporal and geographical diversity of producing portable, mould-made anatomical votives; the phenomenon stretches from the ancient world to today (Graham and Draycott 2017: 1-4).

that the cast was made around the same time,[69] this places us in close temporal proximity to the Begram plasters. The presence of this plaster medallion in a temple context might raise the question of whether plaster casts more widely could have functioned as votive objects in their own right. Therefore, the size and portability of the Begram casts does not necessarily indicate a practical function. As with the Baiae casts, their interpretation perhaps ought to be the subject of more debate.

Additionally, the first in-depth publication of the Hildesheim casts interprets the objects as artists' models (Reinsberg 1980: 14) and this interpretation is described as "securely established" in subsequent literature (Frederiksen 2010: 22). The Hildesheim casts are regularly described as hailing from a metalworking foundry, with some commenting that there is "no doubt" about their interpretation as models (Picón 2014: 452). However, there is little evidence on which to base this claim. As described in section 6.3.3, the casts first came to the attention of archaeologists after they appeared for sale on the art market. Therefore, they cannot be securely associated with a workshop (Bianchi et al. 1988: 146). Bianchi argues that because so little is known about their context, the possibility that the objects might be, in his words, "independent works of art" ought to be considered (ibid.). This possibility has been debated for a single cast within the Hildesheim collection, a relief bust of Egyptian pharaoh Ptolemy I.[70] The decorative brand framing the image of Ptolemy has been interpreted as evidence that appearance of the plaster relief itself was important and that it was not simply used for the transfer of the image (Frederiksen 2010: 22). However, this evidence is not conclusive. It might be possible that this decorative band was simply a feature of the metal object from which the mould was taken. A better argument for the fact that some of the Hildesheim casts might have functioned as decorative objects in their own right can be made by comparing objects from the collection as a whole.

[69] However, dating ancient plaster casts is very difficult, as they could have been made at any point during the life of the original object.
[70] Reinsburg 1980, No.36, Plate 49.

This is because there is a great deal of variation in the quality of the Hildesheim casts. Some, like the Ptolemy cast, are very well made, but others are distinctly messier in their execution. This was noted by Rubensöhn in his discussion of the casts' manufacture (Rubensöhn 1911: 6). Rubensöhn notes how the wet plaster used to create some of the casts seemed to have overflowed when it was poured into the mould. In some cases, the overflow was hacked away from the sides of the finished cast, and in other pieces, the excess remained. Rubensöhn describes these pieces as "very carelessly" made (ibid.). By contrast, other pieces were produced "more cautiously" (ibid.). In these examples, it is likely that a raised rim made in a deformable plastic material (e.g., clay or wax) was placed around the edges of the mould to prevent the plaster from overflowing, giving the casts a clean finish. Time seems to have been dedicated to producing these rims for the casts: the clay or wax is thought to have been moulded free-hand and carefully smoothed (ibid.). This diversity in making technique could suggest that, in some cases, the finished appearance of the plaster cast was deemed sufficiently important to motivate this careful work. In other cases, the final form of the plaster cast was of lesser importance. One might tentatively argue, on this basis, that perhaps the casts in the former category could have been intended for display, and the latter as tools in the artists' workshop, where the appearance of the plaster cast would have mattered much less.

In addition to this, the suspension holes present on many of the Begram and Hildesheim casts also suggest that some did not function exclusively as workshop models. These holes could have been used to hang the pieces on the wall in the artists' workshop, but it is also possible that they were used to suspend the plasters as decorative objects. Indeed, the placement of the holes on a medallion depicting the head of a youth from Begram (Fig.6.i), indicates a desire to hang the object with the image upright. Other mould-made objects from antiquity, such as relief-decorated terracotta plaques, known to have functioned as votive objects in their own right, were suspended in precisely this manner (Salapata 2002: 26-31). By contrast, a cast from Hildesheim representing the *abduction of Europa** (Fig.6.j), bears only a single suspension hole on its right-hand side. When hung from this single hole, the cast would be suspended in portrait orientation, suggesting that there was not an interest in making the landscape-oriented

mythological image readable during suspension.[71] This comparison could indicate that some casts, like the youth from Begram, might have functioned as objects in their own right.

Figure 6.i A circular medallion from Begram representing the head of a youth. One suspension hole can be seen to the right of the youth's head. A matching hole is present on the left-hand side, obscured by the head in this image. Based on Hiebert and Cambon 2011: 182.

It is also possible that the function of ancient plaster objects may have changed over time. Above, I presented the argument that some plaster medallions, in particular that representing Medusa from Aï Khanoum, might be understood as votive objects, expressly made for dedication in an ancient sanctuary. However, it is also possible that the Medusa medallion also served as a tool in an artists' workshop, and was dedicated by the artist at the Stepped Temple later in the object's life. Tools such as loom weights

[71] This interpretation is relatively secure, since original edge of this cast is preserved. It is not possible that a second suspension hole could have originally been present on the piece and is now lost due to breakage.

that originally fulfilled a practical function in the lives of their dedicants are known to have been used as votives across the Greco-Roman world (Hughes 2017: 182), so this is not outside of the realms of possibility for plaster casts.

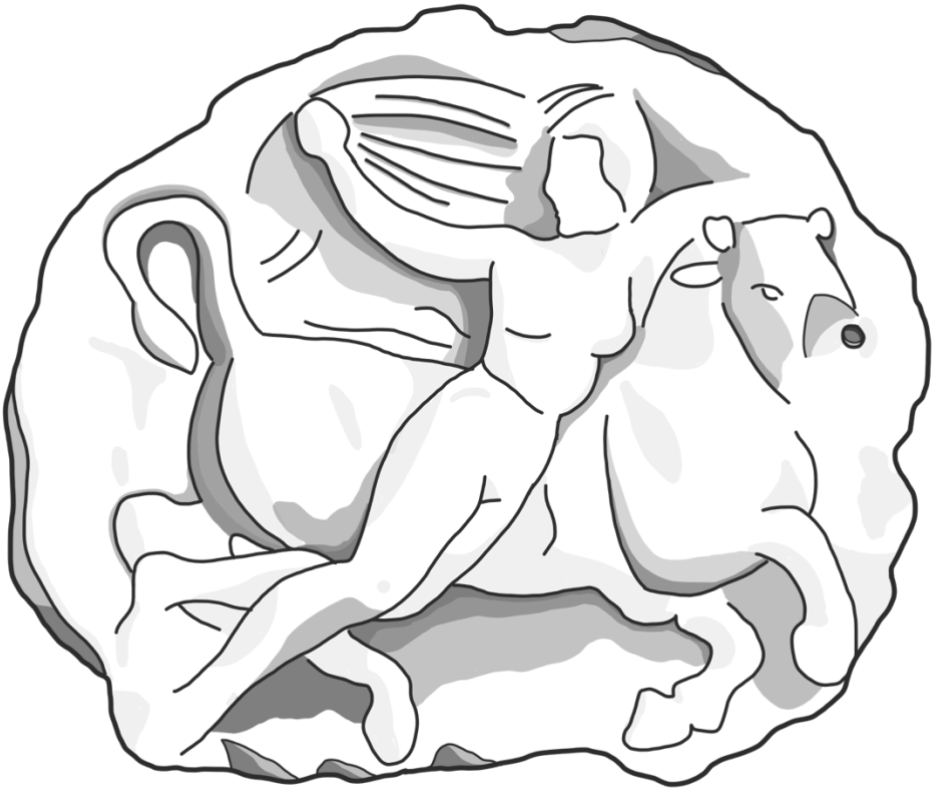

Figure 6.j Cast from Hildesheim representing the abduction of Europa. The single hole on the right is thought to have been used for suspension. Based on Reinsberg 1980: pl.89.

Thus, although there might be good reason to interpret plaster casts from the ancient world in the same way as Vermuele's bronzes, as objects which might have held a multiplicity of values in the ancient world, Classical Archaeologists tend not to consider these possibilities.[72] Instead, within the discipline of Classical Archaeology, there is a noticeable penchant for using the evidence that *some* plaster casts were valued instrumentally as artists' models to infer that *all* ancient plaster casts functioned in this

[72] Above, I referenced discussions of the potential intrinsic value of ancient casts published by Frederiksen and Bianchi. Although some such interpretations of ancient plaster objects do exist, they are very much in the minority. The majority of Classical Archaeological scholarship presents ancient casts as purely practical objects.

way, an approach that has garnered criticism in the past (Bianchi et al. 1988: 146). For example, one scholar has noted that assuming an instrumental role for plaster casts has become "archaeological orthodoxy" (Taddei 1992: 458). Precisely this orthodoxy can be seen in action in Michael Padgett's discussion of the ancient plaster head from Seleuceia-Pieria discussed above. The catalogue description of the head begins with the statement:

> *"In antiquity, plaster was used primarily to provide three-dimensional version of works of art from which to produce copies" (Padgett 2001: 67).*

In a footnote, Padgett references the Baiae and Sabratha casts as evidence for his claim, demonstrating how evidence from these sites is extended to tar all ancient plaster casts with the same interpretive brush.

The pervasiveness of the view of ancient plaster objects' purely practical functions is further demonstrated by the reception of the publication of the Begram finds. The Begram publication was reviewed by archaeologist Ernst Will, who made the following comment about the casts:

> *How can one reconcile the fact that valuable objects such as Indian ivory furniture was found next to Greco-Roman plaster casts of objects, which had only practical functions? (Quoted in Cambon 2011: 150).*

Will set up a clear dichotomy between the plaster casts and the other finds from the cache. He recognised the instrumental value of the ancient casts, their so-called practical function, but implied that the casts are missing the intrinsic value that objects such as the Indian ivory furniture do possess. The view of ancient plaster casts' instrumental value is so prevalent that Will is incredulous that they were even found within the same context as intrinsically valuable objects.

In summary, I have argued that although Classical Archaeologists find both instrumental and intrinsic values to be applicable for objects such as *bronze* artists' models, the same considerations are not made for similar "models" made in *plaster*. Plaster objects tend to be pigeonholed as purely functional objects, to the extent that their discovery within

the same archaeological context as intrinsically valuable pieces is the source of amazement. Just as the Classical Archaeological interpretive community in the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery tends to only identify instrumental values for the more modern plaster casts at the expense of intrinsic values, so too the discipline more generally views plaster casts from the ancient world as having purely practical, instrumental functions. I will now propose that both of these tendencies result from the position that the material of plaster occupies within the unique value system of Classical Archaeology.

6.4 The Classical Archaeological value system

In what follows, I will outline the Classical Archaeological value system to which both ancient and modern casts are subject, outlining whence it came. In order to do this, I will draw both on my experiences of studying Classical Archaeology at Oxford and scholarly literature on the subject. I will show that there are three key categories of object that are valued within the discipline, namely so-called "art" objects (6.4.2 and 6.4.3), "archaeological" objects (6.4.4), and ancient literary texts (6.4.5). In what follows, I will discuss the types of intrinsic and instrumental value with which each type of object is associated, but first I must make the important distinction between art and archaeological objects clear (6.4.1). Finally, I describe the hierarchies of value that exist between the various categories of object (6.4.6) before moving on to discussing how plaster fits into this system of value in section 6.5.

6.4.1 "Art" vs "Archaeology"

Fundamentally, Classical Archaeology is the study of material culture: its aims are to make sense of the ancient world through its extant objects. However, within this broad category of "objects", the discipline often differentiates between two clear subcategories: so-called "art" objects and archaeological objects. This distinction between these two classes of object can even be seen in something as banal as the titles of many books produced by the discipline. Take for example 'Greek Art and Archaeology' (Pedley 2007; Plantzos and Wardle 2016), 'Art & Archaeology of the Greek World' (Neer 2019) and 'Art & Archaeology of the Roman World' (Fullerton 2020) to

name but a few.[73] These titles reflect the fact that art objects and archaeological objects are often considered to be of fundamentally different characters. Both types of objects are valued by Classical Archaeologists, but in different ways. The description of some objects as "art" elevates their status beyond that of mere archaeology, positioning them as something very special. These art objects are special in that they possess both intrinsic and instrumental value for the Classical Archaeologist. Meanwhile, archaeological objects possess primarily instrumental value. They are still valued by the discipline, but mainly as a means to an end. I will now consider both of these classes of object in turn.

6.4.2 Art objects: Intrinsic value

> *Much of what Classical archaeologists write has been concerned with the description and interpretation of certain classes of artefacts, artefacts of a very particular kind. Such objects are often striking and sometimes beautiful. They may even be considered art. (Whitley 2001: 3)*

So begins James Whitley's 'The Archaeology of Ancient Greece', one of the core textbooks that I was assigned when I began my undergraduate degree in Classical Archaeology and Ancient History at the University of Oxford in 2013. Although it was not Whitley's intention to explicitly discuss value, his introduction to Classical Archaeology and the selection of artefacts that he uses to illustrate its tenets implicitly reveals much about the discipline's conceptions of value. Whitley makes two key points: first, he notes that it is to so-called art objects that Classical Archaeologists often dedicate the greatest amount of time. Second, he recognises the grounds on which art objects attain this high status: the aesthetic appeal that they hold for modern commentators.

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[73] Snodgrass also notes the prevalence of book-length studies of Greek art, while comparable volumes directed toward understanding Greek archaeology as a whole "have been few and recent" (Snodgrass 2012: 16). The difference between "art" and "archaeology" is also made in the titles of undergraduate courses at the University of Oxford. I studied a module named 'Greek Art and Archaeology, c.500-300 BC' during my time there.

Whitley's introduction focuses on two classes of object that are readily assigned the title of art: fine painted pottery and bronze sculpture.[74] The particular vase upon which Whitley lavishes attention is a *black-figure** *amphora* (storage jar) attributed to the Nessos Painter, decorated with elaborate figurative designs. This object is described as having aesthetic appeal: Whitley refers to the amphora, as well as other objects given the title of "art", as being "striking" and "beautiful". He describes how the recognition of these qualities in the Nessos amphora in a publication focused on its style and decoration was responsible for its admission "to the Canon of Greek Art" (Whitley 2001: 6). Thus, it becomes clear that if an excavated object is deemed sufficiently aesthetically appealing to be granted the status of "art", this object becomes intrinsically valuable to the Classical Archaeologist.[75]

Such art objects can often engender a special type of response from Classical Archaeologists. An example can be seen in Andrew Stewart's introduction to his study of 'Art in the Hellenistic World'. Unsurprisingly, Stewart's introduction focuses on a work of so-called ancient art: a bowl made of multicoloured semi-precious stone, decorated with exquisitely engraved figural decoration (Stewart 2014: 1-25). Having described the bowl, its adornment, and the technique of its manufacture at length, Stewart concludes with this statement:

> *So the rewards that this bowl offers are simultaneously material, magical, aesthetic, sensory, sensual, and intellectual: delight at its colors, translucency, texture, and feel; happiness at its beneficial magical properties; awe at its size, rarity, intricacy, and virtuosity; pleasure at its delicacy, beauty, and vividness; glee at its sensuous displays of naked flesh;*

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[74] Pottery and sculpture dominate discussions of Classical Archaeological evidence (Gill 1996: 988), but other types of object often fall under the heading of "art" as well. For example, coins were collected for their aesthetic properties alongside pottery from the Renaissance onwards (Pedley 2007: 13), and engraved gems and metal items bearing decoration are often considered masterpieces as well. Architecture also tends to be considered an artistic medium (Whitley 2001: 270).

[75] Others within the discipline have made the importance of aesthetic qualities to Classical Archaeology explicit. The primary reason given by J.D. Beazley for why Greek vases are "important to us [Classical Archaeologists]" was "because they are often beautiful" (Beazley 1986: 2).

and finally satisfaction at decoding its message – if one can (Stewart 2014: 3-4).

Stewart demonstrated an intimate engagement with the bowl as an intrinsically valuable object in its own right: a physicality-focused response akin to those discussed in relation to the Ashmolean's casts in section 4.3.1. This shows that when an object becomes intrinsically valued due to its aesthetic qualities, the Classical Archaeologist seems to feel sufficiently comfortable to engage with it on an emotional level.

This aesthetic appeal of ancient "art" for a long time determined the shape of the discipline of Classical Archaeology. Whitley describes how the discernment of the inherent beauty of these objects prompted art historical desires in Classical Archaeologists, namely the need to seek out the artist responsible for the pieces: "the painter behind the pot, the sculptor behind the bronze" (Whitley 2001: 9). This can be seen especially in the field of Greek vase painting in the early twentieth-century, when prominent Classical Archaeologist John D. Beazley applied the methods of Italian connoisseur Giovanni Morelli for assigning hands to unsigned Renaissance paintings to the study of figure-decorated Greek vases (Pedley 2007: 199).[76] Although Beazley never produced a full treatise outlining his method, it is believed that, like Morelli, he analysed the manner in which small details such as the figures' eyes, ears, and kneecaps were rendered on individual vase, comparing between multiple vases to ascertain which were likely to have been painted by the same hand (Snodgrass 2012: 22). Many vases survive from antiquity without their artists' signature, so Beazley assigned names to them, often after their highest quality work. The Nessos Painter, for example, is named after the vase that Whitley discusses: it features a scene in which the hero Herakles battles a centaur named Nessos. Today, the attribution of artists' names to Greek vases is a less popular pursuit within Classical Archaeology,[77] but the history of the practice of

[76] Beazley's work was predominantly concentrated on *black-* and *red-figure** decorated vases from Athens and its surrounding area of Attica, but his techniques have been applied to the study of vases in other areas. Dale Trendall, for example, applied Beazley's method to the connoisseurship of red-figure vases from Apulia in Southern Italy (Williams 1996: 9).

[77] Some archaeological theorists have declared connoisseurship a futile avenue of study: "stylistic attribution has little bearing on anything other than the discourse of style to which it belongs" (Shanks

connoisseurship nevertheless serves as an example of the importance that the intrinsic value of aesthetically appealing "art" objects has held on the discipline.

This intrinsic valuing of art objects has been interpreted as a hangover from Classical Archaeology's foundation. Although ancient Greek and Roman "art", in particular sculpture, had been appreciated for its aesthetic qualities since the Renaissance (Pedley 2007: 13), it was the so-called "founding father" of Classical Archaeology (Harloe 2019: 1), Johann Joachim Winckelmann, that played a major hand in establishing many of his own favourite pieces of ancient sculpture as "exemplary works of art" (Potts 1994: 64). In passages of Winckelmann's 1764 work 'Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums' ('A History of Ancient Art'), which is often said to be the cornerstone of Classical Archaeology (Snodgrass 2012:17), he extolled the aesthetic characteristics of objects such as the *Apollo Belvedere** (Fig.6.k):

> *His build is sublimely superhuman, and his stance bears witness to the fullness of his grandeur. An eternal springtime, as if in blissful Elysium, clothes the charming manliness of maturity with graceful youthfulness, and plays with soft tenderness on the proud build of his limbs (Quoted in Potts 1994: 118).*

The impact of these aesthetic judgments was considerable: the reputations of the specific pieces that he favoured were so pervasive that their subsequent reinterpretation by Classical Archaeologists was effectively prohibited for many years. For example, Winkelmann was of the belief that due to its quality, Apollo Belvedere could only be a Greek sculpture, transported to Rome by the Emperor Nero who had also appreciated its beauty (Haskell and Penny 1981b: 148). In the late 1770's, this idea was challenged: it was proposed that the Apollo was in fact a Roman copy (Robertson 1975: 460). However, the "overwhelming glamour" that the statue possessed, thanks to Winckelmann's endorsement of its beauty, meant that this interpretation, which is

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1995: 36). This point has been vehemently counterargued by those who state that the great majority of archaeological interpretations are based on the "style and design" of artefacts, and on this basis, connoisseurship should not be singled out and discounted (Neer 2005: 9).

now accepted by today's Classical Archaeologists (Mattusch 2002: 99), was for a long time ignored (Haskell and Penny 1981a: 11). Classical Archaeology's continued interest in art today is often perceived as a continuation of the values with which Winckelmann imbued the discipline (Hughes and Ranfft 1997: 2). In summary, artistic judgements have been central to the study of Classical Archaeology since its inception. Objects granted the title of "art" are perceived as possessing intrinsic value.

*Figure 6.k Cast **C122**, which represents the Apollo Belvedere. 26/05/2021.*

6.4.3 Art objects: Instrumental value

Art objects are also valued by Classical Archaeologists for instrumental reasons. They have long been considered vital for achieving the discipline's core goal: understanding

the ancient world. Within studies of Greek archaeology in particular, art objects are the primary tool through which the essential task of periodisation is achieved.[78] The division of ancient Greek history into the Geometric (c.1100-750 BC), Orientalizing (c.700-600 BC), Archaic (c.700-480 BC), Classical (c.480-323 BC), and (to an extent) Hellenistic (c.323-31 BC) periods has been largely determinedly by the stylistic development of the art of the respective eras.[79]

Again, this has been the case since the birth of the discipline. As well as playing a major role in establishing the importance of aesthetic value within the discipline of Classical Archaeology, Winckelmann pioneered the practice of using charting the history of the ancient world through the chronologically successive styles of its artistic production (Renfrew 1980: 288). In his 'Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthum', Winckelmann identified three main phases of ancient art: the "most ancient", "high", and "beautiful", periods, linking each style with a correlating political era (Beard and Henderson 1997: 69). The three categories that he identified broadly correspond to today's periodisation of the Greek world into "Archaic", "Classical", and "Hellenistic" phases (Harloe 2019: 232). Thus, Winckelmann was key for imbuing art objects with not only intrinsic but also instrumental value for Classical Archaeologists.

The influence of this periodisation is still felt today, and not only in discussions of art objects: even studies that do not focus on art are, to an extent, defined by art objects. Take for example another core text that I was assigned as an undergraduate: Jonathan Hall's 'A History of the Archaic Greek World'. This book dwells little on art, instead focusing on the political communities, colonization, and economic activities of the time (Hall 2007), yet its chronological boundaries are nevertheless defined by the prevailing artistic style of the period. Thus, art objects can be seen to have value for the Classical Archaeologist in an intrinsic sense, because such objects continue to appeal to modern

[78] Art is less important for periodisation in studies of Roman history and archaeology, where epochs are instead defined by the dominant political system or dynasty of the time (i.e., the Republican period, the Julio-Claudian period, the Flavian period).
[79] I detail the grounds on which these stylistic periodisations are made in Appendix 5.

Western aesthetic tastes, and in an instrumental sense, because they have been used to realise the goals of the discipline: better understanding the ancient world.

Many Classical Archaeologists in the past have been accused of "consciously or unconsciously pursuing, albeit in a more organised way, the same objectives" as Winckelmann (Snodgrass 1987: 2), but today their focus on art is not exclusive. Today's Classical Archaeologist values a much broader corpus of objects than the founder of the discipline. Objects from the ancient world that are not described as "art" are also valued, but in a different way.

6.4.4 Archaeological objects: Instrumental value

> *[Classical Archaeology] is also concerned with the sort of artifacts whose banality and lack of aesthetic merit mean that no one would spend time on them in their own right. So, it is concerned with works of art – sculptures, buildings, and paintings – but it is also concerned with broken shards of coarse pottery, the stone beds of oil and wine presses, lumps of slag from mining and metalworking, and so on. It is the mix of such items in the archaeological record that enables us to recreate some picture of the nature of Greek and Roman communities, their values, their way of life, their expectations (Alcock and Osborne 2012a: 4).*

This quote is taken from another introduction to the discipline of Classical Archaeology from scholars Susan Alcock and Robin Osborne. Alcock and Osborne note that while in the past, Classical Archaeologists have been accused of dwelling only on beautiful objects in their scholarship, passing over other, less attractive classes of artefact (Alcock and Osborne 2012b: 12), since the nineteenth-century they have also begun to pay attention to those that do not possess artistic qualities.[80] Such objects are not seen as

[80] This move away from the aesthetically motivated antiquarianism of Winckelmann is often attributed to the influence of his countryman, philologist Eduard Gerhard (Shanks 1995: 94). In the field of Classical Archaeology, Gerhard pioneered what he called "monumental philology" (Schnapp 2004: 171), a new methodology that was inspired by the manner in which philologists tackled ancient texts. Just as a philologist "read" a literary text, Gerhard's approach aimed to "read" not only artistic objects but a much

intrinsically valuable, for their lack of "aesthetic merit" means that "no one would spend time on them in their own right", but they are instead valued for instrumental reasons: for the "picture" of the ancient world that their analysis can create. These are the "archaeological" objects to which I referred in section 6.4.1.

I will now demonstrate how the instrumental value of so-called archaeological objects works in practice by analysing one of the examples given by Alcock and Osborne: "broken shards[81] of coarse pottery." Pottery of this character is very different to that considered in section 6.4.2. The Nessos amphora is an example of fineware: thin-walled pottery made from highly refined clay, often bearing decorative elements rendered in paint. Coarseware pottery is, as the name suggests, made in a far rougher clay, often with a greater number of *inclusions**. It is occasionally decorated, but rarely with the exquisitely rendered figures that tend to mark out fine vessels as art objects. In the ancient world, coarse pottery was utilitarian in nature: such objects were used as everyday storage, cooking, or transport vessels. This pottery rarely receives attention for its artistic qualities, but due to its abundance (broken potsherds are among the most common finds on archaeological sites across Greece and Italy, thanks to clay's excellent rate of preservation (Lapatin 2014: 217)) and the fact that its techniques, shapes, and decorations have evolved over time, it can be used to construct stylistic typologies.[82] These sherds are therefore immensely valuable for developing sequential chronologies used to date the contexts in which they are found (Biers 1992: 51). Everything from monumental architectural complexes to the smallest loom weight can be assigned a relative date using pottery found within the same context on a dig site. Thus, while on a macro level it is through art objects that periodisation is achieved, on a micro level the

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wider corpus of archaeological finds to develop historical knowledge of the ancient world (Shanks 1995: 94).

[81] Alcock and Osborne refer to "shards" of pottery, but following this I will use the word "sherds" to describe these objects. "Shards" usually refers to broken glass, while "sherd" is more typical for pieces of pottery.

[82] Although Alcock and Osbrone refer only to sherds of coarse pottery as having such an instrumental function during their description, broken pieces of fine pottery can also fulfil this function.

construction of chronologies within those broader periods can often depend on less attractive archaeological objects like sherds.

Pottery is also instrumentally valuable beyond its use in dating. For example, the remains of *dolia* (large, utilitarian ceramic vessels typically used to store produce (Peña 2007: 20)) in the Villa Regina at Boscoreale, Italy have allowed archaeologists to speculate about the extent of Roman villas' agricultural production (Moorman 2007: 444). From these examples, it is clear how even unattractive, utilitarian pottery brings "order to the chaos of debris from the past" (Shanks 1995: 21). The value accorded to this type of archaeological object is instrumental in nature, as the objects are primarily valued as a means to an end.

Thus, while so-called art objects are still the focus of a good deal of Classical Archaeological inquiry, and while it likewise remains the case that the exquisite painted pottery and the beautifully carved marble statues of the ancient world still grace the front covers of treatises on Classical Archaeology and stock the galleries of museums,[83] the practice of understanding the ancient world is no longer exclusively the domain of art objects. Today's Classical Archaeologists also acknowledge the instrumental value of archaeological objects, which often have less aesthetic appeal.

6.4.5 Texts: Intrinsic and instrumental value

Classical Archaeologists also attribute a great deal of value, both instrumental and intrinsic, to ancient literary texts that survive from antiquity. Despite the fact that the writings of ancient authors only survive to us today as a result of their laborious copying and recopying by Christian monks in the Middle Ages, they are now viewed by Classical Archaeologists as primary data (Allison 2001: 182). This so-called primary data is instrumentally valuable for understanding the ancient world. Ancient texts benefit the study of Classical Archaeology by contextualising what can be observed in the material

[83] Finely decorated Greek pottery has been described as "a standard element" in exhibitions focused on ancient Greece (Oakley 2009: 604).

record. For example, literary sources such as architectural treatises written by Roman author Vitruvius have been "ransacked" to provide nomenclature for the individual rooms within Roman domestic complexes, aiding in the interpretation of the use of such spaces (Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 6).[84] The reverse is also true. Archaeology benefits the study of ancient texts by providing material attestation for events described in ancient literature. For example, the destruction deposit discovered by archaeologists on the Athenian Acropolis provides physical evidence for an event described by Herodotus (*Histories* 8.53), the sack of the site by the Persian army in the year 480/479 BC (Snodgrass 2012: 15). It has been noted that Classical Archaeologists find it "a source of satisfaction" if the material and textual evidence are found to be compatible in this way (ibid.), but sometimes this need to marry the archaeological and literary evidence can seem extreme. For instance, Classical Archaeologists have considered it necessary to find an explanation for why horsemen are represented as part of the Panathenaic procession on the *Parthenon frieze** when literary evidence does not explicitly attest to their role within this event, and why *hoplites* (citizen-soldiers), who literary texts do place at such processions, are absent (Jenkins 2007). Despite this occasional over-fastidiousness, ancient texts can be seen to have instrumental value. They form a useful part of the Classical Archaeologists' toolkit for understanding the ancient world.

In addition to their instrumental value, ancient texts also possess intrinsic value. This is because they are often viewed as preserving the "non-material cultural achievements" of the Greeks and Romans (Snodgrass 2012: 15). Again, this perception of the intrinsic value of ancient texts has a long history: exemplary status was conferred on ancient literature during the Renaissance (Wood 2011: 163) and as a result, the study of ancient texts (nicknamed "The Greats"[85]) has been traditionally viewed within European

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[84] Wallace-Hadrill and scholars following his work (e.g., Allison 2001: 185) have criticised this approach. They argue that that too often the labelling of a room in a Roman house using a piece of terminology known from literature has limited the scope of its interpretation. As Allison points out, "even an architect's labelled plan of a recently built house today does not dictate the activities that will take place in its spaces" (ibid.).

[85] Final year examinations that undergraduate students of Literae Humaniores (Classics) at the University of Oxford are required to take are still referred to as "Greats".

education systems as being intellectually supreme (Allison 2001: 181-2). The importance of texts has been particularly reinforced in the discipline of Classical Archaeology from the nineteenth-century onwards. At this time, Classical Archaeology became affixed to philology departments in newly founded Western European and North American universities, which in some cases led to the subjugation of studying material culture to the reading of ancient texts (Dyson 1993: 195).

The intrinsic value attributed to ancient texts continues to influence Classical Archaeological studies today. This is because, thanks to the fact that it *possesses* intrinsic value, ancient literature also has the power to *convey* intrinsic value onto objects and/or sites mentioned by its authors. In some cases, the intrinsic value imbued by ancient texts even trumps the intrinsic value accorded to objects because of their artistic qualities. I will now substantiate this claim, using the example of the *Aphrodite of Melos** (Fig.6.l).

The Aphrodite of Melos is valued intrinsically as a work of art. Scholars have described her as representing "a timeless ideal of female beauty" (Kousser 2005: 227). However, other sculptures of Aphrodite (for example, Roman marble copies thought to represent the *Aphrodite of Knidos**) are discussed at much greater length in Classical Archaeological publications, despite being "universally acknowledged to be of lower technical quality" than the Melian Aphrodite (Prettejohn 2006: 231). Prettejohn interprets this trend as evidence of the influence of literary texts over the discipline of Classical Archaeology: because the Aphrodite of Knidos is discussed at length in ancient literature, she is superordinate to the Aphrodite of Melos because "the merest fragment of text is permitted to override the kinds of knowledge that the eye can provide" (ibid.). Indeed, in some cases simply the fact that a site, object, or similar is mentioned in an ancient literary source is sufficient to direct Classical Archaeologists' attention toward it. Classical Archaeologists have been described as using ancient literature as something of a blueprint for the development of the discipline: texts have determined the questions asked, the interpretations proposed, and the sites investigated by Classical Archaeologists (Alcock and Osborne 2012b: 11). For example, there has been a great interest in sanctuaries and town centres because Roman geographer Pausanias

described exactly these sites in his description of Greece (Shanks 1995: 49). Likewise, famous nineteenth-century archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann is reputed to have excavated the sites of Mycenae and Troy with ancient authors Pausanias and Homer in hand (Pedley 2007: 20). However, I argue that it is not only the fact that the Aphrodite of Knidos is mentioned in ancient literature that places her above the Aphrodite of Melos in the value hierarchy; what is said about her is also important. For example, Roman philosopher Pliny the Elder described her as follows:

> *The Aphrodite – which many have sailed to Knidos in order to see – is the finest statue not only by Praxiteles, but in the whole world. (Natural History 36.26).*

I will now argue that the praise that is heaped upon the Knidian Aphrodite by authors like Pliny is a key factor in securing her prominence within Classical Archaeological discourse. I will show that Classical Archaeologists tend to intrinsically value objects that they interpret the ancients as having valued. It is though ancient literature that these influential ancient values are primarily accessed.

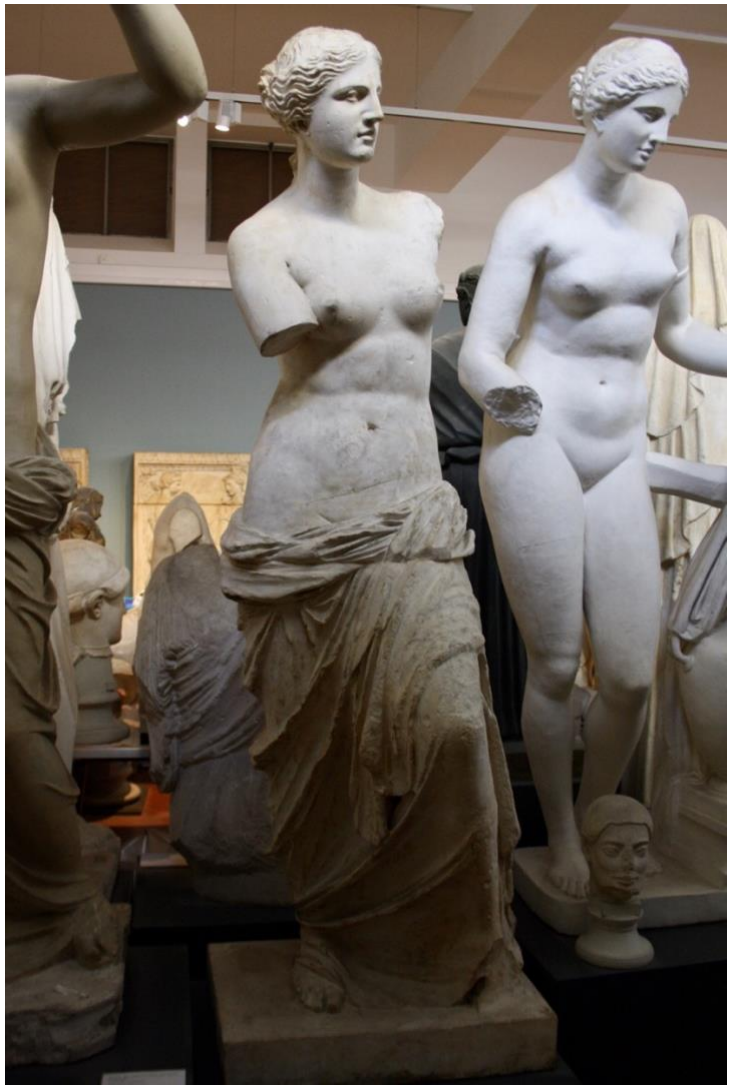

*Figure 6.l The central figure, nude from the waist up, is cast **B148**, which represents the Aphrodite of Melos. 26/05/2021.*

The importance that the values held by ancient audiences have for Classical Archaeologists has already been alluded to in the quotes from Whitley, and Alcock and Osborne with which sections 6.4.2 and 6.4.4 began. For example, it is notable in the excerpt from Whitley that he is reticent about straightforwardly describing ancient artefacts like the Nessos Painter's amphora as "art". He employs tentative phrasing, stating that the such objects from the ancient world "*may* even be considered art (emphasis mine)". This is because ancient audiences who might have come across objects such as the Nessos Painter's amphora in antiquity would not have described such objects as "art". The ancients did not have a concept of what we might call "art for art's sake". Although it is noted that so-called ancient artworks could have been

appreciated for their aesthetic qualities by contemporary viewers (Zanker 2014: 310), even highly decorated objects like the Nessos Painter's amphora were primarily made with a purpose or a practical function in mind (Smith and Plantzos 2012: 5).[86] As a result, while Classical Archaeologists like Whitley consistently refer to artefacts like ancient sculptures and vase paintings as "art", this term is described with equal regularity as being problematic and anachronistic (e.g., by Steiner 2014: 22). The evident discomfort that Whitley and others seem to feel at interpreting objects in a different manner to their ancient counterparts suggests that how an ancient viewer would have used, interpreted, and valued an object matters a great deal to the Classical Archaeologist. Alcock and Osborne, quoted in section 6.4.4, also explicitly mention the important of learning about "ancient values". Thus, the values that Classical Archaeologist perceives were upheld by ancient audiences impacts upon how they assign value to objects.

I will now show how this perception of ancient values has impacted upon modern Classical Archaeological scholarship through the example of Vickers and Gill's publication 'Artful Crafts' and further scholarly furore surrounding it. Vickers and Gill argued strongly against the value, both monetary and archaeological, of fine painted pottery. They claimed that the high price fetched by painted vases at auction was caused by a manipulation of the art market by a savvy eighteenth-century art dealer who was trying to maximise profit from the sale of his ancient vase collection (Vickers and Gill 1994: 6). They also argued that painted pottery was worthless for an ancient audience because ceramic vessels were skeuomorphic: mere copies of more valuable silver and gold plate (ibid.: 107). Vickers and Gill suggested that if it could be proven that ancient

[86] An example of this is ancient Athenian sculpted grave markers, known as *stelai*. Women began to be prominently depicted on *stelai* around 451/0 BC. Scholars often cite the introduction of new citizenship laws attributed to influential statesman Pericles as the catalyst for this development (Whitley 2001: 370). These laws made it so that one could only claim the status of Athenian citizen if their mother, as well as their father, also held citizen status. In order to qualify as a citizen, one would be required to undertake an examination known as *dokiasia*, at which they were required to point out the tombs of their parents, to prove their Athenian parentage. Once the tombs of women became of vital importance for the legal status of her offspring in this way, women began to be represented on funerary monuments (Stears 2000: 52). These depictions of women in art are therefore considered functional by Classical Archaeologists, in that they worked to "further the political interests of men" (Burton 2003: 25).

Greek painted pottery was worthless to its ancient audience, its value would also decrease for the modern viewer:

> *The recognition that gold and silver plate was the material of preference among the elites of the Greek world ought to dislodge painted pottery from its previously privileged position (Vickers and Gill 1994: 193).*

Vickers and Gill are not the only Classical Archaeologists who consider the value of an object to be linked to the esteem in which it was held in antiquity. This is demonstrated in the scholarly reception of their work. Snodgrass described Vickers and Gill as a "threat" to Classical Archaeology, implying that reducing the status of the Greek vase in the ancient world would necessarily result in Classical Archaeologists having to rethink their value system:

> *What if the largest known group of 'creative artists' of ancient Greece proved to be nothing of the kind? (Snodgrass 2012: 23).*

Other scholars, such as Sir John Boardman, also argued against Vickers and Gill. On the basis of a mathematical calculation of vases' relative value as cargo compared to other exports such as wine, wheat, and barley, Boardman concluded that ancient vases were indeed monetarily valuable commodities in the ancient world, and thus worthy of their status in modern scholarly appreciation (Boardman 1988). Boardman does not mince his words in the article, describing Vickers and Gill's proposition as "extreme" and "wrong" (ibid.: 28).[87] This vehement refutation of Vickers and Gill's argument is unlikely to have been carried out had the value of ancient objects for ancient peoples not been important to the Classical Archaeologist. Ancient values thus seem to imbue archaeological objects with an intrinsic (almost divinely inspired) value.

That ancient values, as expressed in extant literature, have determined courses of Classical Archaeological enquiry can be demonstrated through how entire eras of

[87] Boardman's view has itself been critiqued. A subsequent recalculation of the figures discussed in Boardman's article has ironically been shown to support Vickers and Gill's original proposition that the vases lacked monetary value (Gill 1988: 370).

artistic production have been interpreted. For instance, negative views of the art produced in Hellenistic Greece, expressed by ancient authors in subsequent literary texts,[88] are thought to have "prejudiced" Classical Archaeologists against the extant ancient artworks from these eras (Ridgway 2005: 69).[89] Since writers of the Hellenistic and Roman periods favoured works from Classical period Greece above all others, lauding them as "different, special, and superior" (Smith 2000: 62), so too have modern commentators. As well as the privileging of some periods of artistic production above others, sculptural materials that the ancients are perceived to value are likewise intrinsically valued by Classical Archaeologists. For example, literary texts single out two chief artistic media as being significant: wall-painting and sculpture (Whitley 2001: 270). Within the medium of sculpture, statues made in bronze and stone seem to have been the most prized. This is highlighted in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*. In Book 35, Pliny makes a lengthy discussion of sculptors working in marble but it is upon bronze that he lavishes the most attention, devoting to it a far larger section than to sculptural products in any other material (Pedley 2007: 26). In addition, the greatest achievements of ancient sculpture presented by the literary sources were, for the most part, rendered in bronze. One highly significant sculpture thought to have been executed in bronze is Polykleitos' *Canon* (Boardman 1985: 203). The *Canon* was made to illustrate Polykleitos' written treatise on the subject of rendering *symmetria* (ideal proportions) in a sculpted figure. According to the ancient sources, this work was hugely influential in antiquity and inspired large numbers of other sculptors (Quintilian, *The Orator's Education* 5.2.21), with some even taking it as "some kind of law" (Pliny *Natural History* 34.55). Likewise, later sculptor Lysippos, who is lauded as having built upon Polykleitos' work to produce another revolutionary new system of proportions, further improving the *symmetria* of figures, is famed for his works in bronze (ibid. 34.61-5). As a result of these positive appraisals in ancient literary texts, bronze and marble are the main sculptural

[88] As an example of this, Smith quotes an assessment given by Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 34.52) that "the art of sculpture died in 296 BC and was then reborn in 156 BC" (Smith 1995: 7).

[89] However, it is important to note that not all Classical Archaeologists have been swayed by Pliny's judgements. Those rehabilitating the Hellenistic period have argued that it was a time of major innovation, particularly in the field of sculpture (e.g. Smith 1995: 8).

materials considered by contemporary scholars. Most handbooks of ancient sculpture focus on works in those materials, sometimes to the exclusion of all others (as in Palagia 2006). In other commentaries, such as Lapatin's chapter on 'The Materials and Techniques of Greek and Roman Art' (Lapatin 2014: 203-24) discussion largely follows the lines established by ancient literature, dedicating most attention to bronze and marble sculptures, and to painting. Other sculptural materials that are discussed infrequently in literary sources (including wood, bone, ivory, textiles and stucco) are only fleetingly listed by Lapatin in a single paragraph at the end of his chapter (ibid.: 228). It seems that it is not only the quantity of coverage in ancient literature but the quality of discussion that is impactful on the amount of intrinsic value imbued in a material by ancient texts.

In summary, I have demonstrated above that ancient literary texts possess both intrinsic and instrumental value for Classical Archaeologists. As well as being in possession of these types of value, texts also have the power to convey value onto individual artefacts and sculptural materials through their representation of the values held by ancient audiences.

6.4.6 Hierarchies of value

Before I draw my final conclusions about the nature of the Classical Archaeological value system, I must make one final point about the relationship between the intrinsic and instrumental values discussed above. Within Classical Archaeology, objects which are believed to have intrinsic value sometimes impact markedly upon the interpretation of objects which are perceived to have instrumental values. There is a hierarchy of value present within the overall value system. I will demonstrate this by discussing the example of Roman marble copies.

Roman marble copies made after Greek bronze sculptures have long been valued by the Classical Archaeologist. This is because, through a process known as *Kopienkritik*, extant marble copies of the same Greek bronze are compared to give a sense of how the (now

lost) bronze sculptures might have looked.[90] For example, Polykleitos' bronze *Doryphoros* ("spear-bearer"), a statue that is prized in ancient literature, does not survive from antiquity. However, since its discovery in 1863, a Roman marble sculpture found at Pompeii that represents a spear-bearer (Fig.6.m) has been considered by Classical Archaeologists to best preserve the Doryphoros's form (Lenaghan 2007: 148).[91] This attribution was made on subjective grounds: the principles of *symmetria* that are described as characterising Polykleitos' work in ancient literature are most "readily recognised" in this particular Roman copy (Boardman 1985: 205).[92] Nevertheless, this and other Roman copies were, even in the twentieth-century, valued exclusively in an instrumental sense as tools for increasing understanding of lost Greek bronzes (Marvin 1997: 10). The potential that these objects possessed as intrinsically valuable objects of Roman origin were ignored.

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[90] Some Classical Archaeologists have gone so far as to measure the component parts of the fingers on the Pompeiian "Doryphoros", attempting to extrapolate from this Polykleitos' mathematical system of rendering *symmetria* (Tobin 1975). This was presented as a highly important avenue of scholarship at the time, with Tobin justifying his work with a statement from fellow Classical Archaeologist Rhys Carpenter, who had commented that "extracting the recipe of [Polykleitos'] written canon from its visible embodiment [the copies]" was long overdue (Carpenter 1960: 100).

[91] In addition to the Doryphoros from Pompeii, over 50 other marble versions of the sculpture have been identified, in either complete or fragmentary form. The assertion that these marble copies do in fact represent the Doryphoros described by Pliny has not been accepted without question. Lenaghan has usefully described how a combination of literary texts and other archaeological evidence has complicated the issue (Lenaghan 2007: 150). She drew on the example of a passage from Roman writer Pausanias (*Description of Greece* 4.32.1), who described seeing statues of messenger god Hermes, and Greek heroes Herakles and Theseus in a *stoa* (covered walkway) in the ancient city of Messene. When the site was excavated, sculptures of Hermes and Herakles were found in the *stoa* to which Pausanias refers, but the third statue present was of the Doryphoros type. This caused issues as it raised the question of whether all so-called marble "Doryphoroi" should be interpreted as copies of a Polykleitan work, as representations of Hermes, or as something else.

[92] That this approach is somewhat methodologically flawed is well known to Classical Archaeologists. In addition to the wide recognition that Roman copyists reproducing Greek bronze works in marble were unlikely to be slavish copyists (Stewart 1978: 124), uncertainties have also been voiced over whether the models for extant Roman sculptures made in "Greek style", such as the marble spear-bearer from Pompeii described above, were indeed Greek at all, let alone close copies of Polykleitos' original Doryphoros (Ridgway 2005: 69).

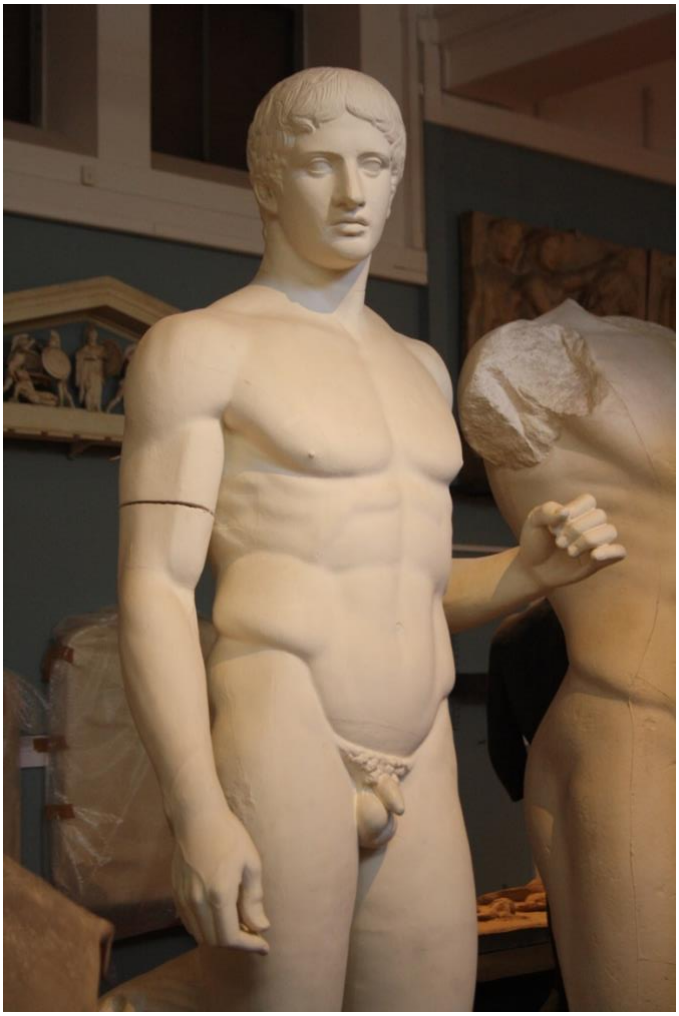
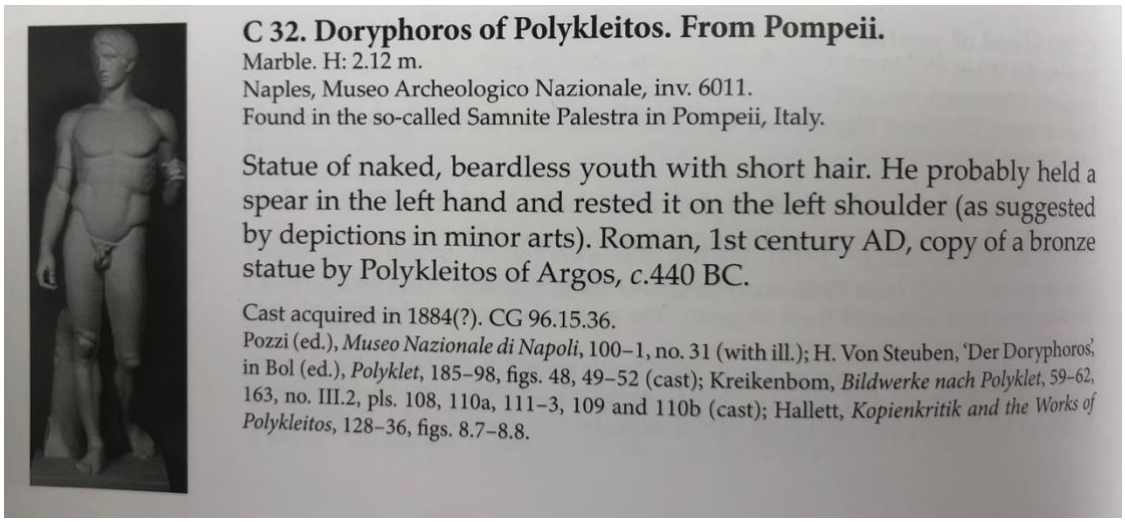


*Figure 6.m Cast **C32**, which represents the spear-bearer often interpreted as Polykleitos' Doryphoros. 26/05/2021.*

Today, Roman copies are still instrumentally valued for this function. Classical Archaeologists now recognise the difficulties in using Roman copies to reconstruct Polykleitos' work but nevertheless illustrate the Pompeiian spear-bearer as evidence of how the great master's work may have looked (e.g. Spivey 2013: 39-40). The Ashmolean's Cast Gallery also preserves this tradition: cast **C32** which reproduces the Pompeiian marble copy is labelled as the "Doryphoros of Polykleitos" (Fig.6.n). However, relatively recently these Roman copies have also begun to be valued as historical objects of their own time (Gazda 2002: 16; Trimble and Elsner 2006: 207). This example usefully demonstrates the hierarchies that can exist between intrinsic and instrumentally valued objects. The intrinsic value of Polykleitos's original bronze works, imbued with this value due to the praise given to them in ancient texts, led to the Roman copies used to access them being valued in a purely instrumental sense for a

considerable length of time. The intrinsic value given to some ancient works thus renders other objects as purely instrumental in value.



C 32. Doryphoros of Polykleitos. From Pompeii.
Marble. H: 2.12 m.
Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 6011.
Found in the so-called Samnite Palestra in Pompeii, Italy.

Statue of naked, beardless youth with short hair. He probably held a spear in the left hand and rested it on the left shoulder (as suggested by depictions in minor arts). Roman, 1st century AD, copy of a bronze statue by Polykleitos of Argos, *c*.440 BC.

Cast acquired in 1884(?). CG 96.15.36.
Pozzi (ed.), *Museo Nazionale di Napoli*, 100–1, no. 31 (with ill.); H. Von Steuben, 'Der Doryphoros', in Bol (ed.), *Polyklet*, 185–98, figs. 48, 49–52 (cast); Kreikenbom, *Bildwerke nach Polyklet*, 59–62, 163, no. III.2, pls. 108, 110a, 111–3, 109 and 110b (cast); Hallett, *Kopienkritik and the Works of Polykleitos*, 128–36, figs. 8.7–8.8.

*Figure 6.n The Ashmolean Museum catalogue entry for cast **C32**, which describes the cast simply as the "Doryphoros of Polykleitos". Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 144.*

6.4.7 Summary: What do Classical Archaeologists value?

Thus far, I have argued that the discipline of Classical Archaeology places a great deal of intrinsic value in so-called artistic products, thanks to the aesthetic appeal that these objects hold for modern commentators. Art objects are also instrumentally valued, because of their historic role in the task of periodisation. In the past, the intrinsic and instrumental value attributed to ancient "art" objects led to the neglect of classes of object that were not classed aesthetically appealing and the pigeonholing of the interpretation of art objects in line with traditional ideas. However, I have shown that it would be erroneous to state that today's Classical Archaeologists only locate value in artistic spheres, as objects of instrumental value are also very important to the discipline. A great deal of instrumental value is located in objects that help the Classical Archaeologist to understand the ancient world, even when those objects lack any aesthetic credentials. Finally, I suggested that texts that survive from antiquity are also intrinsically valued because their status as literary cultural achievements in their own right. They are also instrumentally useful as primary sources for understanding the ancient world. As well as possessing these forms of value in their own right, texts are

also capable of conveying intrinsic value onto material remains. This is because of the insight that texts are perceived to give into the values held by the ancients. Classical Archaeologists often demonstrate a desire to align their values with those held in antiquity, and ancient texts are a medium through which these ancient values can be accessed. The Classical Archaeological value system might be considered to look something like the image in Fig.6.o.

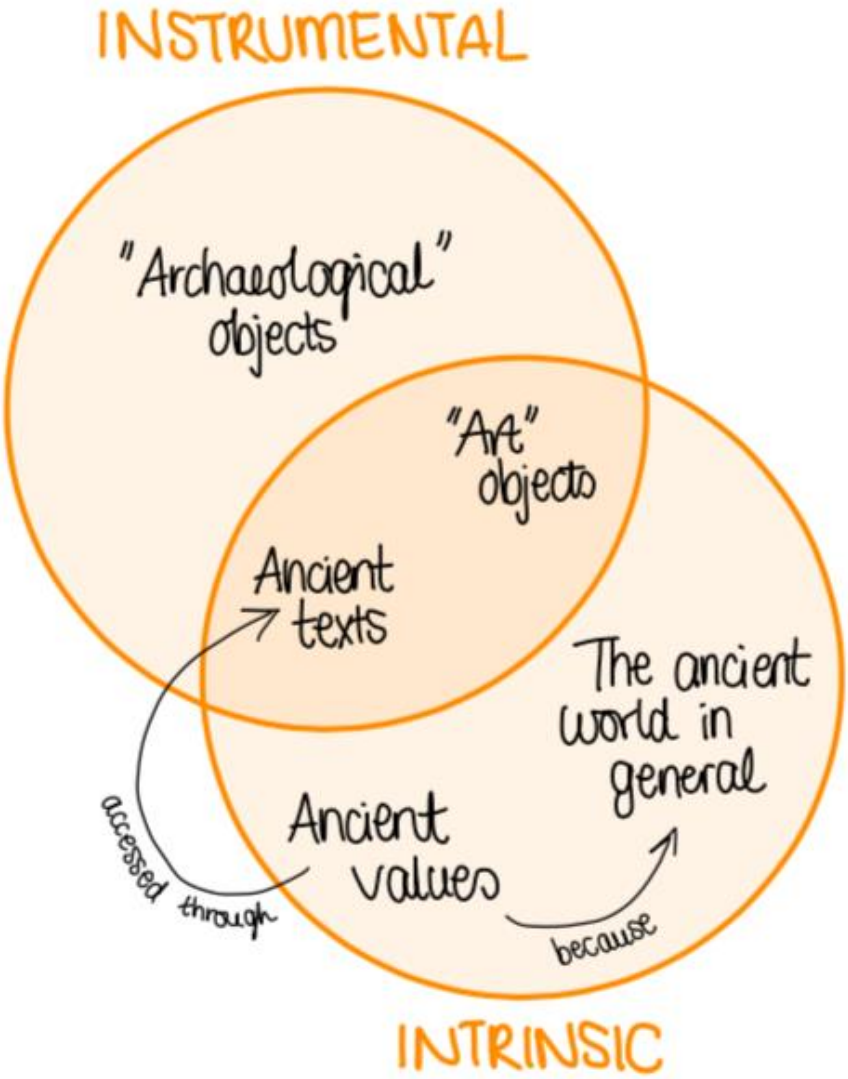


Figure 6.o Venn diagram showing the intersections between different types of value within the Classical Archaeological value system.

However, I have also shown that this picture requires nuance, for there is sometimes a hierarchy of value at play within the Classical Archaeology value system. The example

of Roman copies shows that in some cases, some objects (such as original Greek statuary lauded in the ancient texts) possess so much intrinsic value, even when they do not survive from antiquity, that the objects primarily used to access them (Roman marble copies) can sometimes be pigeonholed into being purely instrumentally valued, with their status as objects in their own right being denied. With this Classical Archaeological value system having been outlined, I will now consider how plaster objects fit into it.

6.5 Plaster and the Classical Archaeological value system

First, plaster receives neither the quantity of coverage nor the quality of approbation dedicated to other materials in ancient literature. I showed in section 6.2.4 that plaster sculptures are briefly mentioned by both Pausanias and in the Historia Augusta. However, these references to plaster are much fewer and more anecdotal in nature than the great swathes of literature dedicated by the likes of Pliny the Elder to sculptures made in bronze and marble. Plaster as a sculptural material is not celebrated in ancient texts, nor is it typically associated with great named master sculptors or important sculptural developments. It therefore does not meet this criteria for intrinsic value.

The mentions that plaster does receive suggest that it held an instrumental, as opposed to intrinsic value for an ancient audience. Only one extant ancient author, a Greek writer and student of Aristotle by the name of Theophrastus, dedicates anything more than an anecdotal mention to the material. In his account, he notes plaster's utility for taking impressions, but describe its use in the production finished sculptures (Theophrastus *On Stones* 67).[93] Additionally, instrumental values are emphasised by Pliny the Elder, who records the positive reflections of fellow writer Varro on the work of the sculptor

[93] Architectural plasterwork executed in lime plaster (stucco) is discussed at greater length in ancient texts. Many sources speak highly of the substance. For example, in his assessment of country houses in the Carthaginian city of Megalepoilis, Greek historian Diodorus Siculus wrote that the luxurious houses and their stuccowork indicate the wealth of the owners (*Library of History* 20.8). He also praised the plaster workers who adorned houses on the Sicilian island of Melitê (*Library of History* 5.2). Other positive assessments of architectural plasterwork come from architect Vitruvius (*On Architecture* 2.8.10), and from prolific Roman author Varro, who reveals that artful stucco was something characteristic of an opulent countryside villa (*On Agriculture* 3.9).

Arkesilaos, whose "models in plaster used to sell at a higher rate, among artists themselves, than the works of others" (Pliny *Natural History* 35.156). Pliny then goes on to describe one instance where a plaster model made by Arkesilaos was used as a model for a *krater* (a mixing bowl) presumably made in metal (ibid.). However, this excerpt differs from Pliny's descriptions of the works of Polykleitos, Lysippos, and other major sculptors because he presents their outputs in bronze and marble works as objects that were valued in their own right. Conversely the plaster made by Arkesilaos, which may or may not be a cast, is described as a model, an instrumentally valuable piece that was valued for its use in creating the metal vase. I have shown above that ancient values, as accessed through literary texts, matter a great deal to the Classical Archaeologist. With this in mind, as the few mentions that plaster objects do receive in ancient literature primarily imbue the material with instrumental value, it is unsurprising that this is the same view upheld of the objects by Classical Archaeologists.

Second, plaster does seem to meet the required modern aesthetic standard to be described as an art object. It does not appear to inspire the same ardently emotional reactions as the bowl discussed by Stewart in section 6.4.2. This may well be to do with the poor condition in which plaster from the ancient world often survives: compared to marble and bronze sculptures which can survive in relatively good condition, plaster pieces are porous and easily damaged, and thus can have a highly fragmentary appearance. The Begram plaster casts have been admired by scholars for their "refined shapes" and "artistic quality" (Cambon 2011: 164), but this praise was framed very much in relation to their instrumental function. These elements of their form garnered praise for what they were able to reveal about the composition of motifs on Hellenistic metalware (ibid.).

Thus, plaster objects do not satisfy the two main criteria required for intrinsic value: they seem insufficiently attractive to invite attention as intrinsic objects in their own right and they are not lauded in ancient literature. One imagines that if plaster objects were extolled in ancient texts in the same manner as bronze and marble statuary, Classical Archaeologists' view of them today might be very different.

Instead, plaster objects are primarily valued for instrumental means. They have instrumental value similar to that of broken pot sherds discussed in section 6.4.4. They are primarily valued for the light that they can shed on the ancient world, in particular the question of how Roman marble copies of Greek bronzes might have been created. This can be seen when the value of the Baiae casts is discussed:

> *The Baiae casts are of great importance for two reasons: they offer a tantalisingly close glimpse of lost Greek bronze originals and provide a unique means of assessing the degree of variation introduced in Roman marble copies (Opper 1996: np).*

Similar sentiments are also expressed about the Begram pieces. They are explicitly characterised as pieces that are useful primarily for understanding the ancient world, in particular for illustrating "mobility of artisans and of templates" (Mairs 2014: 183). As with the broken pot sherds, what is deemed interesting about the ancient casts is not the objects themselves but what they can tell us about other, more important objects or phenomena: Greek bronze sculptures and Roman marble copies.

Plaster as an ancient material is therefore associated with instrumental value in the Classical Archaeological value system. The same Classical Archaeology value system that values the ancient casts from Baiae, Begram, and Hildesheim purely instrumentally, as models used in ancient artists' workshops, also values the Ashmolean's casts as instrumental valuable educational tools. In the case of both sets of plaster objects, other interpretations which centre their intrinsic value are available but these possibilities tend not to be meaningfully explored. I have suggested that this is because of the material in which they were made: plaster. The material of plaster can therefore be seen to be a key reason behind why educational values are so prominent within the Classical Archaeological interpretive community within the Ashmolean, and within the Cast Gallery as a whole. This is because of the importance of the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists to the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery as a whole. This particular interpretive community wields a considerable influence over the interpretive framework that the Museum provides for its casts. Those within the interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists are also those responsible for constructing the

framework: the curators who determine the Gallery's internal layout and label texts, and set out the format of the tours to be led by volunteers are Classical Archaeologists, as are many of the volunteers who are responsible for delivering the tours.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that the discipline of Classical Archaeology as a whole does not typically realise the full scope of values that might be attributed to plaster objects, both ancient and modern. This is due to the fact that material in which they are made, plaster, is not typically associated with intrinsic value in the Classical Archaeology value system. As a result, as was the case with Roman marble copies in the past, plaster objects are somewhat trapped within the realm of instrumental values, meaning that they are valued primarily as a means to an end. The "end" for ancient plaster casts is understanding how ancient Greek sculptural forms, executed in bronze, were transferred into Roman marbles. The "end" for modern plaster casts is facilitating an understanding of ancient statues more generally in a museum setting. This has become established orthodoxy for both ancient and modern casts. This view of plaster influences not just how those from the Classical Archaeological interpretive community within the Ashmolean view the modern casts (as instrumentally valuable objects), but impacts upon users of the Cast Gallery as a whole. I have argued that this is due to the fact that this particular interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists has a strong influence over the Museum's interpretive framework as a whole.

6.7 Beyond material

Before concluding this chapter, I must raise one final factor that might also be responsible for the pervasive view of ancient and modern casts as objects of purely instrumental value. The material of plaster might not be the only factor at issue for Classical Archaeologists: the status of both classes of object as reproductions is also likely to contribute to the pervasive view of the objects as primarily instrumentally valuable pieces. This becomes clear when one analyses how another passage from ancient literature (which might also be thought provide evidence for the use of ancient plaster casts as decorative objects) is discussed in scholarly literature. The text in

question is a satiric poem by Juvenal, in which the Roman poet scorns poseurs who fill their homes with plaster busts of Greek Stoic philosopher Chrysippus (Fig.6.p) in an effort to appear learned:

> *In the first place, they are unlearned persons, though you may find their houses crammed with gypsum plaster busts of Chrysippus; for their greatest hero is the man who has brought a likeness of Aristotle or Pittacus, or bids his shelves preserve an original portrait of Cleanthes. Men's faces are not to be trusted; does not every street abound in gloomy-visaged debauchees? (Juvenal Satire 2:4-5).*

Although Juvenal maligns plaster objects in this passage, Rune Frederiksen has interpreted it as revealing that plaster casts may have been an economically viable alternative to marble copies of Greek sculpture in the Roman period, made for display in less wealthy homes (Frederiksen 2010: 24). However, Juvenal does not give any explicit indications that the busts to which he refers were *casts* rather than plaster sculptures made by modelling or other means. Nevertheless, Frederiksen states that there is "no doubt" that Juvenal refers to plaster casts, arguing that if Juvenal had referenced individually modelled plaster portraits then his critique would not make sense, because the presence of original artworks (even those made in plaster) would not "fit the slating remarks" made by Juvenal (ibid.).[94]

However, I argue that Juvenal's passage cannot be straightforwardly interpreted as referring to casts. It seems clear that Juvenal's aim is to criticise the owners of the plaster busts for their baseless imitation of more learned citizens, but Frederiksen implies that only casts would fit with Juvenal's critique because reproductions are imitative in nature, presenting a satisfying parallel with the qualities that Juvenal maligns in the busts' owners. He seems to suggest that original artworks, even those made in plaster, would not create this attractive parallelism. However, in inferring this, I argue that Frederiksen has made the assumption that the ancient Romans had a similar

[94] Here, Frederiksen seems to be following a similar a similar assumption made by Padgett (Padgett 2001: 211), although he does not cite Padgett explicitly.

conception of originality as modern commentators, which is by no means borne out by the evidence from antiquity.[95] Frederiksen may well have projected the value that modern audiences place on artistic originality onto the ancient world. Instead, I argue that Juvenal need not necessarily be referring to plaster *casts* to bring about the parallelism in his text. I believe that Juvenal is simply referencing the fact that plaster (and/or stucco) was known as an imitative material in the ancient world. This fact was remarked upon by other ancient authors.[96] The paralleling of the qualities of the poseurs that Juvenal scorns and the plaster busts in their homes therefore holds true whether the busts were casts or modelled in plaster. Thus, Juvenal's text cannot be taken as convincing evidence that *casts* of philosophers were used as decorative items in the ancient world. However, Frederiksen's insistence that the text should be interpreted in this way is revealing about Classical Archaeological attitudes to copying and reproductive works: they are considered to have a lower status than so-called original artworks. In this chapter, I have explored the idea that a broad scope of interpretive possibilities is not explored for plaster objects due to their material. In the next, I will show that of equal importance to the values attributed to plaster casts both ancient and modern is plaster casts' status as copies.

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[95] Copies were not necessarily perceived as having lesser value than originals by an ancient audience. Multiple copies of the same sculpture were omnipresent in imperial villas (Vermeule 1977: 15) and elite homes (Mattusch and Lie 2005: 193). Wealthy Roman villa owners are thought to have found arrangements of duplicate copies of the same sculpture attractive because of the symmetry offered (Vermeule 1968: 550). That these works were copies could not have been in doubt when multiples of the same sculpture were present, yet this does not seem to have troubled Roman collectors. In the ancient world, copies are found in exactly the same contexts as originals (Vermeule 1977: 8).

[96] For example, in an extant play by Roman satirist Persius, a character named Cornutus is invited to discriminate between "what rings solid" (meaning that which is truthful) and "the stucco of the painted tongue" (a reference to lies that have been told to him) (*Satire 2*:5). The use of this metaphor suggests that stucco (lime plaster) was known to be employed for imitative purposes.

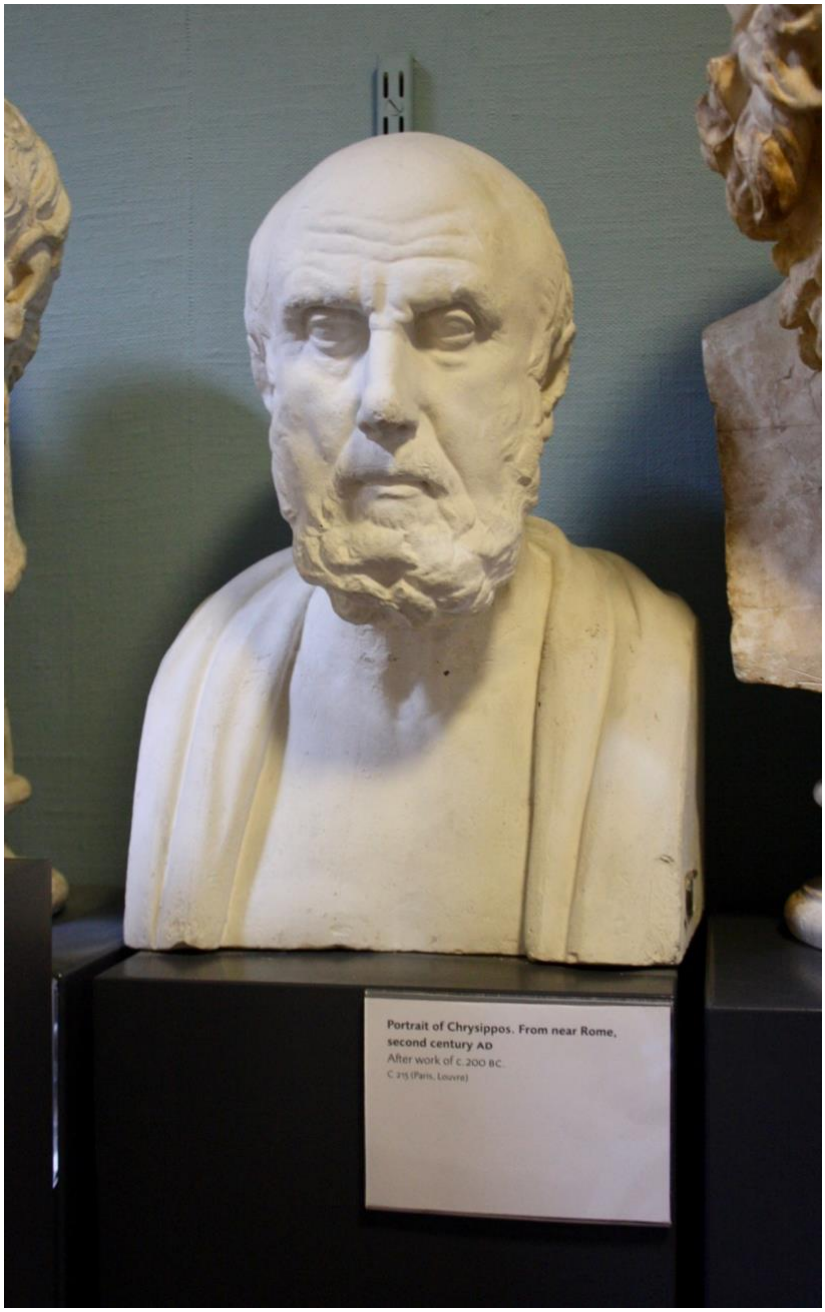

*Figure 6.p Cast **C215**, which represents ancient philosopher Chrysippus. This cast is a modern plaster copy of a second century AD Roman marble sculpture, yet it could give an idea of the form taken by the ancient plaster busts of Chrysippus described by Juvenal. 26/05/2021.*

Chapter 7 Value and Authenticity

In the previous chapter, I discussed instances in Classical Archaeological scholarship of objects described as "copies" being associated with less value than original creations. This trend was also evident in the Cast Gallery, not only within its particular interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists, but amongst all categories of user.[97] Fundamentally, this preoccupation with the status of casts as copies can be understood as a concern with authenticity. Authenticity is normally associated with the qualities of being real, original, or genuine (Jones 2010: 183). The links between value and authenticity have been much explored in scholarship, with authenticity often considered to function as "a qualifier of value/s" (Foster and Jones 2019: 12; Foster and Jones 2020a: 177). This chapter will explore the particular relationship between value and authenticity in the Cast Gallery setting.

Since, like value, authenticity is a slippery concept which is difficult to define, I will begin this chapter by summarising existing scholarship on the subject, in particular describing the pertinent distinctions between materialist and constructivist perspectives on authenticity that will inform my later discussion (7.1). Next, I discuss how materialist authenticity indeed functions as a qualifier of values in the Cast Gallery (7.2). Then, I will show how the reverse is also true: value can qualify a constructivist reading of casts' authenticity (7.3). Finally, I turn to a particular category of value which exerts a great deal of influence over the casts' authenticity, namely historical value (7.4). These discussions ultimately enable me to conclude that while casts' value does not entirely depend on their relationships with ancient statuary, the objects are unlikely to ever be wholly divorced from the realm of classical antiquity (7.5).

[97] For instance, in section 4.1.3, I described how artist Xanthe saw the theme of forgery as being predominant in the Cast Gallery.

7.1 Defining authenticity

> *The proposed replica would be more authentic and complete in effect than the original, which if put up only in its authentic parts inside would perhaps suffer in comparison. (Quoted in Foster and Jones 2020a: 111, emphasis mine).*

This excerpt is taken from the minutes of a 1966 meeting of the Iona Cathedral Trust, an organisation that, at the time, was dedicating considerable efforts to erecting the concrete replica of the St John's Cross monument that stands in Iona Abbey grounds today. It usefully outlines the two key forms that authenticity can take: it can be understood in materialist and constructivist senses.[98]

First, the reference to the "authentic parts", meaning the eighth-century AD components of the original Cross, highlights that authenticity can be understood as an inherent characteristic that is contained within the object's material fabric (Brajer 2009: 24-5, Jones and Yarrow 2013: 6). This perspective, which privileges original objects and those that are "true to their origins in terms of material, design, production, and use" is often described as materialist in nature (Jones 2010: 198). Objects with material authenticity are often described simply as "not a copy" (e.g., in Bossart 1961: 145).

Second, the reference to the concrete reproduction being "more authentic […] in effect" shows that authenticity can also be understood as something that is not inherent in the fabric of the object but is instead a social construct, deriving "entirely from the minds of the onlookers" (Holtorf 2013: 428). This perspective sees authenticity not as an inalienable characteristic but as variable and negotiable: something dependent on the viewer engaging with the object and its context (Jones 2010: 199). This approach, often

[98] Although I have presented these approaches to authenticity as something of a binary, many scholars have argued that this approach is unhelpful. Instead, they advocate for a "modified constructivist" approach (e.g., Jones 2010, Holtorf 2013) that considers an object's material qualities as being key to constructivist readings of authenticity. However, in this chapter the distinction is a helpful one as it provides a useful vocabulary for expressing the trends observed within the Cast Gallery.

referred to as constructivist, emphasises that users experience authenticity in many different ways (Panofsky 2010: 333). Cast Gallery users understood authenticity in both materialist and constructivist senses.

7.2 Authenticity qualifies value

In the Cast Gallery, material authenticity in particular acts as a qualifier of value/s, meaning that the perception of an object's value is impacted by its material authenticity. Such perceptions qualify the value of the casts to varying degrees. First, I will demonstrate that authenticity sometimes qualifies value to the extent that all value is lost if the object is deemed inauthentic. Second, I show that, in other cases, concerns with the objects' authenticity result in values being restricted to the purely instrumental.

For some users, such as a visitor described by volunteer Ralph, a materialist understanding of authenticity was profoundly impactful upon assessments of value:

> *Ralph (volunteer): I once did a tour and we were trying to round up people, saying "are you interested in doing a tour?" and somebody who had wandered into the Cast Gallery by mistake as it turned out… said "what's the tour about?" and I said "it's of the Cast Gallery" and she said "what are the casts?", I said "they're copies of Greek and Roman statues" and she said "oh I don't want to come on the tour then! I don't want to look at copies!" [laughs]*

This visitor was evidently so concerned with material authenticity that the objects' status as copies rendered them devoid of any kind of value. The visitor presented the casts as being entirely unworthy of their time. That an object's material authenticity can negatively impact upon its value is well established in scholarly literature, including in neurological studies that involved showing paintings variously labelled as "original" and "copy" to participants lying in a brain scanner. Such studies have concluded that different processes occur in the brain in response to the variously labelled objects, even when the label of "original" or "copy" does not match the true status of the work with which it is associated (Huang et al. 2011). When a participant was shown a piece of art

marked as a copy, their brain activity suggested that were actively trying to detect flaws in the images that might validate their status as copies (ibid.: 6). By contrast, the labelling of a painting as an original stimulated a part of the brain associated with reward, which the researchers connected with an increase in the perceived (monetary) value of the work (ibid.). It is therefore unsurprising that value seems to be positively correlated with materialist authenticity in the Cast Gallery.

The examples of Ralph's visitor and Huang et al.'s study show users interacting with materially inauthentic objects on a very surface level, where the objects' status as an original or a copy is all that the user knows about them. However, within the Cast Gallery, concerns with a cast's material authenticity rarely leads to its total devaluation when users have greater levels of familiarity with it. In such cases, judgements surrounding authenticity instead result in a narrowing of the scope of values that users deem appropriate for the object.

In this thesis, I have already introduced a user for whom a materialist reading of authenticity influences value in this way: Connor. In section 4.2.3, I described Connor's non-cognitive experience of the casts' intrinsic value, and in section 5.2.1, I showed how he then went on to deny the existence of that very experience, noting his preference for focusing on the casts' instrumental values. I suggested how this may have resulted from the fact that the Ashmolean does not encourage emotive experiences in the Cast Gallery. However, when discussing how touching a plaster cast might feel, Connor implied that this reaction might also be, in part, prompted by his view of the casts' material authenticity:

> *Connor (visitor): Prosthetic would be the word I'd use. Like [touching] a stuffed animal, it not being the real thing.*

Connor's view of casts as materially inauthentic copies ("*not the real thing*") could also explain why he recognised the casts' educational value, but held back from acknowledging the intrinsic, experiential values that the objects could also offer. Connor was not alone in this regard. Other users, including artist Barbara, suggested that

preconceived ideas surrounding material authenticity were sufficient to overpower even direct physical engagement with the objects.

Throughout our interview, Barbara stressed how much she instrumentally valued the casts, referring to them on multiple occasions a representationally valuable "*resource*" that enabled her to reproduce ancient statue forms in her watercolour paintings. However, when asked if she viewed the casts as authentic, she responded:

> *Barbara (artist): No. They're second-hand. They've lost something in being cast.*

After making this statement, Barbara turned and laid a hand on cast **B32**. It soon became clear that she believed this piece to be an original ancient marble. She compared it to cast **B21** located nearby (Fig.7.a), correctly identifying this object as a plaster cast:

> *Barbara (artist): You see this chappie [**B32**] is marble… And you look at it and you compare it to that [points], to the* Leonidas* *[**B21**]. I mean this [**B32**] has… a life of its own because stone's got life, plaster doesn't have life. Once you take a plaster copy of something, it's fine, it's an image, but it's lost its life.*

Barbara presented the object that she believed to be made of stone as powerful and living, imbuing it with intrinsic value. By contrast, the object that she identified as a copy was acceptable as an instrumentally functional representation, but it lacked intrinsic value in its own right. Barbara was in physical contact with the plaster surface of cast **B32** during this whole exchange, suggesting that her preconceived idea of the piece being made of marble and thus possessing a life force was so potent that her sense of touch did not alert her to the plaster reality of its surface. Her preconceived views of its material authenticity prevented her from assigning a full spectrum of values to **B21**, despite the fact that she readily recognised such values in **B32** when she mistakenly perceived it to be an ancient original. Like Connor, Barbara demonstrated that casts' intrinsic values can be lost, or denied, by users who emphasised material authenticity, but their instrumental values often remain.

*Figure 7.a Casts **B21** (far left) and **B32** (far right). 07/10/2020.*

What emerges is that materialist understandings of an object's authenticity, linked to their status as copies, can qualify value negatively in the Cast Gallery setting, causing users to either interpret the casts as entirely bereft of value, or limit the scope of their values to the purely instrumental. The extent of the negative valuation depends on the degree to which the objects' material authenticity makes up the user's knowledge of the object.

7.3 Value qualifies authenticity

Having demonstrated that authenticity qualifies value in the Cast Gallery in precisely the manner described by Foster and Jones, I will now show that the reverse is also true: judgements of an object's value impact upon whether it is considered to be authentic. This occurs when authenticity is understood in a constructivist sense. To explore this phenomenon, I will first demonstrate that, on a basic level, when my respondents recognised value of any form in the casts, they were able to use this to construct a form of authenticity for the objects. Second, I will argue that value can also qualify authenticity in more nuanced ways: the importance that a particular category of value

had to an individual user could have a profound impact upon their perception of casts' authenticity.

Cast Gallery users were able to use the values that they identified for the casts to create a form of constructivist authenticity for the objects. How this works in practice was best demonstrated by artist Melody. When asked to define an authentic museum object, she responded:

> *Melody (artist): What makes it authentic…? Well, I suppose if you actually have the real thing [laughs], that makes it more authentic than having a copy.*

Melody began by defining authenticity in a materialist sense. When asked whether she thought that casts were authentic, one might expect for her to answer in the negative. However, she replied:

> *Melody (artist): Well [laughs] … yes! I mean otherwise we wouldn't have these examples that we could go and look at. You'd have to travel to Greece and Rome or whatever to see them. Or other museums.*

The fact that Melody located some form of (in this case, educational) value in the casts seemed to mean that she considered them to be authentic in a constructivist sense. This was a common phenomenon among my respondents. They often used the categories of value that they identified for the casts (not only values of an educational nature identified by Melody) to justify a view that the casts were authentic. This occurred even when the objects did not fulfil the criteria for material authenticity that they themselves had previously identified. I noted throughout my data collection that many users seemed determined to find casts authentic in some way. I will now suggest an explanation for this trend.

The rise of individualism within modern Western society, as described by Richard Handler, might explain Melody's actions (Handler 1986).[99] Handler details how, under the feudal system, the world and the place of all humans within it was divinely ordained by God. However, with the decline of the feudal system during the Enlightenment, the world was no longer part of a "divine hierarchy" but was instead formed by a "society" of human construction (ibid.: 3). Each individual within this society had the power to define themselves through their character and actions. A greater focus on individualism resulted: since each individual's place in the world was now self-determined, the state of one's true, "authentic" self was of great importance. Handler argues that members of Western society still experience such concerns, and suggests that today's consumer culture enables authenticity to be sold in the form of commodities. A soft drink brand, for example, is able to successfully market itself as "the real thing", convincing consumers to purchase its products on the grounds that they too will gain a "real authentic existence" as a result (ibid.: 2).

Arnould and Price refer to consumers authenticating themselves through purchasing in this manner as engaging in "authenticating acts" (Arnould and Price 2000: 141).[100] In the case of authenticating acts, they argue that it matters not whether the consumer can be judged to have "really" had an authentic experience with their product of choice, what matters is whether the individual *felt* that their experience was authentic and therefore contributed to their self-definition as an authentic human being (Arnould and Price 2000: 194; following Cohen 1998: 378).

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[99] Like many other discussions of the significance of individualism, Handler's description is indebted to Trilling's seminal text 'Sincerity and Authenticity' (Trilling 1972).

[100] Arnould and Price present their authenticating acts in a different historical context to that of Handler. Following ideas expressed by Baudrillard (Baudrillard 1983: 12-13), they theorised that authenticating acts are a uniquely postmodern phenomenon, whereby the consumer feels compelled to restore a sense of community, tradition, and self that has been lost in postmodern society due to the influence of the combined forces of globalization, deterritorialization, and hyperreality (Arnould and Price 2000: 141). Arnould and Price view the search for authenticity in the context of anxieties about the inauthentic state of the postmodern world. If such anxieties drove the search for authenticity in the Cast Gallery, this was not made explicit at any point during my data collection. For that reason, I favour the historical context given in Handler's article, which placed less emphasis on these factors.

I argue that these trends toward individualism and the importance of self-defined authenticity might explain why users such as Melody seemed determined to describe the casts as authentic. Perhaps if the casts are viewed as authentic in some way, they can function as part of an authenticating act, which in turn authenticates the user assessing them. However, in addition to authenticating themselves as individuals, users such as Melody may also have been motivated to find authenticity in the Cast Gallery for a slightly different (although related) reason: in order to validate their enjoyment of their museum experience.[101] Every user that I interviewed spoke with enthusiasm and gratification about their time in the Cast Gallery: perhaps if they were then to declare the objects inauthentic, it would tarnish their enjoyment. This could also explain why users employed the casts' values to rationalise the objects' authenticity, even when the objects did not meet previously expressed required criteria for material authenticity.

This analysis has much to reveal about the relationships between value and authenticity in the Cast Gallery. First, it appears that authenticity itself is valuable: the attribution of this quality to objects may well allow user to view 1) themselves and/or 2) their museum experience, as being authentic. Second, I showed that assessments of an object's authenticity could be qualified by the values that the user had previously identified. This was dependent upon the user implicitly conceptualising authenticity in a constructivist sense. In such examples, authenticity appears as "a post hoc rationalization of an initial assessment of value rather than a trigger of it" (Carroll 2015: 5). Yet value can also be seen to qualify authenticity in more nuanced ways.

It is not only the materialist/constructivist divide that determines how value and authenticity interrelate in the Cast Gallery setting. Other complex factors, such as user expectations, and the particular values most prized by individual users, also work to

[101] It is also possible that my chosen method of data collection could have influenced this phenomenon. The fact that respondents were engaged in face-to-face interviews with a researcher who had a self-evident personal investment in plaster casts could have meant that they were disinclined to deem the objects entirely inauthentic.

qualify authenticity. In order to make this point, I contrast the following statement from visitor Wilf with that of student Isla:

> *Wilf (visitor): What's authentic? [laughs] Something that you know is right. So we know that Trajan bust is a copy but it's also authentic ... I can see at a glance that it's Trajan so I know it's right [...] Therefore, I look at it and yeah, there's authenticity here [gestures around the Cast Gallery]. […] I think there's authenticity in any copy where you are convinced that it is a true copy.*
>
> *Isla (student): [A cast is not authentic because] they don't have the history… it is said to have, that it purports to have. Which isn't to say that fakes are uninteresting. For example, the Van Meegeren fakes which were held up as masterpieces of Rembrandt or whatever.*[102] *They themselves are interesting as part of this history of art forgery in World War Two. But I would say […] for something to be authentic it has to ... actually come from and have the history that we think it does.*

Prima facie, Isla appears to adopt a materialist perspective, seeing the casts as defined for the most part by their status as "*fakes*", while Wilf seems to have a more constructivist outlook, creating authenticity for the casts based on his perception of the objects' accuracy. However, there is another issue at play here. The common thread running through both of these statements is the issue of expectation. Wilf perceived the casts as meeting his expectations. He therefore deemed the objects authentic. Conversely, Isla found that casts established expectations that they did not go on to meet. Their authenticity consequently suffered in her eyes. This picture is largely to be expected: past scholarship has discussed the fact that authentic objects tend to be those that meet expectations.[103] However, I still deem these examples to be worthy of further

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[102] In 1945, Han Van Meegeren was exposed for producing forgeries of the work of renowned painter Johannes Vermeer, including the 'Christ at Emmaus' (Jones 1994). He is not believed to have forged any works of Rembrandt.

[103] In the words of Wayne Curtis: "something authentic is simply something that looks as you might imagine it based on a lifetime of movies and television and glossy ads in magazines" (Curtis 2000: 39). Lowenthal also touches on this matter, stating that "to be credible historical witnesses, antiquities must to some extent confirm with modern stereotypes" (Lowenthal 1985: 354).

discussion. As I will now explain, both users' expectations are broadly the same, yet wildly different assessments of authenticity result. I will now attempt to unpick how and why this occurs, positing that the relationship between authenticity and the particular values that hold most significance for each individual user explain the discrepancy between the assessments.

At this point in the thesis, the expectations that the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery establishes are well known: the fact that very many users easily mistake the casts for original antiquities illustrates that casts meet users' pre-existing expectations of what ancient Greek and Roman sculpture looks like. Throughout the thesis, I have suggested several reasons for why the Ashmolean's casts in particular are mistaken for original ancient pieces (e.g., in Chapter 5 I discussed the impact of the Cast Gallery's placement in the global museum layout and the interpretive text associated with the objects). However, another important factor is the cultural familiarity of casts' ancient referents. Casts are so easily mistaken for ancient Greek and Roman sculptures because the appearance of Classical sculptures is well known from their established role in Western visual culture. This was known to my respondents:

> *Esther (volunteer): They [the casts] are all of such incredibly famous works. […] Works that are so embedded in our own cultures. And the casts show the fact that for so long through history we've always looked back and been fascinated by all this, you know, ancient stuff.*

Esther suggested that certain sculptures are so famous and so entrenched within Western culture that they can be readily recognised. Indeed, many specific ancient sculptures are often highly familiar from their consistent use and re-use in other Western media. This can be seen with the example of the Laocoön group.

Since his discovery on the slopes of Rome's Esquiline hill in 1506 (Smith 1995: 108), Laocoön has become one of the "most famous icons" from the ancient world (Grafton et al. 2010: 507). His image has been reproduced by artists like Reubens in the 1600's (Fubini and Held 1964: 130), William Blake in the 1800's (Tayler 1976-77), and Lichtenstein (Shaw 2001: 25) in the twentieth-century. Even today, Laocoön remains

artistically relevant: an exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute in 2007 explored his continuing influential legacy (Curtis and Feeke 2007). As well as being consistently referenced by subsequent artists, Laocoön has further featured in critiques of political ineptitude,[104] as a visual shorthand for pain[105] and struggle,[106] and to create humour.[107] Although some now view the Laocoön as "the emblem of an over-turned past" in which Classical art provided the canon, he nevertheless continues to exist in collective memory (Warwick 2019: 328-9).[108] The continued relevance of the original Laocoön means that casts of his form are highly likely to be recognised and perhaps assumed to be the original sculpture. Wilf's description of the Trajan bust above is also likely to be evidence of this phenomenon: the characteristic physiognomy of Trajan's sculptural representation is evidently sufficiently recognisable for Wilf to identify him.

Additionally, even if specific ancient sculptures are not as individually identifiable as Trajan and Laocoön, the genre of ancient statuary in general has many characteristic features familiar to modern viewers. This includes their form, general subject matter, and colour. Squire demonstrates that Western viewers recognise naturalistic yet

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[104] In 1868, satirical Parisian magazine Le Charivari published an image of three figures in the poses of the Laocoön group wrestling with the strangling snakes of bureaucracy (Warwick 2019: 327). Laocoön's image was used in 2001 to illustrate the woes of Austrian Transport Minister who was repeatedly criticised for her handling of a new telephone number regulation system and railway contracts (Grafton et al. 2010: 507).

[105] Laocoön's tortured face is depicted on the cover of Morris's sociological and anthropological study of pain (Morris 1993).

[106] Laocoön's image was used in 1870's Berlin to condemn the high cost of living and in 1995 to critique the installation prices associated with installing cable television (Grafton et al. 2010: 507). Furthermore, in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge is described as "making a perfect Laocoön of himself with his stockings," likening the entanglement of the sculpted priest to his struggled attempts to dress (https://www.gutenberg.org/files/46/46-h/46-h.htm Accessed 29/06/2021).

[107] The December 1990 edition of The New Yorker magazine parodied Laocoön on its cover by showing three figures tangled in ribbons as they attempt to wrap Christmas presents. Their poses recall those of the Laocoön group (https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1990/12/17 Accessed 28/11/2020).

[108] All of the examples cited here demonstrate Laocoön's familiarity to those who regularly engage with what one might call high culture: the world of art, literature and museums. Yet classical images are also well embedded within the collective memory of more popular culture. For example, on the day of the England men's football team's Euro 2020 final clash with Italy, the front page of the Daily Star newspaper was adorned with an image of the *Augustus of Prima Porta**. Captain Harry Kane's head was superimposed over that of the Emperor and the adjacent headline read "CAESAR MOMENT." Evidently, Augustus's form was deemed sufficiently identifiable as "Italian" (or perhaps "Roman") for the joke to land. This demonstrates the familiarity of classical images to a broad spectrum of Western audiences.

idealised renderings of the (often male and nude) human form as either being examples of ancient art or owing a "debt" to it in some way (Squire 2011: 4). In addition, Rose-Greenland's visitor studies research at the *Gods in Color* exhibition showed that museum users also have strongly preconceived ideas of the colour associated with Classical statuary (Rose-Greenland 2016). As mentioned in Chapter 1, the exhibition featured plaster casts painted in vibrant polychromy, mimicking the paint that would have originally decorated the surfaces of their ancient antecedents (Brinkmann et al. 2017). Although the *Gods in Color*'s painted plasters can be considered more authentic in terms of historical accuracy than their white cousins, many of Rose-Greenland's respondents viewed the coloured casts as both "shocking and nonauthentic" (Rose-Greenland 2016: 88). This was because their gaudy colours rebuffed visitors' pre-existing assumptions of what pristine white ancient sculpture looked like (ibid.: 99). Therefore, as well as recognising specific forms such as the Laocoön, Cast Gallery users are also likely to be able to identify something that looks like ancient statuary in general because of its characteristic subject matter, representational mode, and colour.

Since they reproduce well-known individual ancient subjects and the generic characteristics of classical statuary, the Ashmolean's casts are likely to meet these pre-existing expectations. Indeed, I noted above that they satisfied Wilf's expectations in exactly this way, leading to him deeming the casts authentic. Isla also seemed to find that the casts met her expectations for what ancient sculptures look like: she implied that the casts "*purport to have*" a history that is truly ancient because of their appearance. However, unlike Wilf, she did not find the casts authentic even though they met her expectations of what ancient statuary looks like. She explained that this was because the casts do not satisfy an additional set of expectations: they lack the ancient history that their physical appearance symbolises. I will now establish the reasons for the discrepancies between Isla's authenticity assessment and that of Wilf: namely the relationship between authenticity and value in each case.

I will make this point by considering two case studies of authenticity assessments, involving golf star Tiger Woods and unhygienic Los Angeles restaurants (Carroll 2015). Carroll described how Tiger Woods was publicly viewed as morally authentic until his

2009 sex scandal. His popularity plummeted after his disclosure of moral wrongdoing. Carroll drew a comparison between the reception of Woods' affairs with that of poor food hygiene ratings given to various LA restaurants. He showed that while the public's previous perception of Woods' authenticity did not protect him from castigation for his poor moral choices, the reverse was true in the case of the restaurants (ibid.: 6-7). Eateries that were perceived as authentic received limited public backlash over their violation of hygiene regulations (Lehman et al. 2014). Carroll concluded that "for the authentic restaurants, their identity was not at stake when they violated hygiene rules", suggesting that the difference between the responses to the two scenarios lies in the extent to which authenticity was key to the identities of each (Carroll 2015: 7). Conversely, I will now argue that the divergent responses can be explained by the particular type of value in which their authenticity was located.

Prior to 2009, Woods' authenticity was derived from his public image: that of an all-American man with family values. It was precisely his embodiment of these family values that was threatened during his sex scandal. Meanwhile, the authenticity of the LA restaurants depended not on their cleanliness. Instead, factors such as the cuisine served, ambience, and décor are likely to have been more consequential.[109] The restaurants' poor hygiene ratings did not impact upon their subscription to these values, and the restaurants consequently retained their authentic status while Woods did not. Thus, I argue that the different outcomes resulted not from the degree of importance that authenticity had for Woods' or the restaurants' identities, as proposed by Carroll. Instead, the particular categories of value upon which the authenticity rested in each case seemed most consequential.

[109] Service industry researchers have identified multiple factors that enhance customers' views of a restaurant's authenticity. These range from serving traditional recipes using local ingredients, to having restaurant staff behave in a manner appropriate to the culture of the cuisine on offer (de Vries and M. 2017). Other studies stress the importance of other customers (Wang and Mattila 2015), and the authenticating impact of the restaurant's name (Zeng et al. 2014). Hygiene was not mentioned as impacting on authenticity in these studies.

I will now argue that the same phenomenon explains Wilf and Isla's differing assessments of authenticity in the Cast Gallery. For Wilf, the key to the casts' authenticity was the accuracy of the representation that they provide (essentially, an educational value). Their material authenticity, their status as copies, did not negatively impact their authenticity because it does not detract from this educational function. However, Isla seemed to prize historical value. Through her comparison of the casts to "*fake*" paintings that speak to the history of the First World War, Isla implies that casts too have historical value. However, she does not see casts as possessing a sufficient amount of historical value to live up to the ancient expectations that their physical appearance establishes. Their authenticity suffers as a result. Thus, for some users it appears that the category in which they locate the greatest amount of value has a significant impact upon judgements of the objects' authenticity.

Overall, I have shown that, for many users, the recognition that casts possess some kind of value in general enables the objects to acquire a form of constructivist authenticity. I have suggested that users may choose to employ their value judgements to this end in order to aid in their own self-definition as authentic individuals, or simply to legitimise their enjoyment of their Cast Gallery experience. I have further demonstrated that the emphasis that some individual users place on certain forms of value also has a profound impact upon their perception of cast authenticity. Thus, in the Cast Gallery, value and authenticity are engaged in a symbiotic relationship: each influences and informs the other.

7.4 The influence of historical value

Above, I argued that the particular value in which a user locates authenticity has major implications for whether they deem the casts to be authentic in general. One of the examples discussed was student Isla, who found authenticity to be most associated with historical value. Isla was one of many users who emphasised historical value in this way. Historical value was not the most commonly observed value attributed to the casts (I showed in Chapter 4 that educational value was most abundant), but it was a concern for very many Cast Gallery users. A hierarchy of value related to age was constructed by many respondents which gave preference to older objects: such objects were

commonly described as having greater historical value. This hierarchy of value was noticeable within the cast collection itself. Older casts within the Ashmolean were seen as possessing greater value than casts which were produced more recently. For other users, the age hierarchy encompassed not only the casts but the other era of the past to which the casts are often connected: the ancient world. Many users, like Isla, presented ancient objects as possessing greater historic value and, consequently, greater authenticity, than all/any casts. This final subsection explores how this hierarchy of age and authenticity works in practice. I draw on the work of Cornelius Holtorf, in particular his 2013 paper 'On Pastness', which discussed how authenticity and historical value interrelate (Holtorf 2013).

First, I briefly summarise the key points of Holtorf's discussion (7.4.1). Next, I describe the relevant Cast Gallery trends outlined above, namely the hierarchy of age value (7.4.2). Then, I discuss why this age hierarchy is meaningful for visitors (7.4.3). Finally, I show what implications the evidence from the Cast Gallery has for Holtorf's theory, through the analysis of what I call "scale-tipping" moments sought by users (7.4.4).

7.4.1 'On Pastness'

Holtorf argued against what he called a materialist approach to historical value, where the object's historical value is "contained in the construction or manufacture process of that object and [is] thus an inalienable condition of it" (Holtorf 2013: 430). In this materialist outlook, an object's historical value and its authenticity is located in its precise attribution to a particular era or date (ibid.: 432), for example, "the Neolithic period". Instead, Holtorf advocates for a focus on the object's possession of the quality of "pastness", namely being "of the past" (Holtorf 2010: 26-7). An object's pastness relates not to their creation within a specific historical period that can be verified through processes like radiocarbon dating or dendrochronology, but instead relates to its perception by its users. If a user understands or experiences an object simply as being "old" or "of the past" in some way, it possesses the authenticating quality of pastness (Holtorf 2013: 431). Having provided this brief synopsis of Holtorf's argument, I now discuss what light my visitor studies research might shed on his propositions.

7.4.2 The age hierarchy: what?

Historical value, understood in the materialist sense described by Holtorf, wields a significant influence over Cast Gallery users' views of authenticity. There exists a clear hierarchy of value within the Cast Gallery, weighted in favour of objects associated with specific, older time periods. I now show that hierarchy exists within the bounds of the cast collection itself, beginning with a quote from tutor Jim:

> *Jim (tutor): Obviously, it's easy to give weight to a cast whose provenance we can trace back to Rome in the 1880's and a particular maker, for example, or whose history of surface we can see because it was treated in the museum in 1887 or whatever that is, but for a cast that was made four years ago and has now found its way into the museum… how do we conceive of that? Is that… is that authentic? Just a reproduction? […] Only a couple of years ago, we acquired the cast group of the satyr and the hermaphrodite and… that's obviously interesting from an iconographic point of view, it's interesting from a physical point of view because it's an object that demands you walk around it. [...] But as a thing, it does feel very new. And it therefore has more of a sense of being a kind of fun curiosity and less of a sense of being a serious object. And I'm sure that will change in a hundred years.*

Identifying historical value and authenticity in nineteenth-century casts seemed obvious for Jim. He contrasted these historic examples to cast **H107**, which was acquired by the Ashmolean in 2013 (Kopsacheili 2015: 17). The cast represents a *satyr and a hermaphrodite group** and was praised by Jim for its accuracy, namely its replication of the intended ambulatory effect of the original (Figs.7.b-d). The cast evidently had some educational value in this sense, but Jim still viewed it as insufficiently old to be "*a serious object*". This shows the hierarchy of age value at work, and also highlights the fact that although cast **H107** is educationally valued, it is presented as possessing less overall value and authenticity than older casts in the collection that have greater historical value. Historical value seems to be weighted above all others.

*Figure 7.b Cast **H107**. As this and the two images following demonstrate, this piece cannot be fully understood from any single viewpoint. The viewer must physically circle around the work to identify the figures and understand the narrative. 09/05/2019.*

*Figure 7.c Cast **H107**. 09/05/2019.*

*Figure 7.d Cast **H107**. 09/05/2019.*

Newer casts were often presented as needing to have a very obvious instrumental function to secure their place in the museum. In this regard, Jim also discussed another relatively new acquisition to the Ashmolean's cast collection, cast **H109**:

> *Jim (tutor): So, [with **H109**] there you have the cast really working, if you like, to earn its keep. […] It's a very good example of the ways in which new things can speak to old questions and having the Antinous de-restored and a cast made makes [the cast] a very good object of record for the physical history of that [original] object because no one's ever going to de-restore [the original] from its current state because it is so immaculate and so beautiful that I think we're stuck with that restoration for a very long time now. And remembering actually is an important part of that… remembering what it was like, remembering what it came from, not only kind of in a conservator's file, but right here physically. I think that's an extremely valuable quality for a cast.*

Cast **H109** preserves the form that its original referent, which represents the Emperor Hadrian's boy-favourite Antinous, took before its restoration work was completed at

the Ashmolean in 2011 (Smith et al. 2018: 76).[110] In discussing the cast's importance for preserving a phase in the history of the original object, Jim associated it with biographical value, but he presented this value as being necessary to override the general lack of value and authenticity that might otherwise be associated with a relatively "*new*" object. He also implied that if an object does not have obvious historical value, its authenticity can be questioned to a higher degree: above, he queried whether a newer cast like **H107** would be materially inauthentic: "*just a reproduction*".

Two useful findings emerge from this discussion. First, it again emphasises that historical value, understood in a materialist sense, is of great significance in the Cast Gallery. Casts which are older seem to possess more value in general and more authenticity than their younger counterparts. Second, Jim suggests another reason why educational value is emphasised above all others. Perhaps, as the highly significant quality of historical value can be called into question for the casts, their instrumental values are emphasised in order to make up for this perceived deficiency.

The age hierarchy presented by Jim stretched within the bounds of the cast collection. However, other users indicated that the Cast Gallery's age hierarchy extended much further than this, also encompassing the ancient world. This was made apparent when visitor Greg discussed the relative merits of touching a plaster cast versus touching an ancient sculpture:

> *Greg (visitor): Well I think maybe it [touching a plaster cast] wouldn't be as exciting because [laughs] it's not as old. […] I suppose maybe touching the original would be better because I like the idea of touching something that's very old. That other people have touched throughout time. I like being able to do that. Yeah, just because you're like touching the story. […] But I think it [touching a cast] would still be nice because you're… getting an experience*

[110] The original Antinous bust received a new marble shoulder, nose, upper lip and hair as part of this project (Smith et al. 2018: 70).

> *of the skill involved and when they were saying upstairs about how they made them like hundreds of years ago, that's quite skilful.*

Greg presented ancient sculptures as having greater value than either the historic or the newer casts discussed by Jim. This was due to the even more advanced age of the ancient pieces. While Greg noted that the casts also have historical value and felt that he could gain something from touching such an object, the benefits that he associated with this tactile experience were practical rather than emotive: touching a cast would simply give him a greater appreciation of the object's craftsmanship. He identified the objects' relative ages as the reason for his differing responses. Greg felt that casts were not "*as exciting*" on account of their relative youth.

While we saw in Chapter 4 that casts do generate a bridging experience for many visitors (either to antiquity or to the period of the casts' own creation), very many users including Greg felt that more ancient objects were the exclusive providers of such an intimate connection with the past. Visitor Sophia expressed similar views:

> *Sophia (visitor): Just because there's that sense that something is three thousand years old as opposed to 150 years old... it's just got a different feel to it. Just thinking about how many generations have touched this thing over that period!*

Overall, what emerges is that in the Cast Gallery, historical value is often understood in the materialist sense critiqued by Holtorf. The precise time period in which the objects were made seemed to be meaningful for users. Objects perceived as older possess greater authenticity and value (both cognitive and non-cognitive) than younger ones. Before discussing the implications that this finding has for the practical application of Holtorf's theory of pastness (7.4.4), I must first examine what drives this trend.

7.4.3 The age hierarchy: why?

Cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard proposed that old objects in general provide an important source of value and authenticity in the modern world, using the metaphor of an architect remodelling an old house. Baudrillard's hypothetical architect decided to retain some of the original stones in an otherwise entirely refurbished building.

Baudrillard argued that the "authenticity of those old stones" makes his modern renovations forgivable (Baudrillard 1996: 78). Were he to remove them, the architect would be unable to "thoroughly rid himself of a particular kind of anxiety" about his place in the otherwise meaningless modern world (ibid.). Thus, old objects, summarised in Baudrillard's term "antiques", are presented as possessing a special power, a "sublime link", that connects the viewer with the past (ibid.: 76). Not all antiques are equally capable of providing such a link, however: "the older the object, the closer it brings us to an earlier age, to 'divinity', to nature, to primitive knowledge, and so forth" (ibid.). In summary, for Baudrillard older objects are highly valuable because they connect one to one's origins, an essential task in a modern world which is somewhat bereft of meaning.

For Baudrillard, the mythical origins to which one is connected through authentically old objects were somewhat nebulous: he does not locate these origins in a specific historical time period, simply in "nature" and so-called "primitive knowledge" very generally. However, in providing an example of the historicity of this nostalgia for origins, Baudrillard referenced the classical world: "According to Maurice Rheims, this kind of mystique already existed in the High Middle Ages, when a Greek bronze or intaglio covered with pagan markings could acquire magical virtues in the eyes of a ninth-century Christian" (ibid.). In the Cast Gallery, origins might also be located in this very particular classical realm. Although not discussed explicitly by any of my respondents, the ancient world has many associations with the origins of Western culture.[111] As a result, it would not seem surprising if users such as Jim, Greg, and Sophia located their origins there. This could explain the age hierarchy witnessed in the Cast Gallery: despite the fact that the casts are acknowledged as possessing historical value,

[111] Ancient Greece is often perceived as providing "the chromosomes of Western civilisation" (Freeman 1999: 434). It is credited with important revolutions in writing, literature, philosophy, sport, law, and architecture (Nicholls 2016: 11). Athens in particular is regularly touted as the birthplace of modern democracy (Frank 2019: 1306). Ancient art is considered similarly: the founding father Classical Archaeology, J.J. Winckelmann (discussed in Chapter 6), began the trend of presenting Greek sculpture as the origin of a distinctive European spirit (Morris 2004: 258).

they cannot connect with origins in the same way as ancient sculptures due to their relative youth.

However, this idea of the classical world providing cultural origins was not overtly discussed by any of my respondents. Equally, no user explicitly mentioned being motivated by anxieties about the meaningless state of the modern world, which Baudrillard theorised was the reason behind this obsession with origins. This means that although Baudrillard's work provides a neat fit with some of the trends exemplified by my respondents, there is no guarantee that his theory is an appropriate explanation for the Cast Gallery's age hierarchy. The vocabulary that he provides is useful: Greg and Sophia certainly seemed to experience a "sublime link" to the past through ancient objects, but for my respondents, this sublime link seemed to be less about connecting to origins and more about facilitating very human connections to the past.

This human connection to the past is significant, and provides a reason for the Cast Gallery's age hierarchy that emerges more strongly from my data than Baudrillard's origin theory. I now examine the phenomenon in detail. Both Greg and Sophia found that ancient objects were especially appealing because they enabled them to form connections to a community of other people.[112] Forming connections in this way might be described as an "authoritative performance". Authoritative performances are said to provide individuals with an "identity" that "emerges through community" (Arnould and Price 2000: 151), namely a way of affirming their place in the world through making connections with the past, present, and future (ibid.: 158). Examples of such authoritative performances include group participation in religious festivals and passing on family possessions as heirlooms (ibid.). Through their imagined acts of touching an ancient sculpture, Greg and Sophia carry out a kind of authoritative performance. The ancient sculpture acts almost as a creator of community: through touching it, Greg and Sophia join a group of "*other people*" across "*many generations*" who engaged in a

[112] They could be described as experiencing the ancient objects' "aura", as defined by Sian Jones. Jones defines aura as "a magical communion" achieved through "personal incorporation" into a "network of relationships with past and present people and places" (Jones 2010: 189).

similar tactile experience. This might give a more convincing reason for the Cast Gallery's age hierarchy: since materially older objects have travelled through a longer stretch of time and been touched by more people, they can perhaps provide a user with a more gratifying link to the past with which to articulate their own place in the world. Older objects might gain more value and authenticity for this reason.

In addition, there might be other reasons for the existence of the age hierarchy. Users from a broad-cross section of those interviewed spoke of a natural association between museums and old objects. Their views are exemplified by tutor Jim:

> *Jim (tutor): I think in museums we are tied to the idea of antiquity in some way and I don't just mean classical antiquity in the distant past. I mean simply old things.*

Jim presents age as an important characteristic for museum objects simply because of museums' cultural associations with history and old things. Visitors also expressed similar views, with one stating:

> *Bea (visitor): I feel like the point of museums is to sort of help people see and understand the past.*

The indelible association between museums and age might account for the importance that users place upon this quality. As museums are associated with old things, perhaps the user might reasonably locate the highest value and authenticity in the oldest possible object. This idea was also highlighted in a focus group which included students Faith and Pearl. The pair turned the group's discussion to the subject of whether they would like to have a plaster cast displayed in their own houses. Both stated that they would, and followed up with this:

> *Faith (student): But it's different, isn't it? To have it in your home makes it a different object from going to see it in a museum.*
>
> *Pearl (student): Yeah, I'd say that. It's more reverential when you go into a museum. It's like you're going off to see… I don't know, a revered celebrity or a statesperson. Like right best behaviour! You'll queue up, wait your turn, find them out, approach slowly…*

Pearl suggested that the experience of going to a museum and the reverence with which museum objects are held makes users expect to see something superlative and exceptional. Therefore, as museums are associated with historic objects and with superlatives, this might cause users to view the oldest of the old as the most valuable and the most authentic. This could be the reason behind the age/value hierarchy observed in the Cast Gallery.

However, other users, such as visitor Stewart, highlighted the particular European context of the Ashmolean Museum as being important:

> *Stewart (visitor): If you were in the United States, anything that was 150 years old would be like ancient and revered for its age. And so… some of these [gestures to the casts] are now approaching 200 years old, then actually... well they are 200 years old, so over there that'd be like… a completely authentic phenomenon in its own right.*

Stewart's statement is something of a cliché: American history stretches far further back than the couple of hundred years he gives it credit for.[113] Nevertheless, he implies that because Europeans perceive themselves has having especially long histories, objects that are just a few hundred years old can appear mundane to them. This may be especially relevant in a location such as Oxford, a city that was established in the ninth century and is home to the oldest university in the English-speaking world (Sager 2005: 36). The city's origins are still highly apparent to visitors through its historic architecture.[114] In such a context, users might be desensitised to objects that they perceive to be materially "newer". This might provide another explanation for the age hierarchy observed within the Cast Gallery.

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[113] Stewart is emblematic of a global trend that minimises indigenous American histories, which are known to stretch back tens of thousands of years (Ellis and Deller 1990: 37). For example, an analysis of worldwide school history textbooks showed that they overwhelmingly described American history only from the time of Columbus onwards (Lindaman and Ward 2004: 6ff).

[114] For example, St George's Tower, located within Oxford Castle, has elements that date back to the Anglo-Saxon era (Goodall 2011: 70). The university's colleges also preserve a great deal of historical architecture. Merton, one of the oldest, has buildings that date back to the thirteenth century (Bott 1993: 16).

Overall, the age hierarchy in the Cast Gallery is a multifaceted phenomenon. A Baudrillardian nostalgia for origins may have some part to play in its creation, but the hierarchy seems to be more associated with users' very human desire to connect to a longer line of people who have come before them. The cultural links that exist between museums and old things also contribute to this hierarchy, as does the location of the Ashmolean Museum on a local scale within the historic city of Oxford and within the European cultural framework as a whole.

7.4.4 Scale-tipping moments

Having explored the underlying reasons for the Cast Gallery's age hierarchy, I now turn attention to the ways in which this discussion responds to Holtorf's theories on pastness. Thus far, I have shown that what Holtorf would describe as a materialist view of historic value exists within the Cast Gallery, exemplified in its age hierarchy. In what follows, I argue that although in theory, such an age hierarchy might be dismantled by emphasising the quality of pastness in the manner proposed by Holtorf, this may not be applicable in a practical sense, particularly within a Cast Gallery setting. I will show this through a discussion of what I call a "scale-tipping" moment that Cast Gallery users seek. The importance placed on these scale-tipping moments demonstrates that users cannot divorce the casts from the very particular pasts with which they are associated.

Many Cast Gallery users sought a form of temporal tipping point, at which objects become sufficiently old to elevate their position within the age hierarchy, securing their authenticity. A comment from visitor Rich, intended as a throwaway remark made to his companion during their interview, was representative of this trend:

> *Rich (visitor): In 50 years' time, then everybody will want them [laughs].*

Rich suggested that casts possess the potential for moving up the age hierarchy, congruently gaining value and authenticity. This statement makes one wonder how old might plaster casts have to become in order to render themselves wholly historically valuable and authentic. The arbitrary nature of this division between objects that are

sufficiently historically valuable and those that are not was highlighted during my conversation with tutor Charlotte:

> *Charlotte (tutor): I mean, at what point in time does a cast become a cast? Well, what's the chronological… is it the material… is it, you know, because given how much in antiquity things would… how often things were copied and replicated and modified and that was absolutely the goal.*
>
> *Abbey: So, your question is almost… when does [the fact that an object is] a cast become a problem?*
>
> *Charlotte: Yeah. When does it stop being a Classical artefact? As in if it's from 399 AD, is it a Classical artefact and if it's in 699 AD, it's a modern cast? I don't know.*

While Charlotte evidently felt that there was a difference between ancient and more modern artefacts, when she interrogated this idea closely, she noted that cracks appear in the reasoning. She demonstrated the impossibility of locating a precise age at which an object might magically become historically valuable. Yet despite these issues, this ineffable quality of age was very important for Cast Gallery users. Rich's statement was representative of many users' views that although the casts are already historically valuable objects, they still need to continue to age in order to fully secure their value and authenticity.[115]

This indicates that although, in theory, "there is no magic age at which something becomes old enough to be perceived as authentic or of value" (Foster and Jones 2019: 20), in practice, a transformative, scale-tipping age of precisely this nature is sought by Cast Gallery users. This problematises the applicability of Holtorf's idea of pastness to Cast Gallery settings, as it does not seem possible for casts to be seen as simply "of the past" in a generic sense. This may be because, as discussed throughout this chapter, plaster casts cannot be separated from a very specific past to which they do not entirely

[115] This can also be seen earlier in this chapter when Jim concluded his statement about cast **H107** lacking value due to its youth with "*I'm sure that will change in a hundred years*".

belong: classical antiquity. Due to the immense familiarity of Western audiences with classical imagery, and due to casts' very precise replication of its characteristic forms, the objects are indelibly linked to the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome. Holtorf's theory of pastness may therefore not be applicable to casts due to the strength of their cultural links with the specific time period of antiquity.[116]

Before concluding, I will make one final observation about the Cast Gallery's age hierarchy. Above, Rich implied that casts could, over time, accrue sufficient historical value to become authentic. Yet passing through time was not the only way in which objects could accrue historical value. Other respondents presented the idea that materially younger objects can accrue something resembling historical value simply through association with older objects. However, only very particular objects could achieve this. Only those that were judged to possess a sufficient, scale-tipping amount of originality could gain authenticity through historic precedent. This was shown by artist Francesca's discussion of the 'Jeff Koons at the Ashmolean' exhibition that was running at the Museum concurrently with my data collection:

> *Francesca (artist): Jeff Koons… seems to link in really well [with the themes of our discussion] because so many artists are appropriating sort of classical stuff or just very established art. And I mean Jeff Koons is clearly really chuffed to be in the Ashmolean. He's link[ing] himself to the past and by harnessing himself to all this kind of classical, I think he's giving his… validating… authenticating… his work and that's really interesting.*

Francesca suggested that Koons displaying his art in the context of historical collections at the Ashmolean instilled value and authenticity in his works through providing them with a kind of historic precedent. This makes for an interesting contrast to discussions of casts throughout this chapter. Casts have an obvious and direct historic precedent,

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[116] There are exceptions to this, including users like volunteer Ralph (discussed in section 4.1.2). Ralph described experienced casts' historical value through the physical ageing of the objects' surfaces. For Ralph, the concept of pastness might be applicable, as he did not tie the objects' historical value to a clearly defined era. He understood "the past" as a more generic quality in the manner proposed by Holtorf. However, Ralph was in the minority. Most Cast Gallery users seemed to view the scale-tipping moments described in this chapter as being necessary and important.

the ancient original sculptures from which they derive. Yet users did not perceive the casts' ancient referents as an authenticating historic precedent in the manner that Francesca proposes for Koons' work. Instead, as seen in section 7.2, the casts were often derided as copies. This is interesting given that Koons' work also involves a great deal of copying. This includes the gazing ball pieces that I described in section 3.1. The key difference between the casts within the Cast Gallery and those within the temporary exhibition was Koons' addition of the gazing ball. This led me to conclude that perhaps Koons' insertion of the gazing ball is a sufficient signifier of artistic ingenuity to mean that his casts are not, to use Jim's words, "*just a reproduction*". Although highly educationally valued for their accuracy, casts might be, in a sense, *too* accurate to benefit from the authenticating force of the historic precedent in the manner of Koons. Koons' work seems to have reached an essential but ill-defined tipping point of originality to enable his pieces to gain value and authenticity from a historic precedent, but plaster casts have not.

The importance of the recognition of artistic ingenuity in this regard is also highlighted in Iranowska's discussion of the branding of the Edvard Munch Museum in Oslo, Norway (Iranowska 2018). The Museum's logo draws inspiration from two items from the Museum's collection: a bedspread bearing an abstract pattern that was handmade for Munch by amateur artist Ingse Vibe, and the representation of the textile within one of his self-portraits: 'Between the Clock and the Bed'. The logo comprises an excerpt of the bedspread's herringbone pattern that had been photographed, edited, reframed, and recontextualised by the Museum's branding team to fulfil its new function (ibid.: 139). In Iranowska's discussion of this process, she described the new logo as a "hybrid copy referring simultaneously to *two originals* (emphasis mine)" (ibid.: 141). The originals are, of course, Vibe's bedspread and Munch's painted reproduction of it. However, one might argue that Munch's painting is almost as much of a copy as the logo: both reproduce Vibe's original creation. Nevertheless, the painting is unquestioningly

described throughout Iranowska's article as an original.[117] As in Koons' work, there seems to be a sufficient quantity of originality in Munch's painting that marks it out as original, despite the elements of copying in both artists' practices. Both the casts and the Munch Museum's logo seem to lack this required amount of originality. This conclusion is a somewhat unsatisfying one, leaving several unanswered questions: Precisely how much artistic originality is required in a work for it no longer to be considered a copy? At what magical point do the scales tip in favour of originality? Again, this makes the point that while, in theory, the contradictions and logical flaws of seeking such scale-tipping moments could be neatly resolved using concepts such as Holtorf's "pastness", on a practical level within museum settings, such moments are meaningful to users and cannot be so simply sidestepped.

7.5 Conclusion

Overall, this chapter has highlighted the co-dependent nature of the relationship between value and authenticity in the Cast Gallery. Authenticity can be seen to impact upon perceptions of value: in the most extreme cases, when casts are understood only as materially inauthentic objects, any value that they possess can be entirely eradicated. However, in other instances value qualifies authenticity: the precise value in which an object's authenticity is located can determine the extent to which the object is seen as authentic.

Next, I demonstrated the significant influence that a particular subset of value, namely historical value, held over perceptions of the casts' value in general and their authenticity. An age hierarchy exists in the Cast Gallery in which materially older objects, in particular those from the ancient world, tend to be invested with the greatest amount of authenticity and value (both cognitive and non-cognitive). Casts, which are much younger, are often perceived as being less valuable and authentic in comparison. Finally,

[117] Other authors demonstrate a greater awareness of the thorniness of many objects' designation as "original". Foster and Jones, for example, discuss the fact that even the so-called original eighth century St John's Cross from Iona is a "reproduction of sorts, of the True Cross of Christ" (Foster and Jones 2020a: 16).

I showed that a cast's value is inevitably somewhat contingent on its relationship to ancient statuary. This is due to the fact that casts generally meet users' expectations for what ancient sculptures look like, thanks to the immense familiarity of classical imagery in Western culture. Casts' value is not entirely dependent on this relationship with ancient forms, for other kinds of intrinsic value related to their castness do exist, but casts are nevertheless very unlikely to be entirely divorced from their ancient precedents. I argued that this problematises theoretical concepts which seek to subvert materialist understandings of age value, such as Holtorf's idea of pastness. The significance that the age hierarchy held for users of the Cast Gallery shows that more work is required to ensure that these theories respond to and take account of everyday user museum experiences.

Chapter 8 Conclusions

8.1 Why is a plaster cast like a stuffed rabbit?

> *"What is REAL?" asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender [...] "does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"*
>
> *"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real…*
>
> *"It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand." (Williams 1922: 13-16).*

At the beginning of Margaret Williams' classic children's tale 'The Velveteen Rabbit', the story's eponymous stuffed rabbit toy, a new addition to the child's playroom, is desperate to become "Real". Realness is a special, aspirational quality, something possessed by some of the rabbit's fellow playthings but not others. In the passage above, the rabbit's friend, the Skin Horse, describes what it means to be Real. The Skin Horse explains that Realness is not inherent in any toy from the outset of their creation. Instead, being Real requires a phase of becoming: a process. The toy's inherent characteristics – for instance, their breakability and fragility – do impact upon this process, reducing a toy's likelihood of becoming Real, but only to an extent. Fundamentally, a Real thing is more than the sum of its parts.

Being Real is less about what the toy can *do*, such as make a noise or move around, and more about what they *are* in their own right. It is through a toy's interactions with the child, infused with love, that Realness is imbued. Yet it is not only being loved that is important: equally integral to becoming Real is time. A single loving interaction is insufficient to elevate a toy to this status, it must be loved consistently over a "long,

long" period. As interactions accumulate and Realness abounds, the toy's physical qualities, like the shabbiness of their appearance, are not perceived as flaws. Instead, they are seen as physical marks of love on the toy's surface and act almost as a certification of Realness. However, the point remains that although a toy can be Real to a child, not everyone can recognise and appreciate this Realness.

In this description, the Skin Horse provides a blueprint for the journey to Realness traced by the Velveteen Rabbit as the story progresses. The Rabbit gradually becomes Real to his young owner, but disaster strikes when he falls with scarlet fever. When the child recovers, his Nanny casts the Rabbit out into the garden along with the other contents of the sick bed. Sadly, the Rabbit is not seen as Real by the Nanny. Having served his purpose of keeping the child company during his illness, the Nanny sees no reason to bring the scruffy and disease-ridden bunny back into the nursery. Yet the ending of the tale is not an unhappy one for the Velveteen Rabbit. The story concludes with a fairy visiting him. The fairy explains that because he became Real to a child who truly loved him, she will "turn [him] into Real" for everyone (Williams 1922: 40). With a kiss from the fairy, the Rabbit magically transforms into a living, breathing rabbit and hops away into the forest.

Over the course of this thesis, the ideas that I have presented suggest that the Ashmolean Museum's archaeological plaster casts have much in common with the Velveteen Rabbit. Some Cast Gallery users are like the child in the Velveteen Rabbit's story: they view the casts as Real, intrinsically valuing them as objects in their own right. They truly emotionally experience the casts, taking in everything that the objects have to offer. However, the majority of users can be compared to the child's Nanny. These users primarily value the casts in the same manner as the toys with "things that buzz […] and a stick-out handle", namely for what they can *do* as instrumentally valuable tools. Such users do not typically value the casts for what they *are*, as intrinsically valuable objects in their own right, to which they might emotionally connect. The casts' inherent qualities, namely the fact that they are made of plaster, as well as their identity as reproductions, still matter to these users. Time has not yet imbued them with the same Realness that objects like Roman copies seem to possess. Despite the bent of

modern theoretical debates which argue against this, many Ashmolean users seek a magical, transformative moment for casts akin to the Velveteen Rabbit's encounter with the fairy. They look for a scale-tipping moment at which a cast becomes either sufficiently old or sufficiently "original" to render them intrinsically valuable. In summary, for many Cast Gallery users, casts are playthings in the museum toybox that have yet to become Real.

I will now summarise my answers to the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, demonstrating what unique contributions my conclusions make to scholarship and contemporary museum practice (8.2). Finally, I describe the limitations of my study (8.3) and explore possible future research directions (8.4).

8.2 Summary and research contributions

I began my analysis in Chapter 4, when I addressed **RQ1**: What categories of value do users of cast collections assign to plaster casts? I showed that a multiplicity of value categories, instrumental and intrinsic, those adjudged cognitively and those experienced non-cognitively, exist for plaster casts within the Ashmolean Museum. Many of the categories of value identified by users mirror those discussed in scholarly literature, but I nevertheless identified important differences and nuances. This conclusion has useful implications: it highlights the necessity of embedding theories about museum value not just within scholarship but also in the real-world setting of the museum through discussions with museum users. To gain a true understanding of value, one must continue to ask "*how* precisely is this valued?", "by *whom*?" and "for what *reason(s)*?".

My discussion of value categories also has helpful implications for other disciplines of study, in particular the discipline of Classical Archaeology. In Chapter 6, I showed that by using vocabulary as "intrinsic" and "instrumental" value when interpreting ancient objects, the archaeologist can be better versed to identify which aspects of value are readily acknowledged and discussed in scholarship and which might be missing from the study of certain objects altogether. Keeping such terminology in mind when interpreting

archaeological artefacts more generally could result in a more holistic appreciation of the values of objects within the Classical Archaeological discipline.

Through **RQ2**, I sought to investigate what factors impact upon how value is assigned to casts, and whether the particular context of a university museum affects how casts are understood. I began answering this question in Chapter 5, when I demonstrated that the overwhelming predilection toward educationally valuing the casts in the Ashmolean is in part determined by the framework provided by the Museum. I also showed in Chapter 6 that this framework is itself influenced by the dominant interpretive community of Classical Archaeologists who are largely responsible for the creation of the framework. Likewise, I discussed the significance of users' own personal visit agendas in the skewing of values toward the educational. This was a meaningful contribution that provides nuance to Beard's analysis of the University of Cambridge's teaching collection of casts, in which she hypothesised that the emphasis placed on casts' purely pedagogical values within this and other university museum settings caused the perception of casts' other kinds of value to diminish (Beard 1993: 19). My research has shown that is not only the setting of the university museum that promotes educational value, but the Classical Archaeological focus of the Ashmolean Museum in particular, stemming from the interpretive community of such archaeologists in its curatorial team. Thus, my research highlights that a museum's framework and its interpretive community, although often presented as different factors influencing interpretation, do not exist independently. This conclusion might serve as a useful reminder of best practice among curatorial staff more generally. Considering the interpretive community to which they themselves belong as part of the process of exhibition design, and contemplating how this will inherently impact upon their resulting interpretive framework, might help curators to be self-reflexive, acknowledging the value system that underpins their choices. I also showed that while that the framework of a museum is highly likely to influence users' valuation of casts in the manner proposed by Beard, users are not passive recipients of museum interpretation. My research thus reinforces the view that users are active actors in the process of making meaning in museums.

Next, I sought to investigate **RQ3** (Is a cast's value inevitably dependent upon its relationship to its ancient referent?) and **RQ4** (Are casts simply copies of ancient masterpieces, made in a poorer material?). In Chapter 4, I showed that instrumental values, particularly educational, are often built on users' perception of casts' accurate replication of ancient statuary. Conversely, I also demonstrated how many responses that indicated intrinsic value were entirely divorced from the realm of antiquity. Despite this, I showed in Chapter 7 that casts are unlikely to be entirely emancipated from connections to their ancient referents. This is due to the immense familiarity of classical or classically inspired imagery for Western audiences, and the fact that casts align with visitors' preconceptions of what ancient statuary looks like. Due to their links with something so culturally embedded within Western society, casts present a special case of reproduction; they are perhaps linked with their original referents to a greater extent than other forms of replica. While casts are not "simply copies" as the phrasing of **RQ4** might suggest, the fact that they are copies is an indelible part of their identity.

Yet it is not only casts' relationships with the precise ancient statues that they replicate that impacts their value. As I showed in Chapter 6, casts also share connections with other ancient referents, namely plaster casts that survive from antiquity. I argued that the discipline of Classical Archaeology views modern plaster casts through a similar interpretive lens as ancient plaster casts from sites such as Baiae. The value system to which both are subject emphasises their instrumental value due to their materiality. Thus, to provide an answer to the latter half of **RQ4**, within this interpretive community the material of plaster does still impact upon the values attributed to casts, but it does not render the objects entirely lacking in value as was attested in the historical accounts described in Chapter 2.

The conclusions drawn from my investigation of ancient plaster casts could also have wider implications, presenting curators of modern cast collections with a source of new value and authenticity for their objects. The finds from Baiae, Begram, and Hildesheim discussed in Chapter 6 could be drawn upon as a significant historical precedent for modern plaster casts. In Chapter 7, I showed how historical precedent could enhance the intrinsic value and authenticity of objects perceived to be sufficiently original, like

the works of Jeff Koons. I also demonstrated that although casts have direct precedents in the form of the "original" ancient statues that they replicate, they do not have a sufficient level of originality to derive intrinsic value and authenticity from this link. However, the issue of originality might be sidestepped if cast gallery curators were to emphasise that copying through casting is a truly ancient phenomenon, using the Baiae, Begram, and Hildesheim casts as examples. Consequently, the status of the modern casts as copies might be rendered less problematic and more modern casts might be able to acquire the same brand of authenticity enjoyed by Koons. The Ashmolean in particular is well versed to curate such displays, since it holds casts of ancient plaster casts within its existing collections (Fig.6.f-g).

Looking more broadly, my thesis also contributes to wider scholarly debates and elements of museum practice. Just as a plaster cast entwines both the ancient and modern within a single object, the theme of many of these wider implications is entanglement. As I outline below, my research shows how many concepts and ideas that are often considered separately in scholarship can more fruitfully be considered together.

Material and culture

Sandra Dudley has noted that when museological practitioners analyse how museum users make meaning from objects, the sociocultural contexts to which the users belong and their pre-existing knowledge are often presented as being more consequential to interpretation than the physical, material qualities of the objects themselves (Dudley 2012: 7). However, through my analysis of how the material of plaster fits within the value system of the discipline of Classical Archaeology and how this in turn impacts interpretation of the plaster casts within the Ashmolean Museum, I have shown that material and cultural influences are not always two separate entities. Material is indeed directly experienced by the senses in the manner described by Dudley, but my work shows that it is also culturally experienced. Materiality and culture, presented as two separate influences over the process of making meaning, can and should be considered as entwined.

Classical Archaeology and Classical reception

My work also highlights the need for better unification of Classical Archaeology and its sub-discipline of Classical receptions. Classical receptions, which is (in part) concerned with how today's understanding of the ancient world has come to be formed, is rarely considered integral to Classical Archaeology. Reception studies are usually "artificially" separated from analysis of ancient texts or archaeological evidence: if the topics are considered in the same publications, reception is either left to the end (Hardwick and Stray 2008: 35), or demoted to independent publication series (De Pourcq 2012: 220).[118] However, my research has shown that the origins of the discipline of Classical Archaeology and its resulting value system influences more than just views taken of the ancient objects themselves. It is also likely to influence how modern objects are portrayed, not just to fellow Classical Archaeologists but wider museum users. Thus, not embedding Classical reception studies within the Classical Archaeologist's training is of detriment not only to the discipline itself but also to museum interpretation.

Knowledge and emotion

My research into casts also has implications for best practice guidance surrounding the display of reproductions. For example, the University of Stirling's 'New Futures for Replicas' guidance recommends the clear identification of reproductions:

> *4.8: Replicas should be readily identified as such, but in a way that contextualises them in terms of relationships, processes and materials. (Foster and Jones 2020b: 9).*

While the Ashmolean Museum's displays accord this approach, introducing casts' identities, materials, and making processes through its introductory panel and verbal introductions to the gallery, this approach has drawbacks. The examples of Connor and Travis, discussed often throughout this thesis, demonstrate that label of "cast, "copy",

[118] This point is reinforced by some of the sources discussed in my thesis: while Kousser's investigation of the Hellenistic reception of the figure of the Aphrodite of Melos was published within an archaeological journal (Kousser 2005), Prettejohn's study of the modern reception of the same sculpture was published in a separate volume dedicated to Classical receptions (Prettejohn 2006).

or “reproduction” can be a stumbling block, preventing users’ engagement with the full range of the objects’ values, particularly those of an intrinsic, emotive nature. However, interpretive interventions in general have also been considered to hinder emotional encounters. Dudley showed in her discussion of her experience with a Chinese sculpture of a bronze horse that interrupting users’ initial object encounters with interpretive text can be distracting and detrimental to their experience of intrinsic value (Dudley 2012: 2). From this it appears that for their value to be secured, casts must be both immediately interpreted for the viewer and totally unimpeded by interpretation. This might seem like an impossible paradox to overcome.

A solution that arises from my thesis might be to work toward a cognitively informed yet emotional appreciation of the casts. It must be clear to museum users that they are looking at reproductions, but a concerted effort must also be made to engage users on a non-cognitive level. Dudley shows in her paper that a non-cognitive response can enhance a cognitive one: having had an intrinsic encounter with the Chinese horse, she was rendered more receptive to learning its history (Dudley 2012: 2), but my data also suggests that the reverse could be true. I have shown in my description of bridging responses that cognitively informed emotional appreciation, where knowledge of historical context comes first and emotion then follows, is possible. The users in my study who exhibited bridging responses, particularly those who built a bridge to the nineteenth-century context of the casts’ creation, would likely not have been able to experience this response were they not informed to some extent about the objects’ histories. This kind of response is something that the Ashmolean could explicitly encourage through its interpretive framework perhaps by adjusting its “interactional style” (as described in Chapter 5). The Museum could ask questions intended to promote imagination and wonder in volunteer-led tours and on object labels. My data suggests that is not the exact formulation or content of these imaginatively focused questions that are important, just that imagination and emotional engagement is encouraged in some form. If an emotive response is perceived by users as a legitimate reaction to have within a cast gallery, visitors like Connor and Travis may find themselves more able to embrace their emotional, intrinsic experiences. Thus, while casts initially seemed to be stuck in an almost impossible position, needing to be both

identified and unidentified to be secure their value, my thesis suggests that a combination of knowledge and emotional engagement could be used to work in their favour.

Another issue surrounding appropriate interpretation for casts abounds from this discussion. Returning to the 'New Futures for Replicas' guidance once more, I have shown in this thesis that the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery already works in accordance with recommendation 4.8. However, my research indicated that the Gallery's introductory elements were often insufficient to achieve the goal of making the objects readily identifiable as casts, causing confusion for some users. This makes clear the need not only for replicas to be "readily identified" as such in the initial phases of a museum visit, but for their identities to be reinforced *throughout* displays. On this basis, I propose that the guidance could be adapted to read as follows:

> *4.8: Replicas should be readily identified as such <u>not just at the outset but consistently throughout the display or exhibition in which they feature</u>, in a way that also contextualises them in terms of relationships, processes and materials.*

This could be achieved within the Ashmolean through an adaptation of cast labelling, mirroring that seen at the V&A. On one side of its bisected labels, the V&A presents the original object, giving the same credentials that occupy the entirety of the space on the Ashmolean's labelling. On the other side, the V&A presents the cast as an object in its own right, describing its material, date of production, and its own unique history as far as it is known. This is likely to achieve the goal of leaving users under no illusions about the identity of the objects in front of them. Thus, while casts are a particular case of reproduction because of their links to the ancient world, their study still has a great deal to contribute to best practice guidance for the display of copies more generally.

Objects as accessories

Finally, casts are emblematic of one further wider issue within museum interpretation. Dudley has pointed out how many objects within museum displays function only as grammatical marks, punctuating the overarching exhibition narrative (Dudley 2012: 6).

The value of objects in such displays is largely instrumental: they are "used as accessories within the interpretation of something else" and remain "unexplored in themselves" (ibid.). My research has shown that within the Ashmolean, casts are even further removed from the Cast Gallery's central focus than this. The casts do not merely tell a story about ancient statue culture but are often used as direct stand-ins for absent ancient statues. Thus, casts present an extreme case of what one might call the accessorisation of museum objects. The recognition of this phenomenon in the case of casts might prove a useful reminder for wider museum practice, encouraging practitioners to direct effort toward looking *at* objects as things in their own right as well as looking *through* them during exhibition interpretation. Encouraging museum practitioners to consider "the castness [inherent in all] of the things" that they curate and interpret could be of great benefit.

8.3 Limitations

One of main limitations of this thesis is its scope. Although I discussed the significance of non-cognitive, intrinsic responses to the Ashmolean's casts, this thesis has placed an emphasis on understanding the casts' instrumental, educational values. This was in part due to my grounded-theory inspired methodology. Since educational values were the most frequently observed in my data collection, my work gravitated toward exploring them. However, having reflected upon my work as it was nearing completion, I began to acknowledge how much my own background in Classical Archaeology had also impacted my thesis. In directing attention towards educational value, I was no doubt also influenced by a desire to put into context my own student experiences in the Cast Gallery. This was not a motivation of which I was conscious when conducting my analysis; I only gained awareness of this when reflecting on my experience. Another researcher with different prior experiences would have no doubt taken the same research questions down a very different path. While I could consider this a negative limitation of my thesis, I prefer to see it as another reminder of the importance of reflexivity in museological studies.

The second major limitation of this project concerns the Cast Gallery users interviewed. Aside from the curators and tutors that I approached directly with interview requests,

all of my interviewees were self-selecting. I made this choice for sound ethical reasons (see section 3.5), but this approach did mean that my participants were mainly white and all were of European descent. This left me questioning whether people from different backgrounds would assign different values to casts. Since classical imagery is not as fundamental to many other cultures as it is for Western audiences, diverse ways of valuing the casts could result from interviewing a broader spectrum of candidates. Those hailing from areas where casts had been used as colonial "civilising tools" in the past might value the objects differently. These were questions that I was not able to explore in this thesis, but exploring the often missing colonial angles (Foster and Jones 2020a: 12) would be a fruitful direction for future research.

8.4 Future directions

My work might be taken as a basis for other future research projects. It has become clear from my investigations into ancient plaster casts that there is much extant plaster material from antiquity that is ripe for analysis. Many ancient plaster finds are incredibly poorly documented. For example, they have not been subject to scientific analysis (e.g., XRF testing) that would enable archaeologists to learn whether they are made from gypsum (and would thus have been relevant to my comparison of the similarly composed casts at the Ashmolean) or lime plaster (which would have rendered them less relevant for my purposes).[119] Better understanding these plaster finds could revolutionise archaeologists' understandings of the materials and methods of ancient statue production, especially if the potential that such plaster finds have for intrinsic value are considered in the manner proposed by my thesis.

[119] For example, in the 1950's, a chunk of plaster of uncertain chemical composition was excavated at the so-called workshop of sculptor Pheidias at Olympia (Mallwitz and Schiering 1991:167). The plaster mass, measuring around 20cm, has a smooth linear depression on its surface, but its function or purpose within the workshop has not been debated. Just a few lines are dedicated to it in the excavation publication, far less than those dedicated to finds in other materials such as glass.

Finally, my research might suggest ways in which current emphases on museum value and authenticity could usefully realign. The aim of many reproduction-focused studies is to argue for the authenticity of replicas. Particularly in heritage contexts, this makes perfect sense. As authenticity informs the basic principles and assumptions of heritage scheduling and management (Foster and Jones 2020a: 9), it is often only objects that are deemed to be in possession of this "authentic" quality that are preserved and protected for future generations. I would not wish to make the case that replicas should not be considered sufficiently authentic to warrant this much-deserved protection. However, it would be fruitful to conduct further research into countering the notion that they should be considered wholly authentic.

While I showed in section 7.2 that casts' lack of material authenticity caused some users to perceive them as wholly lacking in value, in other cases the casts' inauthenticity was sometimes the very thing that makes them special and engaging. Over my time at the Ashmolean, I noted other users' enthusiasm for questions surrounding authenticity generated by 1) the casts' status as copies and 2) my research into them. Concurrently with my data collection, I volunteered as a tour guide for the 'Antinous: Boy Made God' exhibition. My tours focused on two objects: the ancient Antinous bust described in Chapter 6 which had been restored at the Ashmolean, and its plaster cast cousin. I introduced questions of authenticity to my audience, inviting them to decide whether they felt that the marble bust with its modern restorations or the plaster cast was more authentic. The wealth of engaged responses that this question generated was staggering: many tour attendees stayed afterward to talk with me about their conflicting views, with great excitement often being generated around their inability to come to a definitive conclusion about either the bust's or the cast's authenticity. Given this picture, one cannot help but feel that if casts (and replicas in general) are deemed entirely authentic, they might lose part of what makes them especially engaging. Indeed, if casts were fully authentic, I would not be writing this thesis, and you would not be reading it. Thus, perhaps instead of regarding inauthenticity as a spectre and trying to liberate casts and reproductions in general from this terminology, their potential for inauthenticity could be embraced. Future research efforts might be directed toward understanding what replicas' potential for inauthenticity has for

engaging their museum audiences. Can museum practitioners emphasise the value of "the castness of the things", whilst leaving their authenticity up for enlivening debate?

Appendix 1 Glossary

Abduction of Europa (myth)

The modern continent of Europe takes its name from the mythological figure of Europa (Pfister 2007: 21). In Greek legend, Europa was a princess of Phoenicia (modern-day Lebanon). When she was gathering flowers with her friends on the beach, she met a beautiful white bull and became entranced by it. She then climbed onto its back, only for it to carry her away across the sea. In reality, the creature was not a bull at all but Zeus, king of the Greek pantheon of gods, transfigured in one of his many animal disguises. Once he had taken Europa to the Greek island of Crete, Zeus is said to have either seduced or raped her. How Europa's encounter with the god is retold in the modern era often depends on the function that the story fulfilled in contemporary politics. For example, during the Second World War, Europa's encounter with Zeus was presented as a rape, providing a metaphor for Europe's "rape" by the forces of Nazi extremism and nationalism (Manners 2010: 69). After the war, the myth was reformulated and Europa was willingly seduced by the bull. The bull was then said to represent the US and was positioned as Europe/Europa's liberator (ibid.). The myth was then taken to symbolize how Europe was helped to rebuild after the Second World War, and justify the EU's special relationship with the USA (ibid.). Regardless of the precise nature of her relations with Zeus, Europa is said to later have given birth to three sons as a result of their union, each of whom grew up to be a founder of a great ancient empire.

Albani Antinous

This sculpture represents Antinous (see entry below) in high relief. He is shown facing right, draped in a cloak, wearing a flower garland in his elaborately curled hair. He holds a ribbon in his left hand. The relief was supposedly discovered in Hadrian's Villa in 1732 (Vout 2005: 87). It shows the figure of Antinous from the waist up, but is originally thought to have been part of a larger full-length representation (Smith et al. 2018: 88). However, the bust was heavily restored in the nineteenth-century, limiting it to its current composition (ibid.). Cardinal Albani, after whom the relief receives its modern name, was responsible for the restorations: he purchased the sculpture and had it set

into a fireplace in a specially designed room of his private villa in 1763, where it remains to this day (ibid.). As a result, although the antiquity of the piece has been called into question, conducting any work to verify its ancient credentials is very difficult (Vout 2005: 94).

Athena Lemnia

This sculpture represents the Greek goddess of wisdom, Athena, wearing an *aegis* (an animal skin), adorned with the snake-haired head of the gorgon Medusa. The *aegis* is worn in a unique configuration, fastened on her right shoulder and hanging below her waist, leaving her left breast exposed (Harrison 2005: 127). According to Roman writer Pausanias, the statue was originally made in bronze by famous sculptor Pheidias between 450-440 BC (*Description of Greece* 1.28.2). It was supposedly dedicated on the Acropolis of Athens by colonisers who lived on the island of Lemnos in the northern Aegean (ibid.).

Athena and Marsyas

The story of Athena and Marsyas is known from Greek mythology (Van Keer 2004: 21-24). In her role as the patron of invention, the goddess Athena had created a new musical instrument, the double flute. However, upon playing the flute for her fellow deities on Mount Olympus, she was ridiculed when the act of blowing air through the reeds caused her cheeks to puff out and turn red. Humiliated, Athena cursed the flutes and flung them down to earth. The flute landed in front of Marsyas, a satyr (see *Satyr and hermaphrodite group* entry below for the definition of satyr). He picked up the flute and taught himself to play. The conclusion of the myth takes a violent turn: as Marsyas' instrument had been cursed by Athena, *hubris* (arrogance) overtook him and he challenged Apollo, the god of music, to a playing contest. Unsurprisingly, Apollo was the victor and Marsyas was flayed alive as a punishment. In the statue group representing the myth, Athena is shown in the act of hurling the flute: her weight is shifted backwards onto her right leg, her left hand stretched out to one side in the act of throwing the instrument. Marsyas is represented facing Athena in a posture indicative of surprise. He is shown flinging his arms out in shock as the flute descends from the sky.

Aphrodite of Knidos

The Knidian Aphrodite is reputedly the first full-size female goddess to be rendered in the nude by a Greek sculptor (Damaskos 2012: 121). The original was carved in marble by the famed sculptor Praxiteles in the fourth-century BC. It was set up in a sacred precinct on the island of Knidos. The sculpture represents Aphrodite at her toilette, having just disrobed in order to enter a bath. In the ancient world, bathing was thought to augment sexual allure and enhance fertility (Seaman 2004: 561-3), and as such, archaeologists have interpreted this as an appropriate motif for the goddess of love (Lee 2015: 115-6). The original marble Aphrodite of Knidos does not survive today, but hundreds of extant Roman copies of the piece are thought to give an idea of her appearance (Stansbury-O'Donnell 2015: 298).

Aphrodite of Melos

In 1820, an over-life-size marble representation of Aphrodite was discovered by French archaeologists on the Greek island of Melos, in a niche not far from an ancient theatre (Havelock 1995: 93). Upon her discovery, the Aphrodite was presented to King Louis XVIII, who donated her to the Louvre, Paris, where she is still exhibited to this day (Kousser 2005: 229). The goddess, who was discovered without her arms, is represented nude from the waist up. Drapery is gathered about her waist and hangs down to her feet. Although thought to date to the fourth-century BC until the 1930's, the sculpture is now believed to have been created in the Hellenistic period (Ridgway 1976: 147). More recent research also suggests that the Aphrodite may have originally been represented holding an apple, a reference to 1) her prize for winning the Judgement of Paris contest, where Trojan prince Paris awarded her an apple labelled "to the fairest", and 2) the city of Melos, which means "apple" in Greek (Kousser 2005: 227).

Aphrodite Sosandra

The original Aphrodite Sosandra sculpture (meaning "Aphrodite the Saviour of Men"), is thought to have stood on the Acropolis of Athens. According to Roman writer Pausanias, the Aphrodite was commissioned by a wealthy Athenian by the name of Kallias, and was produced by sculptor Kalamis (*Description of Greece* 1.23.2). The original does not survive, but the form of the Aphrodite Sosandra has been identified in

various Roman copies. Unlike the representations of Aphrodite known from Knidos and Melos (see entries above), the Aphrodite Sosandra is represented wearing a heavy cloak and dress, which even covers her head. Only the goddess's left hand, toes, and face, which bears a severe expression, are visible.

Apollo Belvedere

Although originally believed to be a Greek original work, the Apollo Belvedere is now known to be a Roman copy of a Greek bronze. The original bronze, now lost, was supposedly made by famed sculptor Leochares (Boardman 1995: 73). It was displayed in front of a temple dedicated to Apollo in Athens (Brummer 1970: 58). The sculpture represents the Greek god of music, dance, and healing in a dynamic pose. Stepping forward onto his right leg, Apollo appears as if he has just released an arrow from a bow which he originally carried in his left hand. He is represented wearing only a pair of sandals, a quiver slung over his left shoulder, and a *chlamys* (robe) clasped at his right. The Roman copy is displayed in the Belvedere courtyard of the Vatican, where it has been part of the papal collection since Pope Julius II's pontificate in 1503 (Brown 1986: 235).

Amazons

In Greek mythology, the Amazons were a race of warrior women who interacted only with males during battle and for the purposes of procreation (Larson 2009: 34). They supposedly hailed from the western part of Anatolia in Asia Minor. The most famous sculptural representations of Amazons from antiquity were displayed at the Temple of Artemis, Ephesos (see entry below). Pliny the Elder preserves the story of the Amazons' creation (*Natural History* 34.53). In the fifth-century BC, four of Greece's most celebrated sculptors, Polycleitus, Phidias, Cresilas, and Phradmon, were each commissioned to produce a statue of an Amazon for the temple. Each of the sculptures was made in bronze and represented an Amazon dressed in a characteristic short *chiton* (tunic), with a single breast exposed. However, the originals are not extant. Three versions of Amazon sculptures have survived in the form of Roman marble copies. Attempts have been made to link each of the three extant archetypes to one of the four named sculptors (e.g., in Ridgway 1974).

Antinous

Antinous, a youth from Bithynia in north-west Asia Minor, was the boy-favourite of Roman Emperor Hadrian. Antinous was part of Hadrian's entourage during an imperial visit to Egypt in AD 130 when he fell into the River Nile and drowned (Tuck 2015: 224). Hadrian was supposedly devastated by the loss and honoured his favourite with statues and cults set up across the Roman empire (Zanker 2008: 179). More than 85 statues, busts, and heads depicting Antinous are extant (Smith et al. 2018: 8). In these sculptural representations, Antinous is typically identified by his youthful, beardless visage, his meek and downturned gaze, and his characteristically voluminous hair, which often curls over his ears.

Augustus of Prima Porta

The Prima Porta sculpture represents Rome's first Emperor, Augustus, in his role of *imperator* (military commander). He stands wearing a highly elaborate *cuirass* (breastplate), with his right arm outstretched, as if gesturing to his troops. The marble was discovered in 1863 amid the ruins of a private villa outside of Rome that was believed to belong to Augustus' wife Livia (Squire 2013: 243). It is thought to be a faithful copy of a bronze original that was erected in the city of Rome (Zanker 1990: 189) to honour Augustus' successful negotiations with the King of the Parthians (Zanker 2008: 91).

Belvedere Torso

Like the Apollo Belvedere (see entry above), the Belvedere Torso is named after the courtyard of the Vatican where it has been displayed since its acquisition by Pope Clement VII between 1523-1534 (Brummer 1970: 40). The torso is a fragmentary marble sculpture representing a muscular nude male figure seated on an animal hide (Smith 1995: 133). The original on which it was based was a Greek bronze dating from the 2nd century BC (ibid.). The marble version in the Vatican today is believed to be a copy by a Roman sculptor named Apollonius. The subject is unclear due to the missing head, chest, arms, and lower legs, but nineteenth-century commentators often assumed that it represented the Greek hero Herakles (Platt 2020: 55). More recently, others have

suggested that the subject is the satyr Marsyas (see *Athena and Marsyas* entry above). They interpret the animal skin on which the figure is seated as a panther pelt, a well-known attribute of satyrs, and the hole in the small of the sculpture's back as a dowel hole for the addition of a tail (Smith 1995: 133).

Biton

According to ancient writer Herodotus, Biton and his brother Kleobis were among the "most blessed of men" (*Histories* 1.31). The pair were truly devoted to their mother: when her usual pair of oxen were not able to transport her to a festival in honour of the goddess Hera, the brothers harnessed themselves to her wagon instead and pulled it the 45 *stades* (8.3km) to the temple at Argos. Upon arriving at the sanctuary, their mother petitioned Hera to grant her sons the greatest gift that mortal men could receive. Kleobis and Biton were killed in their sleep the same night, a painless death resembling that of a sacrificial animal and one that secured them great acclaim (Sansone 1991: 123). Two kouroi (see entry below) discovered at the Temple of Apollo at Delphi (see entry below) have been interpreted as representing Kleobis and Biton, but there has been debate over their attribution. When the pair were first discovered at the end of the nineteenth-century, a fragmentary inscription associated with them was interpreted as identifying their sculptor as an Argive (meaning "from Argos"). Since the city of Argos was associated with Kleobis and Biton's mythology, the inscription was thought to prove that the sculptures represented the brothers (Chiasson 2005: 41). However, others who have examined the same inscription argued that it instead gave the name of one of the Dioskouroi (another pair of mythological brothers who drew their lineage from Zeus, the king of the gods) (Faure 1985: 62). Despite this, the traditional interpretation of the pair as Kleobis and Biton remains in vogue. The boots that the sculpted figures are shown wearing are thought to mark them out as travellers, which again fits with Kleobis and Biton's mythological narrative (Stewart 1990: 109). The sculptures' slightly flexed elbows have also been considered a reference to the brothers straining to pull their mother's wagon (Spivey 2013: 109).

Black-figure (vase painting technique)

In the black-figure technique, which originated in Corinth, Greece, around c.700 BC, figures and motifs were rendered like silhouettes on the clay surface of the vase using lustrous black paint. Smaller details such as eyes, ears, and fingers were incised onto the vessel after firing (Beazley 1986: 1).

Calydonian Boar

This sculpture represents a boar, seated on its hind legs in what has been described as a "lazy attitude" (Richter 1970b: 77). It was found on the slopes of Rome's Esquiline Hill in 1556 and is thought to be a Roman copy of a Greek bronze original dated to the third century BC (Frederiksen and Smith 2011: 129). The boar was brought to Florence in 1568 and remains in the Uffizi Gallery to this day. The statue is sometimes referred to as the "Uffizi Boar".

Discobolos

The Discobolos was a life-size bronze statue of a nude, athletic male crouched down in the act of throwing a discus. It was made by an Athenian sculptor named Myron around 450 BC (Boardman 1985: 80). Ancient literary sources which preserve descriptions of the sculpture have been compared to around twenty extant Roman marble copies to give an indication of how the original, now lost, might have looked (Anguissola 2005: 317, 331). Roman rhetorician Quintilian (*The Orator's Education,* 2.13.8) described how the statue was much revered by Roman audiences (Spivey 2013: 103). Many copies of the Discobolos were displayed in aristocratic Roman houses (Fullerton 2016: 275).

Eirene and Ploutos

Having won a major military victory against enemy city-state Sparta in 374 BC, the Athenians established a cult of Eirene (the personification of Peace) (Fullerton 2016: 397). They erected a bronze sculpture representing Eirene holding Ploutos (the personification of Wealth in the form of an infant). In so doing, the Athenians have been interpreted as giving voice to the hope that through peace, their then-impoverished city would return to prosperity (Bieber 1961: 14). The original statue is thought to have stood either on the slopes of Athens' Areopagus (a prominent rock northwest of the

Acropolis that served as a council meeting-place) (Fullerton 2016: 397) or in the city's marketplace (Bieber 1961: 14). Pausanias describes the statue as having been made by a sculptor named Cephisodotus (*Description of Greece* 1.8.2). Images fitting his description of the Eirene and Ploutos group have been found on painted *amphorae* (storage jars) dating to c.360 BC (Fullerton 2016: 397). The painted vases show Eirene as a heavily draped matronly figure, looking down at Ploutos who is held against her left hip. Ploutos gazes back and reaches out his right arm to her. Taken together with Pausanias' description, the vase paintings have been used to identify several Roman marble copies as preserving the form of Cephisodotus' original bronze (ibid.).

Ganosis

The process of ganosis was conducted as part of the creation of marble statuary. It involved the application of a layer of melted wax mixed with olive oil to the surface of a marble sculpture. It is thought to have had a protective function as well as enhancing the colour of any paint applied over the top (Bradley 2009: 438).

Inclusions (in pottery)

Inclusions are fragments of other materials (including but not limited to minerals, rock, bone, shell, and byproducts of crop processing (Lippi and Pallecchi 2016: 565)) that are suspended within the clay of a pot. They can be naturally present in the clay mixture, or they can be added deliberately by the potter to strengthen it.

Lateran Sophokles

Sophokles was an ancient Greek tragedian active in the fifth-century BC. He is best known for his trilogy of plays about mythical figure Oedipus, which still survive today. Athenian statesman Lycurgus supposedly commemorated Sophokles' literary achievements by erecting a posthumous bronze statue of him in the city's Theatre of Dionysos (Richter and Smith 1984: 206). The form of this sculpture, which does not survive from antiquity, is thought to be best preserved in a Roman marble copy from Terracina, Italy, dating to the Augustan period (Zanker 1995: 43). The playwright, represented as a mature, bearded man in a contemplative pose, is shown wrapped in a cloak from which his right hand is exposed. A bundle of papers sits at his feet.

Kore (pl. korai)

Korai are the female equivalent of kouroi (see entry below) (Boardman 1993: 24). They are freestanding sculptural representations of young women, often dressed in sumptuously patterned clothing, with elaborate hairstyles. Korai are often columnar in shape: as opposed to the striding movement of the kouroi, they are depicted in a static pose, with both feet together (Ridgway 1977: 85). They are often shown with one arm outstretched, holding a flower or fruit. They were common dedicatory offerings in ancient Greek temples and were also used as grave markers. The type dates to the Archaic period (c.650-480 BC).

Kouros (pl. kouroi)

Kouroi are freestanding sculptural representations of nude, male youths. The youths are typically rendered in an upright striding posture, with one leg rigidly placed in front of the other. They are represented facing forward, with arms straight or lightly flexed at their sides (Boardman 1993: 22). Like the korai (see entry above), they typically have long, stylised hair, although some later examples do have much shorter hairstyles. The type dates to the Archaic period (c.650-480 BC).

Lapith

In Greek mythology, the Lapiths were a tribe who lived in ancient Thessaly. The most famous mythological narrative in which they were involved surrounded their king, Pirithous. At Pirithous' wedding, a centaur named Eurytion attempted to abduct the bride and a battle ensued. Athenian hero Theseus came to the Lapiths' aid and the Centaurs were expelled from Thessaly. This battle, known as a Centauromachy, is depicted in sculptural form on Greek temples such as the Temple of Zeus, Olympia (see entry below).

Leonidas

Leonidas was a general from the city-state of Sparta who led the famous force of 300 Spartans against the Persian army at the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC. Since its discovery in 1925, a marble sculpture found on the Spartan Acropolis has been

interpreted as the legendary general (Kourinou-Pikoula 2006: 223). The fragmentary sculpture represents the head and torso of a warrior, nude from the waist up, wearing a plumed helmet with cheek pieces that are engraved with the image of a ram. However, this statue may not necessarily depict Leonidas himself. Scholars have proposed that it belongs to a larger group of military figures, to judge from fragments of marble shields found nearby (Boardman 1985: 52).

Mausoleum of Halicarnassus

In the fourth century BC, Halicarnassus, located in modern Bodrum on Turkey's south-west coast, was the capital city of a ruler named Mausolos and his wife Artemisia. Mausolos, a client-king who had been granted power by the dominant Persian Empire, began constructing his own monumental tomb in the centre of the city in around 367 BC (Cook 2005: 2). It was completed by Artemisia after his death in 353 BC and became known as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world (ibid.). The tomb was so famous that the word "mausoleum" was coined from Mausolos' name. The Mausoleum had an impressive sculptural programme comprised of friezes (depicting scenes such as battles between Greeks and Amazons) and freestanding sculpture (thought to represent members of Mausolos' royal family) (Jeppesen 1997: 42). Two of the best-preserved freestanding figures are interpreted as Mausolos and Artemisia themselves: they are believed to have stood on the roof of the tomb building in a horse-drawn chariot (Boardman 1995: 28-9). How precisely the extant sculptures fitted onto the exterior of the now-destroyed mausoleum building is the subject of intense scholarly debate (see Jenkins and Waywell 1997: pl.43-46 for the various proposed restorations).

Nike of Samothrace

The Nike of Samothrace is a spectacular marble monument that is traditionally thought to commemorate a naval victory won by the Greek city of Rhodes in 190/189 BC (Ridgway 2000: 150). It was originally dedicated at the Sanctuary of the Great Gods on the island of Samothrace, Greece (Smith 1995: 78). Nike, the personification of Victory, is represented as a youthful, winged female figure, alighting on the prow of a warship. Her wet robes are shown blowing in the wind: they are plastered to her body and reveal her fine physique. Recent research into the sculpture indicates that Nike is represented

not on a generic warship but specifically on a *quadrireme*, a ship with four banks of oars (Clinton et al. 2020). She is currently displayed at the Louvre, Paris.

Parthenon Frieze

The Parthenon is a large temple that was erected on Athens' Acropolis between 447-433/2 BC (Camp 2001: 75). The temple is dedicated to the city's patron goddess, Athena, and has an impressive sculptural programme. In particular, the figured frieze, which runs continuously around the interior of the temple, depicts a huge formal parade known as the Panathenaic procession. The frieze has received a wealth of treatment in academic scholarship, with debate having been particularly aroused by the subject of its central scene. Some interpret the two adults and three children shown bearing a folded cloth as depicting the culmination of the procession, where the cult statue of Athena within the Parthenon was presented with a specially woven *peplos* (robe) (ibid.: 79). Those interpreting the scene thusly do not understand it to be a representation of a specific historical festival but an idealised procession (Jenkins 1994: 42). Meanwhile, others have argued that the children are shown carrying shrouds in preparation for an act of human sacrifice (Connelly 1996).

Red-figure (vase painting technique)

The red-figure vase painting technique superficially appears to be the reverse of the black-figure technique (see entry above) (Boardman 2001: 79). In this method, figures and other decorative elements were painted in outline on the vase. Instead of relying on incision, black paint was used to add the details of the anatomy and clothing. The background of the scenes were painted solid black.

Satyr and hermaphrodite group

This is a narrative sculpture depicting a satyr and hermaphrodite engaged in an erotic scuffle (Pollitt 1986: 131). Satyrs are mythological followers of the Greek god of wine, Dionysos. They are often represented as having the body of a man but the ears and tail of a goat. They are famed in ancient myth for their drunkenness and sexual debauchery. In this particular representation, the satyr has crept up on what he believes to be a beautiful woman. He intends to seduce or perhaps rape her. However, he soon notices

that the figure that he has approached is not a woman but a hermaphrodite. The sculpture captures the moment in which the roles reverse: the hermaphrodite has become the aggressor, holding the satyr in place by his foot and reaching back to gouge out his eyes with their fingers (Groves 2016: 333-337). Many different renderings of this popular subject matter survive from the Roman world; they are believed to trace back to a Greek original from the Hellenistic period (Retzleff 2007: 459).

Temple of Apollo, Bassae

The Temple of Apollo at Bassae was built on the slopes of Mount Kotilionin, in Greece's Peloponnese, between 429-400 BC (Spawforth 2006: 156). The temple's frieze, a high relief marble sculpture executed on 23 panels and displayed in the interior of the temple, represents battles between the Greeks and Amazons and between the Lapiths (see entry above) and centaurs (ibid.: 158).

Temple of Apollo, Delphi

Delphi is a town located on the slopes of Mount Parnassus in the south of mainland Greece. The ancient site comprised a popular sanctuary to which worshippers from all over Greece would travel in the sixth- and fifth-centuries BC (Spawforth 2006: 170). Delphi was understood by the Greeks to be the centre of the world, and the temple on the site thus housed an ovoid stone called the *omphalos* (the navel of the world). The temple was also home to countless votive offerings made by both individual dedicants and Greek city-states. The twin sculptures of Biton (see entry above) and his brother Kleobis were dedicated at the site.

Temple of Artemis, Ephesos

Ancient Ephesos was a harbour city founded near the modern Turkish town of Selçuk. Three temples once occupied the city's sacred site. One was dedicated to Artemis, the Greek goddess of wild animals, the hunt, and of chastity and childbirth. The temple, which had origins in the seventh-century BC, was truly colossal in proportion, with its top podium measuring 51.44m x 111.48m (Spawforth 2006: 199). It was most famous for its sculptured column drums, on which life-size figures were represented in carved

high relief (ibid.: 199-200), and for the four freestanding sculptures of Amazons (see entry above) displayed there.

Temple of Zeus, Olympia

The Temple of Zeus at Olympia, located in western mainland Greece, was constructed by the Greek city-state of Elis to commemorate their military victory against their neighbours in Pisa. Construction was completed by 457 BC (Spawforth 2006: 153). While the sanctuary site as a whole was used as the setting for the famous Olympic Games, the temple itself was best known for its architectural decoration. The temple's west gable held statues representing a fight between the Lapiths (see entry above) and the centaurs, and the east gable depicted a chariot race (Boardman 1985: 34-5). The labours of Greek hero Herakles were displayed on the temple's *metopes* (sculpted panels positioned above the two porches) (ibid.: 37).

Trajan's Arch, Benevento

Trajan's Arch is a single, barrel-vaulted archway that stands on the Via Appia, one of the major Roman roads leading into the city of Benevento in southern Italy. The arch is adorned with elaborate relief sculpted decoration, which depict various events from the reign of Emperor Trajan (AD 98-117). This includes his alimentary scheme, military campaigns, and foundation of new Roman colonies (Tuck 2015: 233). The arch also works to justify Trajan's rule by showing Jupiter, the king of the gods, handing him a symbol of power in the form of a lightning bolt (Zanker 2008: 112). Work on the arch began in AD 114 and finished in AD 118 under Trajan's successor Hadrian (Tuck 2015: 233).

Trajan's Column

Trajan's Column is an ancient Roman honorific monument comprising a 28.9m high column standing on a 6.2m pedestal. It was erected as part of the Emperor Trajan's monumental forum complex in the city of Rome in AD 113 (Lancaster 1999: 419). The Column served to commemorate Trajan's victories in wars fought in Dacia (modern Romania) in AD 101-2 and 105-6 (Coulston 2012: np). Arguably the Column's most striking feature is its helical sculpted frieze, which spirals from the top to the bottom of

the monument. The frieze is thought to depict specific events in the Dacian conflict, although not in chronological order (Zanker 2008: 99): the first crossing of the river Danube by Roman forces, the Dacian surrender at the end of the first war, the consolidation of the territory by the Romans, and the death of the Dacian king Decebalus. There has been some debate over the date of the frieze: some believe it to have been added to the Column by Trajan's successor Hadrian (Claridge 1993; Wilson Jones 1993), while others argue for the retention of the traditional Trajanic date (Stevenson 2008).

Terme Boxer

This bronze representation of a seated boxer was found at the foot of Rome's Quirinal Hill in 1885 (Ridgway 2000: 308). He is identified as a boxer by his *caestus* (a leather hand wrap that the ancients used in place of boxing gloves). The date of the sculpture has been much debated, but today scholars are "fairly certain" that it was made during the first century BC (ibid.). The sculpture's exact subject has also been disputed. Statues erected to commemorate sporting achievements usually showed victorious athletes, but in this representation the boxer looks exhausted by the fight. His seated pose is slightly hunched, and he has puffy facial features and several bloodied wounds from repeated blows. As this differs so widely from typical representations of athletes, some scholars have argued that the boxer instead represents a mythological Greek king called Amykos, who was defeated in a fist fight (Laubscher 1982: 68-9).

Tyrannicide Group

Prior to becoming a democracy, the city of Athens was ruled by tyrants. One such tyrant, Hipparchos, was supposedly murdered in 514 BC by two men: Harmodios and his lover Aristogeiton (Brunnsåker 1971: 2). The reasons posited by authors ancient and modern for the assassination are various: some see it as a politically motivated killing aimed at ridding Athens of tyrannical rule, while others suggest that Aristogeiton carried out the murder for personal reasons, to avenge Hipparchos' brother Hippias' forceful yet unrequited romantic advances toward Harmodios (ibid.). Regardless of their motivations, Harmodios and Aristogeiton were lauded in Athenian legend as *tyrannicides* (tyrant-slayers) and the founders of the city-state's democracy. Statues

commemorating the pair were erected in the *agora* (public square) of Athens in the fifth-century BC, which at the time was a singular honour (Taylor 1991: 13). However, the sculptures were stolen by the Persian army when they occupied Athens in 480 BC. A replacement version, which is known today through Roman marble copies, was set up in 477/76 BC (ibid.: 15). In this statue group, Harmodios and Aristogeiton are represented in the act of murdering the tyrant. A nude, clean-shaven, and youthful Harmodios is shown wielding a sword above his head, while the older, bearded Aristogeiton, thrusts his weapon out in front of him. A *chlamys* (robe) is draped over his outstretched arm.

Appendix 2 Making a Plaster Cast

In December 2020, I was commissioned by Scan the World to produce a 1:1 plaster cast of their 3D printed version of Gian Lorenzo Bernini's Bust of Constanza Bonarelli.[120] The following images provide a step-by-step guide to the complex casting process.

Instead of the traditional plaster moulds described in Chapter 1, I worked with dental alginate to produce an accurate mould (Figs.a-g), followed by using Plaster of Paris to create the finished cast (Figs.h-n). These photos are also featured on Google Arts and Culture.[121]

Figure a Coating the casting container in release agent.

Figure b Placing the 3D printed bust base inside the container.

[120] https://www.myminifactory.com/object/3d-print-bust-of-costanza-bonarelli-49773 Accessed 30/07/2021.
[121] https://artsandculture.google.com/story/casting-costanza-scan-the-world/CgXxDauQti4p7Q?hl=en Accessed 30/07/2021.

Figure c Mixing the dental alginate.

Figure d Pouring the alginate inside.

Figure e Removing the set alginate from the bowl.

Figure f Carefully slicing the alginate in half.

Figure g Prizing the alginate apart to reveal the negative impression.

Figure h Placing the two pieces of alginate back inside the bowl.

Figure i Pouring the Plaster of Paris into the negative mould

Figure j Rocking the bowl so that plaster fills every crevice.

Figure k Removing the hardened plaster and mould from the bowl.

Figure l Carefully peeling away the alginate to reveal the plaster cast.

Figure m The plaster cast once removed from its alginate mould. The vertical line at the front of the base is a flashline, showing where the two alginate pieces had not sat flush together during the casting process.

Figure n The completed plaster cast bust (left) and the 3D print that served as the model (right).

Appendix 3 Information Sheets

Information Sheet for Visitors

Who are you?

My name is Abbey Ellis and I am a PhD researcher working jointly with the University of Leicester and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford. During my studies in Oxford as an undergraduate, I volunteered regularly with the Ashmolean Museum, including as a Lower Cast Gallery tour guide. My PhD project is now set in the Cast Gallery. Detailed information about me and my project can be found on the University of Leicester website: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/PhD-Students/CurrentPhDStudents/AbbeyEllis

What is your research about?

I am interested in learning about what users of the Ashmolean Museum's Cast Gallery think about archaeological plaster casts. I am investigating whether users consider the casts to have value and/or authenticity.

What is my role in your research?

Your role in my research is absolutely integral – I cannot complete my project without you. I will be conducting short interviews after today's tour, where I will be asking about your experience on the tour and what you think about the casts.

What can I expect from the interview?

Your semi-structured interview will take approximately 20 minutes. I will record the interview with an audio recorder and take pen and paper notes during the session.

Informed consent

If you are uncertain about any aspect of what I am doing today, please don't hesitate to ask me about it. The information I collect will be used to help me write my PhD thesis which will also include interviews with museum staff and volunteers. My report may be published online.

Protecting confidentiality

Material you provide as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your words will be recorded unless you do not agree to this. Your words might be used in the report, but your real name and details will be kept private. Pen and paper notes as well as audio recordings will be taken during the interview process. Pen and paper notes will be transcribed onto a computer

after the interview and the originals destroyed to protect your privacy. Audio and text files created in the interview process will be safely stored according to University of Leicester ethics guidelines in a password-protected OneDrive storage, to which only I will have access. Secure backups will be kept on an encrypted external hard drive that will be stored under lock and key in a filing cabinet. Interview data will be stored for a maximum of 5 years after the completion of my PhD project, to give me sufficient time to publish my work.

Any questions?

Please direct these to me at alre1@leicester.ac.uk

Alternatively, you can contact the School of Museum Studies' Research Ethics Officer, Dr Jen Walklate at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 19 University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RF.

Thank you!

Information Sheet for Curators/Tutors

Who are you?

My name is Abbey Ellis and I am a PhD researcher working jointly with the University of Leicester and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford. During my studies in Oxford as an undergraduate, I volunteered regularly with the Ashmolean Museum, including as a Lower Cast Gallery tour guide. My PhD project is now set in the Cast Gallery. Detailed information about me and my project can be found on the University of Leicester website: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/PhD-Students/CurrentPhDStudents/AbbeyEllis

What is your research project about?

My research questions concern user perceptions of archaeological plaster casts: Do Cast Gallery users view plaster casts as authentic? What values/s do they attribute to the objects? How does the casts' position within a university museum such as the Ashmolean impact upon users' valuations of the objects?

What is my role in your research?

In order to gain a broad range of user perspectives on the Cast Gallery, I will be interviewing visitors, volunteers, artists and students. By interviewing staff members such as yourself in addition to this, I will be able to usefully contextualise interview data from other users and gain further insights into how the Gallery works in practice.

What can I expect from the interview?

Your semi-structured interview will take between 45 minutes and one hour, and will be arranged at a time and location convenient for you. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes will also be taken during the interview.

Informed consent

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the project at any point within four weeks of the interview taking place. If you are uncertain or uncomfortable about any aspect of your participation, please feel free to discuss this with me.

Protecting confidentiality

Material you provide as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You can choose to remain anonymous, but as the Ashmolean Museum is my only case study in my research, as a curator you are likely to be identifiable. Therefore, you can choose to be named in my research or you can choose to remain unnamed, in which case I will endeavor to keep your identity as anonymous

as possible. The choice is entirely yours and your wishes will be respected. I will send you transcripts of the interview for your approval to ensure that you feel your viewpoints are accurately represented. Pen and paper notes as well as audio recordings will be taken during the interview process. Pen and paper notes will be transcribed onto a computer after the interview and the originals destroyed to protect your privacy. Audio and text files created in the interview process will be safely stored according to University of Leicester ethics guidelines in password-protected OneDrive storage, to which only I will have access. Secure backups will be kept on an encrypted external hard drive that will be stored under lock and key in a filing cabinet. Interview data will be stored for a maximum of 5 years after the completion of my PhD project, to give me sufficient time to publish my work.

Any questions?

Please direct these to me at alre1@leicester.ac.uk

Alternatively, you can contact the School of Museum Studies' Research Ethics Officer, Dr Jen Walklate at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 19 University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RF.

Thank you!

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

ASHMOLEAN
MUSEUM OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Information Sheet for Volunteers

Who are you?

My name is Abbey Ellis and I am a PhD researcher working jointly with the University of Leicester and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford. During my studies in Oxford as an undergraduate, I volunteered regularly with the Ashmolean Museum, including as a Lower Cast Gallery tour guide. My PhD project is now set in the Cast Gallery. Detailed information about me and my project can be found on the University of Leicester website: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/PhD-Students/CurrentPhDStudents/AbbeyEllis

What is your research about?

I am interested in learning about what visitors to the Cast Gallery think about archaeological plaster casts. I am investigating whether visitors consider the casts to have value and/or authenticity.

What is my role in your research?

As part of my data collection, I will be conducting interviews with visitors after the 'Downstairs in the Cast Gallery' tours. To better understand and interpret this visitor interview data, I will be organizing focus group interviews with members of the volunteer team such as yourself. These focus groups will give me a better understanding of volunteer perceptions of the tours, what works well with visitors, and allow me to note trends that you have noticed about questions that are asked by visitors and their reactions to the objects.

What can I expect from the focus group?

The focus group will last for approximately 45 minutes. Between 3-6 volunteers will be present and I will lead the group through a discussion of the tours that you regularly deliver. I will record the discussion with an audio recorder and take pen and paper notes during the session.

Informed consent

If you are uncertain about any aspect of what I am doing today, please don't hesitate to ask me about it. The information I collect will be used to help me write my PhD thesis which will also include interviews with museum staff and visitors. My report may be published online.

Protecting confidentiality

Material you provide as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your words will be recorded unless you do not agree to this. Your words might be used in the report, but your real name and details will be kept private. Pen and paper notes as well as audio recordings will be

taken during the focus group discussion process. Pen and paper notes will be transcribed onto a computer after the focus group and the originals destroyed to protect your privacy. Audio and text files created in the discussion process will be safely stored according to University of Leicester ethics guidelines in a password-protected OneDrive storage, to which only I will have access. Secure backups will be kept on an encrypted external hard drive that will be stored under lock and key in a filing cabinet. Interview data will be stored for a maximum of 5 years after the completion of my PhD project, to give me sufficient time to publish my work.

Any questions?

Please direct these to me at alre1@leicester.ac.uk

Alternatively, you can contact the School of Museum Studies' Research Ethics Officer, Dr Jen Walklate at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 19 University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RF.

Thank you!

Information Sheet for Students

Who are you?

My name is Abbey Ellis and I am a PhD researcher working jointly with the University of Leicester and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford. During my studies in Oxford as an undergraduate, I volunteered regularly with the Ashmolean Museum, including as a Lower Cast Gallery tour guide. My PhD project is now set in the Cast Gallery. Detailed information about me and my project can be found on the University of Leicester website: https://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/PhD-Students/CurrentPhDStudents/AbbeyEllis

What is your research about?

I am interested in learning about what visitors to the Cast Gallery think about archaeological plaster casts. I am investigating whether visitors consider the casts to have value and/or authenticity.

What is my role in your research?

In order to gain a broad range of user perspectives on the Cast Gallery, I will be interviewing visitors, volunteers, artists, tutors, and curators. I will be interviewing students such as yourself to understand more about the gallery from your perspective. I will use information gleaned from your interview to aid my understanding of how the Cast Gallery functions as a whole.

What can I expect from the focus group?

The focus group will last for approximately 45 minutes. Between 3-6 students will be present and I will lead the group through a discussion of the tours that you regularly deliver. I will record the discussion with an audio recorder and take pen and paper notes during the session.

Informed consent

If you are uncertain about any aspect of what I am doing today, please don't hesitate to ask me about it. The information I collect will be used to help me write my PhD thesis which will also include interviews with museum staff and volunteers. My report may be published online.

Protecting confidentiality

Material you provide as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your words will be recorded unless you do not agree to this. Your words might be used in the report, but your real name and details will be kept private. Pen and paper notes as well as audio recordings will be taken during the interview process. Pen and paper notes will be transcribed onto a computer

after the interview and the originals destroyed to protect your privacy. Audio and text files created in the interview process will be safely stored according to University of Leicester ethics guidelines in a password-protected OneDrive storage, to which only I will have access. Secure backups will be kept on an encrypted external hard drive that will be stored under lock and key in a filing cabinet. Interview data will be stored for a maximum of 5 years after the completion of my PhD project, to give me sufficient time to publish my work.

Any questions?

Please direct these to me at alre1@leicester.ac.uk

Alternatively, you can contact the School of Museum Studies' Research Ethics Officer, Dr Jen Walklate at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 19 University Road, Leicester, LE1 7RF.

Thank you!

Appendix 4 Consent Forms

Consent Form for Visitors/Volunteers/Artists/Students

I agree to take part in Abbey Ellis's research project, based within the Cast Gallery, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford which will form part of her research towards a PhD at the University of Leicester.

I understand that this study will be carried out in accordance with the University of Leicester's Code of Research Ethics which can be viewed at: https://www2.le.ac.uk/institution/ethics/code

I understand that material I provide as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Statement	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read and fully understood the information sheet.		
I have read the information concerning this study's adherence to the Data Protection Act (1988) and the General Data Protection Regulation / GDPR (2016). I understand the information regarding Data Protection that I have been given.		
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.		
Any questions or concerns that I raised were answered to my satisfaction.		
I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time.		
I agree to the interview being recorded using audio and paper notes.		
I agree to my words being used by the researcher in her thesis.		
I agree that my actual words can be used in additional publications, including online publications.		

I understand that my real name will not be attributed to any words that I have said.		

Name (print) _____

Signed _____

Date _____ / _____ / _____

Please contact me if you have any further questions or concerns, or if you wish to withdraw your participation from the research.

Abbey Ellis, PhD Researcher
alre1@leicester.ac.uk | abbey.ellis@conted.ox.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

ASHMOLEAN
MUSEUM OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Consent Form for Curators/Tutors

I agree to take part in Abbey Ellis's research project, based within the Cast Gallery, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford which will form part of her research towards a PhD at the University of Leicester.

I understand that this study will be carried out in accordance with the University of Leicester's Code of Research Ethics which can be viewed at: https://www2.le.ac.uk/institution/ethics/code

I understand that material I provide as part of this study will be treated as confidential and securely stored in accordance with the 2016 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Statement	**Yes**	**No**
I confirm that I have read and fully understood the information sheet.		
I have read the information concerning this study's adherence to the Data Protection Act (1988) and the General Data Protection Regulation / GDPR (2016). I understand the information regarding Data Protection that I have been given.		
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.		
Any questions or concerns that I raised were answered to my satisfaction.		
I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any point within four weeks of the interview taking place.		
I agree to the interview being recorded using audio and paper notes.		
I agree to my words being used by the researcher in her thesis.		
I agree that my words can be used in additional publications, including online publications.		

I give permission for the following personal details to be used in connection with any words I have said or information that I have passed on.		
My real name		
The title of my position(s)		
My institutional affiliation		
I understand that I will be provided with a transcript of the interview for my approval		

Name (print) _____

Signed _____

Date _____ / _____ / _____

Please contact me if you have any further questions or concerns, or if you wish to withdraw your participation from the research.

Abbey Ellis, PhD Researcher
alre1@leicester.ac.uk | abbey.ellis@conted.ox.ac.uk

Appendix 5 Periodisation through Ancient Art

Geometric Period: c.1100-750 BC

The Geometric period is, unsurprisingly, defined by the geometrically shaped figures that characterise the painted pottery and sculpture produced at this time. Human forms in both artistic media are rendered with broad shoulders, small waists, triangular shaped bodies, and elongated necks and limbs (Boardman 1993: 10).

Orientalizing Period: c.700-600 BC

The Orientalizing period was distinguished by the international influences that can be observed in Greek art at this time. Greece's contacts with the Ancient Near East, Egypt, and Asia Minor contributed to the development of a distinctive "Eastern" style. Floral, faunal and mythological motifs appeared on pottery. Sculptures mainly took the form of frontal, plank-like figures, wearing broad belts (Pedley 2007: 125-149).

Archaic Period: c.650-480 BC

During the Archaic period, Greek vase painters became less interested in geometric designs and more focused on illustrating specific tales from mythology (Woodford 2015: 4). At this time, sculpted figures tended to be dressed in highly patterned clothing which referenced Eastern influences. Anatomical details tended to be were rendered not in a naturalistic sense but using stylised patterns. Figures' lips were lifted up in the so-called "Archaic smile" (ibid.: 75).

Classical Period: c.480-323 BC

The breaking of the rigid symmetry seen in Archaic sculpted figures and the move toward representing subjects in a truly naturalistic manner (creating works that were "observed from nature" as opposed to being conceptual studies) marks the transition into what is called the Classical period (Spivey 2013: 20).

Hellenistic Period: c.323-31BC

Sculptural products of the Hellenistic period were characterised by an expansion in subject matter: in contrast to the naturalistic yet idealised bodies of the Classical period,

Hellenistic art also depicted the very old, the very young, created individualised warts-and-all portraits of notable subjects, and explored a wider range of emotions from misery to ecstasy (Smith 1995: 7). However, this period is much less closely defined by its artistic production than those prior. It is instead historical events that signal the beginning and end of the period: it begins with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC and his political legacy of Hellenistic kingship, and ends with the conquest of the last of these Hellenistic kingdoms by Rome in 31 BC (Smith 1995: 9). Nevertheless, it was within this time that "the bulk" of the Hellenistic sculptural repertoire was created (ibid.). Art objects and historical narrative might be considered to work together to create periodisation in this case.

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