



Questioning
a new
collection



AN EXHIBITION OF THE CLASSICAL MUSEUM
UDC School of Classics

On the occasion of **WAC-6**, July 2008

Questioning . . . a new collection

With a catalogue of the exhibits displayed
in the Classical Museum

On the occasion of Wac-2008



The Classical Museum
University College Dublin

Introduction

For any museum, taking into its care a new collection is an important and exciting event, but one not devoid of challenges. In 2007 a small eclectic collection of east Mediterranean antiquities in the ownership of St Finian's College in Mullingar (Co. Westmeath) came to the attention of the Classical Museum, and a long loan was subsequently arranged. This exhibition is the result of the attempts to address the questions and obligations that arise from such an undertaking. It investigates the collection's origins and history, follows lines of enquiry for the interpretation of the artefacts, and implements its presentation and display. The accompanying catalogue presents the previously unpublished artefacts in the collection in the light of modern scholarship.

The exhibition is the first among the Museum's exhibitions to have been researched and organized by students as part of a seminar course of the MA in Classics (2007-08) in the UCD School of Classics. Four students participated: Emily Barton, Mary Roberts Cahill, Danielle Wilson Higgins and Marian Morrissey. Ronan McConnell, former MA student, also took part. The Classical Museum is most grateful to Father Connell, President of St Finian's College for the loan of the collection. The exhibition team wishes to thank Professor Michael Lloyd for his support for the project. We are grateful to the following for having helped with various aspects of the preparation of this exhibition:

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Stephen Davis (UCD School of Archaeology)

Tony Eklof (James Joyce Library, UCD)

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Origins of the collection

The likelihood is that the collection came to the College between 1910 and 1912 as an teaching collection, although no records that relate to its acquisition survive. It seems to have remained on display there until 1986, after which it was kept in storage.

St Finian's College was founded in Navan in 1802 as a boarding and day school for the Diocese of Meath. In 1908 the College was relocated to Mullingar, in the building that it still occupies today. The 37 complete ancient artefacts in its holdings present great variety in type, provenance (Cyprus, Egypt, Greece and Asia Minor) and date (Bronze Age to the Roman period). Only three artefacts can be traced to specific sites or excavations by the old labels stuck on them. Two derive from sites excavated by British archaeologists in Cyprus in the late 19th century: Tamassos-*Frangissa*, where an Iron Age sanctuary was brought to light in 1885 (by Ohnefalsch-Richter excavating on behalf of the infamous Colonel Falkland Warren) and Enkomi, where the British Museum excavated a number of Late Bronze Age graves prior to the uncovering of the important Late Bronze Age town (the Emma Turner excavations of 1890/1896). Otherwise only isolated artefacts are possible to trace (by their morphology) to sites (a lamp from Cnidus, cat. no. 3, from Charles Newton's excavations of the 'Temenos of Demeter') or regions (the artefacts made in Athenian black glaze).

Collection acquisition

Unprovenanced artefacts in collections are deprived of vital information for their interpretation, which can only be obtained if the context in which they were found is known. Furthermore the action of removing antiquities from their countries of origin deprives these countries of their national heritage. The legitimate acquisition of antiquities is a major concern of museums today, and is monitored by Unesco, although unfortunately the illicit trade of antiquities is still rampant. In the 19th century and the turn of the 20th century the movement of antiquities from the Mediterranean was largely unrestricted or poorly controlled. Colonial powers legitimized the export of finds from excavations, and the demand fuelled tomb robbing. The policy of the Classical Museum is not to purchase

unprovenanced antiquities, but to accept those antiquities that, having been removed from their original context prior to the 20th century, are today at risk of being lost or destroyed. In the case of the Mullingar collection, the study of the artefacts proves that most of them would have come from the same source as the UCD Classical Museum collection. Despite the lack of documentation to prove it, it is fairly certain that they were given to St Finian's by the curator of the UCD museum, the Rev. Henry Browne. 'Redistribution' of artefacts was a popular practice of museums in the earlier part of the 20th century. Large museums cleared their stores by donating their surplus artefacts, particularly 'duplicates', to poorer museums. It is well documented that the source of many objects in the UCD museum was the British Museum. Continuing the practice, Henry Browne gave away his 'duplicates' to select institutions including St Finian's, where a number of artefacts can be traced to the British Museum. Comparisons between artefacts in UCD and St Finian's clearly show the principle of keeping the best for oneself.

The purpose of the collection

From their earliest days, modern museums made education one of their priorities. University teaching collections were by and large a mid 19th to early 20th century phenomenon. During the first two decades of the 20th century the foremost advocate in Ireland of the use of archaeological artefacts for the teaching of classical studies was the Rev. Henry Brown, founder of the UCD Classical Museum. His mission to 'convert' others to the approach is demonstrated by his active role in supplying antiquities to other teaching institutions, including St Finian's, as was mentioned above. Most artefacts of this diverse collection were clearly only superficially understood at the time, and one wonders what they really signified to the students of the College in this provincial Irish town. The likely explanation lies with the educational function attached to artefacts, which was advocated by Henry Browne: the tangible and visual presence of artefacts would provide the concrete proof that the events of the past learnt from other sources really happened. At St Finian's the classical artefacts were displayed along with a flintlock pistol from the battle of the Boyne, an 'Indian corn' from the time of the Irish famine, and a chalice and crucifix of the penal period, all artefacts that would have conveyed similar messages about the historicity of the past, albeit in this case the Irish and much more recent past.

The reasoning behind the present exhibition of the St Finian's collection was that artefacts in collections need to be interpreted and given a context in order to become useful and educationally 'active' as educational collections should be. In this exhibition the thematic focus was thought appropriate. But because of the diversity of the material, the choice was largely of themes into which artefacts could be grouped most coherently despite their diversity. In order to aid interpretation, the displays have been supplemented by objects from the UCD collection, which is particularly pertinent given the common origins of the two collections. The St Finian's collection of artefacts have been clearly indicated in the display.

The following thematic areas have been explored:

- Domestic space (cat. nos 1-21)

Although mostly from unknown contexts, and dating from different periods, this group of artefacts, consisting of lamps, loom weight, whorl, pestle and various bowls and dishes reflect activities in interior space, some of which, such as the making of cloth, food preparation, grinding of cosmetics, would have been gender related.

- Death ritual: the use of wine and oil (cat. nos 22-32)

Equally multi-period and multi-origin is the small collection of oil and wine containers that most likely originated in graves. Their funerary use highlights the important diachronic role played by two valuable Mediterranean products: wine and oil.

- Cult places: honoring the Gods in Cyprus (cat. nos 33-37)

This is a more coherent display of artefacts, which blends well with UCD's own collection. The heads of stone statuettes and the terracotta figurines were intended for the sanctuaries of 6th – 5th century Cyprus, although the terracotta figures are also found in graves.

- Aspects of ancient technology (cat. no. 37)

This small display focuses on the development of glass technology from core-formed to blown glass, and on tambourine making.

Catalogue



1. Black glaze oil lamp

Attic. Unknown provenance (SF 12)
Ht: 2 cm, dia: 8.5 cm. Complete; painted surface slightly chipped.
Wheel made body with flat overhanging rim. Central tube rising slightly higher than the body.

Date: 500-450 BC

Bibliography: Cf. Bailey 1975, Pl. 6, Q18.



2. Black glaze lamp filler (*askos*)

Attic. Unknown provenance (SF 21)
Dia: 8.7 cm. Handle restored with plaster. Slightly chipped surface.
Canonical shape. Completely coated.
Date: late 5th – early 4th century BC



3. Double nozzle terracotta oil lamp

From Cnidus, Newton excavations (SF 13)
Ht: 5.9 cm, dia: 10.5 cm. Some damage on spout and around the handle area.
Double convex body with bowl shaped filling hole depression. Slave mask applied on front of lamp; plain disc and 'Cnidian leaf' – central disc under the base.

Date: 2nd century BC or a little later

Bibliography: Cf. Bailey 1975, Pl. 62, Q 326.



4. Terracotta scallop-shaped oil lamp

Unknown provenance, probably Egypt (SF 14)

Ht: 3.5 cm, dia: 7.8 cm. Flaking surface. Plain with incised decoration.

Date: 3rd century AD

Bibliography: Cf. Mulvin 2006, no. 188. For Roman provincial lamps: Bailey 1988.

Comment: in closed lamps, the wick, usually of flax, was placed in the spout(s), and the oil poured into the reservoir through the central hole.



5. Small black glaze bowl

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 8)
Ht: 3.0 cm, dia: 8.5 cm. Chipped in places.
Deep bowl; incurving rim; body tapering to a small ring base. Exterior partly coated.
Date: 5th - 4th century BC



6. Small black glaze bowl

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 7)
Ht: 3.0 cm, dia: 8.5 cm. Rim chipped; worn surface.
Similar shape to no. 5 but with taller base.
Comment: these bowls belong to a common type, difficult to date precisely.
The clay and dull glaze indicate non-attic pieces.



7. Plain bowl

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 9)
Ht: 6.4 cm, dia: 13 cm. Rim and one side chipped.
Straight rim; conical lower body; small ring base.
Date: Cypro-Archaic II, 600-475 BC
Bibliography: Gjerstad 1948, Fig. LV1, no. 4 (Plain White V Ware).



8. Plain bowl

Probably from Cyprus (SF 10)
Ht: 6.6 cm, dia: 13.3 cm. Flaking, salt damaged body; hole on in the interior.
Rounded body; incurving rim; ring base.
Date: probably Hellenistic-Roman period



9. Small plain bowl

Unknown provenance (SF 11)
Ht: 4.6 cm, dia: 9.2 cm. Chipped rim and interior.
Conical body; broad sloping upper part.
Date: Roman period



10. Plain mug

Unknown provenance (SF 26)
Ht: 10 cm. Much of the surface obscured by accretion. Thin crack on upper body.
Thin walled, broad, biconical body; distinct rim; arched handle.
Date: Roman period
Bibliography: Hayes 1976, Fig. 44.
Comment: a very widespread class of drinking vessel. It is common on sites in Italy and the Aegean region.



11. Bronze hemispherical bowl

Said to come from Egypt (SF 5)
Ht: 5.8 cm, dia: 14.9 cm. Three large fragments. Heavily corroded. Conserved by Susannah Kelly, UCD (2008).
Date: uncertain
Comment: made from a flat disc of bronze hammered onto a mould.



12. Bronze mirror head

Said to come from Egypt (SF 28)
Dia: 14.1 cm. Heavily corroded with outbreaks of bronze disease.
Oval shaped; Handle lost, originally probably of wood or bone.
Date: uncertain.



13. Female figure from shoulder of jug

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 40)
Preserved ht: 8.5 cm. One fragment. Red, black and white colour well preserved. Female figure, seated, holding a jug.
Date: Cypro-Archaic II, 600-480 BC
Bibliography: See Brehme *et al.* 2001, Fig. 76-80.

Comment: jugs with figures acting as spouts are believed to have been used for cultic purposes. The liquid would have been dispensed through the figure's jug.



14. Alabastron

Unknown provenance, probably from Cyprus (SF 20)
Ht: 10.8 cm. Worn with chipped surface. Cracks along base. Narrow neck; flared rim. Round base with pointed tip. Faded brown bands around the body.

Date: Hellenistic-Roman
Comment: a late example of a typical container for perfumed oils, popular since the Archaic period.



17. Stone whorl

Unknown provenance (SF 4)
Dia: 1.5 cm. Surface worn and scratched. A rounded conical shape. Made of steatite.
Date: Bronze Age, 2nd, mil. BC
Bibliography: Cf. Astrom 1972, tpe 4, Fig. 71:17; Demakopoulou 1996, cat. no. 25.



18. Terracotta loomweight

Unknown provenance (SF 25)
Dia: 4.8 cm. Surface worn. Oval shaped with two suspension holes at the top.
Date: uncertain
Comment: This type of weight, used with the upright loom, was made from the Geometric to the Roman periods. The upright loom was the most common loom used in the Mediterranean.



15. Stone pestle

From Enkomi, Cyprus (SF 32)
Ht: 5.5 cm. Edges slightly chipped. Green stone. Truncated conical shape.
Bibliography: Cf. Goring, 1988, cat. no. 87; Astrom 1972, 'conical pestle', Fig. 71:31.
Date: Late Cypriot II-III (14th - 12th century BC)

Comment: probably to be seen in association with no. 16. Probably used for grinding cosmetics as well as foodstuff.



16. Stone dish/mortar

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 6)
Dia: 13.2 cm. Small cut marks on the interior. Grey-green stone, shallow shape with flat rim and convex sides.
Date: Late Cypriot II-III (14th - 12th century BC)

Bibliography: Cf. Goring 1988, Pl. 86; Astrom 1972, type 1, Fig. 71:28.
Comment: Probably to be seen in association with the pestle (no. 15). Found in many tombs of the period (Enkomi, Kition).



19. Handle of Rhodian transport amphora

Unknown provenance (SF 33)
L: 11 cm. Broken. Worn. Stamp on handle.
Date: Hellenistic, 4th-3rd century BC
Bibliography: About the Rhodian amphora, see Grace 1948; Grace 1975.
Comment: transport amphorae were used for the trading of wine, but also for the storage of other liquids such as oil and water.

20. Handle of Rhodian transport amphora

Unknown provenance (SF 34)
L: 7 cm.
Stamp chipped and quite worn.

21. Handle of Rhodian transport amphora

Unknown provenance (SF 35)
L: 7.1 cm.
Stamp with head of Helios, very worn.



22. Base ring ware II bowl

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 3)
Ht: 6 cm, dia: 12.5 cm. Surface worn.
Handmade, carinated body, round handle, rising above the rim.
Date: Late Cypriot II, 1450-1200 BC
Bibliography: Cf. Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 2004, cat. no. 54.
Comment: used for the consumption of wine, or for the pouring of libations.



23. Base ring ware II jug

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 2)
Ht: 24.5 cm. Chipped in places; worn surface, including decoration.
Handmade, round, thin-walled body; tall narrow neck with backward tilt; funnel-shaped mouth, well defined foot.
Decoration of sets of white bands crossing.
Date: Late Cypriot II, 1450-1200 BC
Comment: believed to be used principally for serving wine.



24. Black glaze cup-skyphos

Attic. Unknown provenance (SF 22)
Ht: 6.5 cm, dia: 10.5 cm. Both handles and part of foot lost. Large hole in body. Worn glaze.
Mould-made foot; heavy squat bowl; thick lip. Stamped decoration on the interior.
Date: 4th century BC
Bibliography: *CVA Ireland 1*, Pl. 59:7-8.
Comment: Athens was the main producer of early black glaze, using stamps and rouletting. See also Sparkes 1996, Fig. 1:22.



25. Miniature amphora

Unknown provenance. Cyprus? (SF 27)
Ht: 10.2 cm.
Globular body, tubular neck; flat rim; arched handles. Black bands around body handles and inside rim are concealed by red over-paint, probably modern.
Date: uncertain



26. Mycenaean stirrup jar

Unknown provenance (SF 1)
Ht: 11 cm, dia: 12.9 cm. Intact, but very worn.
Conical body, flat shoulder; ring base. Shoulder decoration of stylized flowers.
Date: Late Helladic IIIB, 14th - 13th century BC
Bibliography: Furumark 1972 (shape: FS 182; motif FM 18)
Comment: decorated stirrup jars were exported from Mycenaean Greece; many have been found in tombs in Cyprus.



27. Ridge-neck lekythos of Black-on-red ware

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 23)
Pres. ht: 8 cm, dia: 5.5 cm. Neck, mouth and foot lost. Some accretion on body. Three small sets of concentric circles on the shoulder, and bands on the body.
Date: Cypro-Geometric III, 850-750 BC
Bibliography: Gjerstad 1948, Fig. XXII, 10.
Comment: Cypriot ridge-necked jugs developed under the influence of Phoenician ware.



28. Black glaze lekythos

Attic. Unknown provenance (SF 18)
Pres. ht: 7 cm, dia: 4.8 cm.
Neck, mouth and handle lost. Foot very incomplete. Body chipped.
Tapering body; tongues and rays on the shoulder.
Date: 6th century BC
Bibliography: See *CVA Ireland 1*, Pl. 59: 1-2. Pl. 41: 9.
Comment: a common type of small oil container found in tombs.



29. Red-figure squat lekythos

Attic. Unknown provenance (SF 19)
Pres. ht: 8 cm, dia: 5 cm. Mouth and part of neck lost. Chipped in places.
On a reserved frontal panel, a leaf palmette design.
Date: 425-400 BC
Bibliography: Cf. *CVA Ireland 1*, Pl. 34:1-3.
Comment: a common type of small oil container found in tombs.



30. Miniature fusiform unguentarium (globular)

Unknown provenance (SF 16)
 Ht: 10 cm. Chipped base; oil stained.
 Globular body, tapering neck; short foot.
 Two white horizontal lines on body.
Date: 400-300 BC
Bibliography: Anderson-Stojanovi 1987, Fig. 1:a, 2.
Comment: Miniature pottery of types of adult use often furnished children's graves.

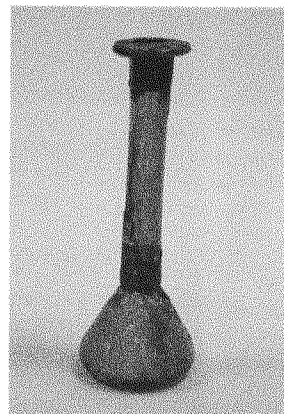


31. Fusiform unguentarium (spindle shaped)

Unknown provenance (SF 15)
 Ht: 15.5 cm. Chipping on the body and the rim of mouth.
 The spindle shaped unguentarium approximates a tube with a bulge in the middle and a closed off foot.
Date: 300-200 BC
Bibliography: Hayes, 1976, Pl. 46.
Comment: This is a standard Hellenistic type of container for burial oil. Many such containers were deposited in Hellenistic and early Roman tombs, often in multiples.

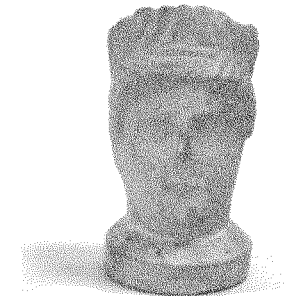
32. Glass 'candlestick' unguentarium

From Syria/ Palestine or Cyprus (SF 17)
 Ht: 15 cm. Intact. Part of the surface devitrified to a golden/brown hue.
 Small conical body; concave base; long straight tubular neck. Wide flat irregular rim with fold on the inside. Light green colour; marine shade iridescence.
Date: 1st century AD
Bibliography: Hayes 1975, for type: Pl. 236, 237, for shape: Pl. 576, 577.
Comment: The unguentarium was the earliest shape of glass to be produced by blowing throughout the Roman empire.



33. Head of female stone statuette

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 38)
 Ht: 7 cm. Broken at the neck; chipped in places.
 Oval face; hair to shoulder below conical cap with a row of plated hair across the brow.
Date: Cypro-Archaic II, 600-480 BC
Bibliography: Cf. Fortin 1996. Cat. no. 292.
Comment: Large numbers of limestone Statuettes were dedicated at Cypriot sanctuaries in the 6th -5th centuries BC.

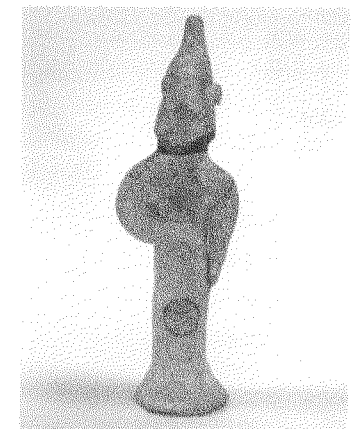


34. Head of male stone statuette

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 39)
 Ht: 13.2 cm. Worn. Chipped nose and mouth. Traces of red pigment on the lips and black pigment on the chin.
 Elongated face with faint smile, a row of curls, and a wreath with stylized leaves sprouting diagonally.
Date: Cypro-Classical I, 480-400 BC
Bibliography: Cf. Brehme 2001, cat. no. 150; Fortin 1996, cat. no. 322.
Comment: Found in large numbers in sanctuaries, believed to have been offered mostly as representations of the dedicatee.

35. Terracotta male figure of votary

From Tamassos-Frangissa, Cyprus. Colonel Warren excavations (SF 37)
 Ht: 14 cm body, ht: 7 cm head. In three pieces. Staining from old adhesive (shellac) on base of the head. Worn; faint remains of colour.
 Handmade body and head, Solid cylindrical body splaying toward the base. The right arm is bent over the torso with left arm down the side of the body.
Date: Cypro-Archaic, 6th century BC
Bibliography: Cf. Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 2004, cat. no. 206.
Comment: Small human terracotta figures were the most common dedications at sanctuaries. Wholly handmade figurines are known as 'snowman' figures.





36. Terracotta female figure

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 43)
Pres. ht: 15.5 cm. Upper part only. Worn.
Mould made; hollow interior; right hand
at the chest. She wears a tall diadem,
and necklaces.

Date: 6th-5th century BC

Bibliography: Cf. Brehme *et al.* 2001,
cat. nos 94-96.

37. Terracotta tambourine player

Cyprus. Unknown provenance (SF 36)
Ht: 13.5 cm. Complete and well
preserved, including painted decoration
in red.

Hollow, wheel made, cylindrical body,
and moulded head. The arms are bent
forward, the left arm supports the drum
while the right one beats it.

Date: Cypro-Archaic II, 6th century BC

Bibliography: Cf. Souyoudzoglou-
Haywood, 2004. Cat. nos. 194.

Comment: musicians, particularly
tambourine players are common
dedications in Cypriot sanctuaries. The
tambourine is an oriental instrument
widely used in cult in Cyprus during this
period.



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