

# Cultural diplomacy in the acquisition of the head of the Satala Aphrodite for the British Museum

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*The current location and curatorial display at the British Museum of a Hellenistic bronze head of the goddess Anahita in the guise of Aphrodite, found at Satala (Asia Minor), reveal little of the importance ascribed to it at the time of its acquisition, or of the complex route by which the head came to form part of the museum's collection. Detailed examination of archival documentation relating to this acquisition shows how, despite nineteenth-century Ottoman and Italian legislation in relation to antiquities, this head and its accompanying bronze hand were found in the province of Armenia, sold by an Ottoman diplomat to a private collector in Rome and used to secure the sale of a collection of jewellery to the British Museum. The journey of the head illustrates the importance of diplomatic channels, the workings of the nineteenth-century European trade in art and antiquities and how museums, diplomats and collectors were able to assemble collections.*

THE Hellenistic bronze head known as the Satala Aphrodite is believed to come from a cult statue of Anahita,<sup>1</sup> a goddess local to Asia Minor, in the guise of Aphrodite or Artemis; but its modest display in a glass case over a ventilation grille in Room 22 of the British Museum belies the cultural significance of the statue and the fascinating narrative of how it came to reside in central London. The label for the display simply reads:

Head from a bronze cult statue of Anahita, a local goddess shown here in the guise of Aphrodite. 200–100 BC. Found at Satala in NE Asia Minor (Armenia Minor). A left hand holding drapery was found with the head, showing that it belongs to a full-length figure.

GR 1873.8–20.1 (Bronze 266) (head) GR 1875.12–1.1 (hand).

Yet the acquisition story of this head, from its initial discovery to its arrival at the British Museum, illustrates many aspects of the functioning and complexities of the nineteenth-century art market and trafficking chain, and the use of diplomacy for the building of the collections in national museums, as well as the subsequent ethical dilemmas that this history of collecting poses today. Research into the history of acquisition is vital to an understanding of the relative importance of each work of art, to an assessment of the moral and legal basis for restitution requests, and to the opening of new chapters that take account of the full history of the objects.

The intricate story of how the head came to be in the British Museum is revealed through correspondence in the Castellani and Biliotti papers in the archives of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, through the minutes of trustees' meetings in the Central Archives, and in correspondence with William Gladstone at the British Library. This article examines these documents, as well as additional letters in the Victoria and Albert Museum archives. All of these papers clearly highlight the different layers of involvement between the government, the diplomatic and consular service in two countries and the private art market. Extraordinary efforts were made to acquire the Satala Aphrodite, but its rich history is lost in the cryptic wording of the museum label.

Beyond this, in the era of restitution requests, the head has acquired significance as a symbol of Armenian culture. Identified by Armenian historian and patriot Ghevont Alishan<sup>2</sup> as being the head of Anahita (Fig. 1),<sup>3</sup> which may have originated from a cult temple believed to have been located near the find spot,<sup>4</sup> the bronze has become an emblem for the people of Armenia,<sup>5</sup> appearing on Armenian stamps, gold coins and banknotes. In 2012 Gevorg Martirosyan, a student at the University of California, Irvine, launched a petition asking that the British Museum return to Armenia the fragments of the statue of Anahita, 'goddess of fertility, healing, wisdom, water, and war', stating that she

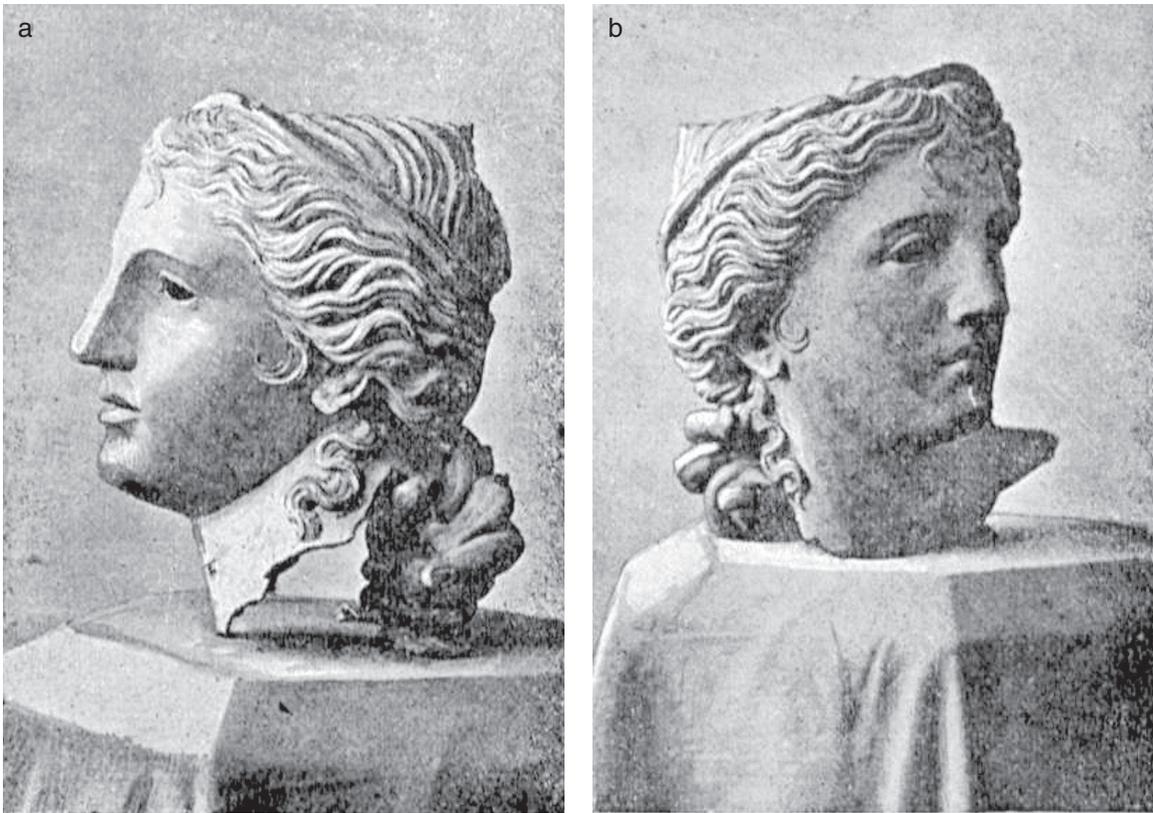


Fig. 1. The Satala Aphrodite identified as the goddess Anahita in Ghevont Alishan's publication *Ayrarat* (1890).

is 'an important part of Armenian history, mythology, and culture'.<sup>6</sup> When put in the context of the history of erasure suffered by the people of Armenia and the destruction of the religious symbols in the country, the petition acquires additional relevance.<sup>7</sup> Property confiscation and the destruction of churches, documents, manuscripts, statues and paintings mirrored the internment and mass execution of the Armenian people. Of 2,549 religious sites under Turkish control in the region, UNESCO listed just 197 remaining in 1974.<sup>8</sup> The brutality of the cultural cleansing carried out by the Young Turk government in the second decade of the twentieth century was such that it is deemed cultural genocide by the modern Armenian state.<sup>9</sup> It is in this context that the bronze head, a rare surviving example of ancient Armenian cultural heritage, acquires particular importance. Martirosyan's petition explicitly set out how turmoil and deportation in the region of historical Armenia had deprived Armenians of the artefacts that represent Armenian culture, and he asserted that the return of the statue of Anahita would

give the people of Armenia the opportunity to see their historic culture without the necessity of travelling thousands of miles.<sup>10</sup>

This request for restitution is but one of a great number besieging cultural institutions across the world. Yet it is impossible to assess the merits or demerits of such requests without a detailed knowledge of the acquisition histories of the items concerned. This article examines how the Satala Aphrodite came to form part of the British Museum collection, leaving analysis of the legal nuances to experts in other disciplines.

### The head and Alessandro Castellani

The head and the matching bronze hand now displayed with it were both found in Saddak (ancient Satala) in what is now the Trabzon Province of north-eastern Turkey, but their point of contact with the British Museum was actually the acquisition, in Rome, of the collection of Alessandro Castellani (1823–1883), an Italian goldsmith and collector (Fig. 2). This purchase



Fig. 2. Alessandro Castellani, photograph, from *Catalogue des objets d'art antiques, du Moyen-Âge et de la Renaissance dépendant de la succession Alessandro Castellani* (Paris, 1884).

was negotiated on behalf of the museum by Charles Thomas Newton, keeper of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities and a complex and highly influential figure in the history of collecting.<sup>11</sup>

Castellani first approached the British Museum to negotiate the sale of his collection, consisting of his famous gold jewellery as well as 'bronzes, marbles, terracottas, ivories, carvings in amber, glass',<sup>12</sup> in 1865. The British government had immediately expressed interest in acquiring it:

Sir, I am authorised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to inform you that H.M. Government are willing to purchase your collection of Gold and Silver ornaments and gems now exhibited at the British Museum for the sum of twenty thousand pounds, such purchase to be subjected to the approval of Parliament. If you accept this offer, a vote for the above named sum will be submitted to the House of Commons as early in next session as circumstances will permit.<sup>13</sup>

However, as late as 1869 no funds had been released and Castellani appears to have realized at this stage that he needed to make his collection more appealing to the museum's trustees. To obtain advice on how to convince the government to go forward with the

purchase, Castellani confided in the archaeologist and politician Austen Henry Layard, who suggested that an exhibition of his gold and jewellery at the South Kensington Museum would provide an opportunity for the trustees to see the collection and to push for its acquisition.<sup>14</sup> At this point the bulk of the collection was forwarded; Layard negotiated with the South Kensington Museum a sum of £500 towards Castellani's costs for putting together this exhibition.<sup>15</sup>

However, in February 1870, getting wind of Castellani's desire to sell abroad, Italian government officials sealed his cabinets and blocked their export, pending an offer of acquisition from the Italian state. The collection was valued at £24,000 for the gold ware and £16,000 for the other pieces.<sup>16</sup> Unable to find the entire sum, the newly formed Italian state was able to offer only £20,000 for the gold and gems in the collection.<sup>17</sup> In November, having refused this offer, Castellani wrote to Henry Cole, secretary to the Department of Practical Art and director of the South Kensington Museum, that he was free to sell the collection and wished to push forward with the exhibition at South Kensington:

At last I am free to dispose as I like of my large collection of ancient gold ornaments, gems, bronzes, and other antiquities, the Italian Government being unable to find the money to purchase it. Are you still disposed to entertain the project initiated by Mr Layard and Sir William Drake, which had yours and Mr Newton's approbation? If so, be kind and let me know if you could assign me a proper place in the Museum, in which I could exhibit my Collection . . .

In case you were determined to entertain our first arrangements, do you think you could obtain from the British Government to have my Collection sent to England on board of the state ships I so often see with pleasure [part of text missing] stationed in our gulf? This circumstance would be of a most decisive nature for the security of my valuable Collection. I hope you will soon let me know your opinion on this important question, in order to take the dispositions required.<sup>18</sup>

Although his collection arrived in London in 1871,<sup>19</sup> a year later Castellani was still waiting to sell. It was at this point that he borrowed £4,000 from the British collector William Drake<sup>20</sup> to buy a work of art in bronze – a head, said to have an accompanying hand – that was offered for sale in Rome. The head became the catalyst for the sale of Castellani's entire collection.

I include here an authorisation thanks to which my collection of antiquities, now held in custody at the British Museum, will be put in care of Sir William Drake. He was

so good as to lend me the sum of £4,000 so to allow me to purchase a Greek bronze head from Tessalia which, for the strangest sequence of coincidences, was sent for sale here in Rome, and ended up in front of me. It is an object worthy of us: and we must all be grateful to Sir William Drake who eased the way to be able to acquire such an important object. I will send it to the Museum together with the two vases from Capua, and the other two crates.<sup>21</sup>

The loan and interest payments put a strain on Castellani's spending and his ability to buy further works of art.<sup>22</sup> He wrote to Newton that he had the opportunity to buy a remarkable Etruscan sarcophagus, but without funds he was unable to make an offer and had become worried that competitors from other museums could end up acquiring it. On 26 January 1873, he alerted Newton that Wolfgang Helbig<sup>23</sup> from the German Archaeological Institute, was in fact reaching an agreement to acquire this piece on behalf of the Berlin museum.<sup>24</sup> In this letter Castellani made an offer to Newton that if the trustees agreed to purchase the entire collection and the head, he would help to negotiate the acquisition of the sarcophagus for the British Museum.<sup>25</sup>

Newton took the situation in hand and in January 1873 asked the trustees' permission to visit Rome on his way back from Ephesus to visit the collector, 'as Mr Castellani has now in his possession a bronze head and other antiquities of extraordinary merit',<sup>26</sup> he also wrote privately to Prime Minister Gladstone on 15 February 1873, focusing on the importance of the Satala head:

This precious relic of the heroic age<sup>27</sup> has been secured by Mr Castellani and it is now offered with the remainder of his collection to the British Museum. I have reported very fully on his offer to the Trustees and recommended it in the strongest manner, not only on account of the sarcophagus, but also because it contains a bronze head of Venus of heroic size which is to my mind the finest example of Greek work in metal I have ever seen, indeed, I may say, the work which in beauty of conception and mastery of execution has most claim to rank next to the marbles of the Parthenon. I trust that the liberality of the Government will enable us to secure this matchless head.<sup>28</sup>

Two days later he sent Gladstone a report on the Castellani collection, with particular emphasis on the head: 'A Colossal bronze head of Aphrodite, the finest work of antiquity I ever saw except the sculptures of Phidias from the Parthenon.' Highlighting that the head alone was worth about £8,000, Newton claimed he was worried that Castellani would sell elsewhere: 'If the English do not close with him in two months he intends to show the collection at Vienna – the

price will then rise, and the bronze head and the sarcophagus will never reach England.'<sup>29</sup>

On the same day he also sent a report to the trustees which informed them that Mr Castellani now possessed:

a bronze head of Venus of colossal size, of the finest period of Greek art, and in admirable condition. The nose and mouth are perfect, the eyes have been filled with precious stones, the hair over the forehead and the front of the neck are well preserved. At the back of the neck and head the bronze has been torn away, but this injury does not at all affect the front view. Mr Newton considers that this is not only the finest bronze which he ever saw, but that as a work of Greek art, it has more of the manner of the great artists of Athens than any extant sculpture [other] than those of the Parthenon, and it is the more precious because of the works of Phidias in the pediments of the Parthenon the bodies only have been preserved: Mr Castellani's bronze shows us how the heads were treated in the school of Phidias and his contemporaries.<sup>30</sup>

Yet Newton was worried: he knew that the Prussians were pursuing Castellani for the same collection, and reported that he was aware that the Berlin Museum had made an offer for the parts of Castellani's collection already in London. He had every reason to believe that, were the trustees to decline his present offer, Castellani would seek to exhibit his entire collection in Vienna. Newton estimated that, taking into consideration the 'surpassing beauty' of the bronze head, the collection would be worth in excess of £24,000,<sup>31</sup> and recommended that immediate steps should be taken to obtain authority from the government to deal with Castellani. Were the collection to be secured for this sum, it would be one of the most important acquisitions ever made by the British Museum.<sup>32</sup>

Two months later, pressed by Castellani and faced with no answer, on 9 April Newton wrote again to Gladstone:

My dear Sir,

I arrived in London on Friday last with Mr Castellani and we brought with us the beautiful bronze head respecting which I wrote to you from Rome. The Etruscan sarcophagus which I also mentioned in my letter has also arrived and is being put together. These two objects are of such surpassing interest that I feel it my duty to use every means in my power to bring them under the notice of the Government . . . May I venture to hope that you will honour the Museum with a visit on your return to London. I have no words in which I could describe the charm of the bronze head . . . The Etruscan sarcophagus as an example of what I would venture to call art of the Homeric age is a monument of surpassing interest and it will be to me a matter of profound regret if it should pass into any other Museum but our own.

I venture to trouble you with this letter because I have reason to believe that the matter of the Castellani purchase is now in a position when it could be favourably dealt with and that this favourable opportunity will never again recur.<sup>33</sup>

The following day, an article in *The Times*, also bearing Newton's signature, highlighted the incredible beauty and unsurpassed value of the bronze head to the British public:

The first impression, in short, produced by this bronze head is that of majestic godlike beauty, simple, but not too severe, with just enough of expression to give the face a human interest, and make us feel that the conception is a product of a human imagination inspired by a divine theme, of a mortal striving to body forth his idea of the immortal . . . very little more expression would have made this head less divine . . . while, on the other hand, a very little less expression might have converted it into a cold, tame, lifeless ideal . . . This style we see in its perfection in the works of Phidias, as we know them in the remains of the Parthenon, but up to this date we have looked in vain in the museums of Europe for a cardinal example of the same style in bronze. The reason for this is obvious. Bronze decays under influences which do not affect marble, and the intrinsic value of this metal has caused thousands of statues to be melted down . . . Thus the great works in bronze of Phidias and Scopas, fused in the mints of barbaric conquerors, must have furnished the coin by which their mercenaries were paid, and, for aught we know, may still be circulating in the copper currencies of the Eastern world.

The disappearance of the Greek masterpieces in bronze is almost as much to be deplored as the loss of their paintings. Neither the bronzes of Herculaneum nor the Roman copies in marble of bronze chefs-d'oeuvre which may here and there be detected in sculpture galleries have as yet given us [no] more than a feeble and inadequate idea of those 'spirantia cera' which, as the candid Virgil admits, it was the special gift and prerogative of the Greeks to make, and we have had to imagine what the style of bronze statuary in the great age was like, by the study of Greek coins, and of a few precious relics of repoussé work, such as the bronzes of Siris.

Therefore it is that the Castellani bronze head has such surpassing interest. It comes nearer to our conception of the work of a great master than any bronze yet discovered; we learn from it more than from any other extant bronze what perfect mastery the ancient sculptor attained over this material, how in his plastic hands it became as clay in the hand of the potter, so that in gazing at the form we forget the material and the absence of colour, and think only of the life which a master spirit has evoked out of the ductile metal.<sup>34</sup>

Gladstone bent to pressure. Newton's unprecedented first-person public appeal and his private and official letters to him had convinced the prime minister to release the money for the acquisition of the Castellani collection.

A pencilled note dated 17 April 1873 in the Gladstone Papers at the British Library reads: 'Mr

Newton says there is no chance of Castellani taking less than £27,000.<sup>35</sup> This price was the final agreed purchase price for the antiquities (including the bronze head), communicated to and accepted by Castellani:

My dear Mr Newton, the telegram from Mr Winter Jones and your letter from this morning communicate to me the decision of the British Government to buy my collection. I wrote to Mr WJ asking him to thank the Trustees for the many kindnesses done to me in this circumstance. And I ask you at the same time to conduct the whole transaction with Sir William Drake, who is representing me in my absence. You can detract from the agreed sum of £27,000 the price of the objects that I still have to send from Rome, according to the estimate done by you. I will take care to send them as soon as back in Rome. I thank you particularly, my dear Newton, for all your incredible work done to bring the transaction to a conclusion. I recognise that without your energy and firmness, England would have lost a collection worthy to be part of its great Museum. Please thank and salute Mr Panizzi, who has also done so much to smoothen the many difficulties we encountered.<sup>36</sup>

On 16 May 1873 Newton wrote to Gladstone to express his gratitude:

My dear Sir,

The name Aphrodite was originally given to the bronze head by Castellani and has clung to it in common connotation, but I do not think we have as yet any sure ground for assigning either this or another name. Possibly Photiades Bey, the former possessor, may throw some light on this by giving those particulars of provenance which he promised Castellani on selling it . . . I must take this opportunity of expressing to you my most grateful acknowledgment of the liberality of the Government in respect of the Castellani purchase. It is my conviction that such expenditure, like that of Pericles . . . at Athens, will bear fruits long after the generation by which it was incurred shall have passed away. For myself I can only say that the privilege of looking at the bronze head every day is like granting an enormity of celestial pleasure for the rest of my life.<sup>37</sup>

Castellani was to be paid £20,000 on account for his collection, while the museum waited for the remainder to be sent from Rome.<sup>38</sup> By August, however, Castellani realized that in accepting the figure of £27,000 he had neglected to account for the cost of transport from Italy and insurance. He wrote to Newton about the need for additional payment for the transportation of the collection from Rome to London by the company Freeborn Ercole & Co. He had already received £14,000 but there was disagreement on the remaining £13,000 owing to these costs. He begged Newton to intercede with the trustees, stating that the cost of permissions to let the pieces out of Italy had been very high:

If you knew how many difficulties I have had to overcome to take away the objects from Rome, how much money I have spent to be able to do so, you would avoid to impose me more sacrifices. Let's make sure that such a dramatic transaction really has a good end and does not leave any rust between us. I bought beautiful things in the past few days. You'll see them all but please be good to me!<sup>39</sup>

In October 1873 Castellani received news that the trustees had agreed to include payment for transport to London and insurance;<sup>40</sup> Newton had worked hard behind the scenes to obtain this result.

If Castellani had eventually succeeded in selling his collection to the museum, this had been thanks to the advocacy and lobbying of Newton, yet primarily through the inclusion of the head of Satala; Castellani also promised that in due course the museum would receive the hand that appeared to have been discovered in the same location.

At the time of the discovery of the bronze fragments, Ottoman directives that aimed at building up an imperial museum required the two pieces to be handed over to the local governor and taken to Constantinople. Although they had for a number of years allowed foreign powers to excavate and take away archaeological pieces from their territory, around 1870 the Ottoman authorities, keen to develop their own institution, introduced a more restrictive approach to the export of antiquities. By 1869, in fact, the Ottomans had passed the first by-law on antiquities. This signalled a modern attitude to the management of antiquities and 'indicated a desire to play the Great Game on equal terms with the major European countries'; it thus constituted a climax in the changes of attitude toward the European excavations in the empire. The law stated that permission to excavate needed to be obtained, and it prohibited the exportation to foreign countries of any antiquity (excluding coins) found in excavations. Article 6 allowed discretion to the sultan to grant special permission for export. The law was updated in 1874 and again in 1884. By this time, the golden era of acquisition for European museums was over.<sup>41</sup>

A rudimentary collection had been started at Constantinople in 1846 by Fethi Ahmet Pasha (1801–1857), the minister for war affairs, who, after returning from his missions abroad, during which he had visited the museums of Europe, decided to assemble a collection of archaeological and military pieces in the church of St Irini, in the first courtyard

of the Topkapi Palace. During Saffet Pasha's tenure as education minister, these works were rearranged and the collection was named the Imperial Museum; Edward Goold, a history teacher in the Galatasaray High School, was placed in charge of it. Saffet Pasha sent directives throughout the empire asking governors to collect and send to Istanbul any ancient artefacts found in their territories. When Ahmet Vefik Pasha was appointed minister of education in 1872, he placed Anton Dethier, headmaster of the Austrian High School in Constantinople, in charge of the imperial collection. Dethier was tasked with the creation, and development, of an archaeological museum.

These developments coincided with the withdrawal of permission for foreign powers to export antiquities. Works of art were expected to be taken from their find spot directly to the museum at Constantinople, and only duplicates could be exported by foreign nationals.<sup>42</sup> At this delicate juncture, the two bronze pieces that had been destined for the museum in Constantinople resurfaced on the open market in Italy. Curiously, the head and hand were offered for sale by Photiades Bey, an interesting character with a compulsive passion for antiquities, who was then Ottoman ambassador to Italy.<sup>43</sup>

### **Diplomacy and the search for the rest of the statue**

Following the acquisition of the Castellani collection in 1873, Newton became obsessed with the bronze head. Before he was appointed keeper of the British Museum's Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, Newton had served as British consul, first in the Aegean and then in Rome. Now he made use of his diplomatic connections in the Levant to uncover the story behind the pieces of the statue. Officers' Reports and correspondence to and from Newton reveal a search to establish the provenance of the head and matching hand, and to find the rest of the statue from which they were believed to have come; he was keen to discover whether other pieces might be found in the same location. In pursuit of his inquiries, he requested that his former colleague Alfred Biliotti (1833–1915) be sent to Satala to investigate the precise provenance of the two pieces already known, and he also tasked Consul Blunt at Salonica, 'Thessaly being within

Mr Blunt's consular district . . . to make enquiries as to the truth of Photiades Bey's statement that the bronze head was found in that part of Turkey'. Blunt was unable to substantiate Photiades' story through local enquiries, but confirmed that Photiades Bey had an estate in Thessaly 'from which he obtains coins and antiquities from time to time'.<sup>44</sup>

The existence of a thriving antiquities market in Greece, in which Photiades seems to have actively participated, makes it possible that the find spot of the statue could have been somewhere in Thessaly. This option would appear to be corroborated by the description Castellani made of it in his letter of 1 October 1872 as 'a bronze head of Greek workmanship discovered in Thessaly'.<sup>45</sup> Although the Greek antiquities law in force between 1834 and 1899 forbade the export of antiquities, there were a number of loopholes. The law 'conditionally permitted the sale of objects originating from private excavations within Greece (Articles 78–80) but prohibited the unauthorized exportation of all antiquities, public and private (Article 76) . . . Even when antiquities were discovered by chance, they had to be reported and . . . catalogued (Articles 67–71).'<sup>46</sup> Yet the lack of personnel made enforcement impossible and, thanks to bribery and corruption of custom officials, export from Greece was still possible.<sup>47</sup> However, it is debatable whether a false find spot was deliberately invented by Photiades to increase the asking price or to conceal smuggling from the Ottoman Empire.

News concerning the find spot of the statue was first presented to the British Museum trustees in the autumn of 1873. A memorandum explained that the head had been found, together with the bronze hand, in Saddak, and hinted at the possible existence of further portions of the original statue.<sup>48</sup> Newton suggested engaging embassy personnel to investigate further on behalf of the trustees:

Mr Newton submits the enclosed memorandum which has been placed in his hands together with the accompanying photographs by Mr Hirschfeld a young German archaeologist who has been recently residing at Athens. It appears from Dr Hirschfeld's statement that at the close of last year the bronze female head recently purchased by the Trustees from Mr Castellani was at Constantinople in the hands of an Armenian dealer called Savas Kougioumtsoglou who also then possessed a hand represented in the enclosed photograph.

The dealer stated that both head and hand had been found in the earth . . . in a part of Armenia recently included in the

kingdom of Cappadocia. A photographer of Constantinople named Abdullah who sent photographs both of the head and hand to Dr Hirschfeld informed him that he thought it not improbable that the Armenian dealer possessed other portions of the bronze statue to which the head belonged. So far as Mr Newton can judge from the photographs, the hand seems to be in the same style as the head and may very well have belonged to the same statue. With regard to the story of its discovery in Armenia, Mr Newton has no sufficient ground for either belief or disbelief. The truth in cases of this kind is hardly ever ascertained . . . It seems to Mr Newton that it might be as well if steps were taken to ascertain whether the Armenian dealer has any more pieces of the statue. Mr Hughes, the current General Secretary of the Embassy, might be able to make private enquiries on behalf of the Trustees. Mr Hughes is well acquainted with oriental languages and having been consul at Erzerum would probably know the locality where the head is said to have been discovered.<sup>49</sup>

Newton stated clearly that he had 'no sufficient ground for either belief or disbelief' in the matter of the find spot, and that 'the truth in cases of this kind is hardly ever ascertained'. It is possible, therefore, that the development of events explained here represented a deliberate misconstruction of provenance to avert possible claims by the Ottoman authorities. In his report to a museum committee meeting on 28 March 1874, Newton submitted letters from Biliotti from 22 December 1873 and 4 March 1874, which stated that he had received information that the large bronze head in the Castellani collection, now in the museum, had been found, together with a hand in bronze, at or near Satala in Armenia, and suggested that further interesting discoveries might be made where these objects were found.<sup>50</sup>

Newton explored with the Foreign Office the option of giving Biliotti, at the time a consular official in Rhodes, leave to visit Saddak to find out if the rest of the statue, or other equivalent pieces, could be found there. After a preliminary request to go to the place described by Photiades Bey to make enquiries, Biliotti was granted leave and a sum of money to travel to Satala to establish the truth about the statue.

In July 1874 Newton reported to the trustees on Biliotti's researches. The bronze head had been found in 1872 by an old man called Youssouf near Saddak, now in the Gümüşhane Province of Turkey.<sup>51</sup> Saddak was a miserable modern village littered with majestic Roman ruins. The field where the head had been found was surrounded by a ditch at the foot of

a hill contiguous to the Roman baths. A platform, fortified with numerous walls and towers, the ruins of a building and those of a basilica of the Byzantine period formed the setting for the location of the statue. The locals had got used to excavating the site to obtain building materials, and this made it likely that more remains might be found embedded in the masonry of local houses.

Biliotti, who remained at Saddak nine days before returning to Trabzon, became convinced that Saddak was the location of the ancient Roman town of Satala, which had hosted a permanent Roman camp. He wrote in his report that:

The discoverer of the head, an old man named Youssof, pointed out to me the exact spot where he picked it up. It was on the limit of his field, which, together with that of his neighbour Vely, occupies the centre of the platform. He told me that a little more than two years ago he was cutting a trench for watering his field, when, at a depth of about two feet, his pickaxe struck against a piece of metal, and in clearing the earth it proved to be the head in question which he describes as broken at the neck, and representing a youthful woman. Together, and touching it, was the left fore-arm of the bronze statue with the hand half shut, holding, he says, a purse, but which was, perhaps, a piece of drapery. Youssof carried the head and hand to Erzenghian for sale but the fact of the discovery having become known to the Governor of the town, he took possession of both relics and sent them to the Governor General of Erzeroom, his superior. They were forwarded by him to the Porte, who, I am assured by the Government Accountant accompanying me, acknowledged their receipt. The fact of the head having subsequently passed into private hands can be taken as an instance of the little care which is bestowed by the Turkish Government on objects of art, which are taken possession of under the plea of adorning the museum at Constantinople. Youssof accompanied the bronze head to the Capital, and was paid £8 Turkish for it, a sum which, he was telling me, did not cover his travelling expenses.<sup>52</sup>

Biliotti added that another peasant digging for stone on the same site had come across the legs of a bronze horse described as life size. These had been seized by the Turkish official for the district, and the finder had received no payment.<sup>53</sup> 'They are said to have been sent to the Porte but it is not known what has become of them.' Owing to bad weather and difficult access, Biliotti had been unable in the first instance to explore the field, but had suggested that such an exploration could be carried out in the summer. Newton felt that, 'though it would not be expedient at the present time to apply to the Porte for a firman for exploring Satala, it would be well that Mr Biliotti

should visit the site and that his travelling expenses which he reckons worth £20 should be paid by the Trustees'. If the trustees agreed to this recommendation, they should write to the Foreign Office requesting a leave of absence for Mr Biliotti, as Satala was located outside his consular district.<sup>54</sup> The trustees authorized a sum to allow Biliotti to go and explore the area on their behalf, and arranged for his leave with the Foreign Office.<sup>55</sup>

In September 1874, Biliotti sent a long and very detailed report on the area where the statue had been found (Fig. 3); he had alerted the locals that any other findings would be of interest to him.<sup>56</sup>

In conclusion I may state that, if my visit to Saddak is productive of no other result, there is one attained which I consider very important. I am now known to the inhabitants, several of whom have more or less profited by my presence amongst them. Having promised them handsome rewards for any antiquities worth having, which they may bring to me, I am convinced that as the discovery of those in question have received no, or adequate compensation, they will bring straight to me any relics which may be discovered here after. It now remains for the Trustees of the British Museum to decide, whether it is more convenient to wait for this eventuality or to lose no time in securing, by excavations on the spot, those objects of art which may still exist at Saddak, and which in spite of all precautions may be lost to them in consequence of some unforeseen circumstance.<sup>57</sup>

Biliotti's posting was moved from Rhodes to the territory of Trabzon, giving him a foot in the door should further archaeological finds emerge. But by this time the hostility of the Ottoman government to the export of antiquities, combined with the cost of exploration,

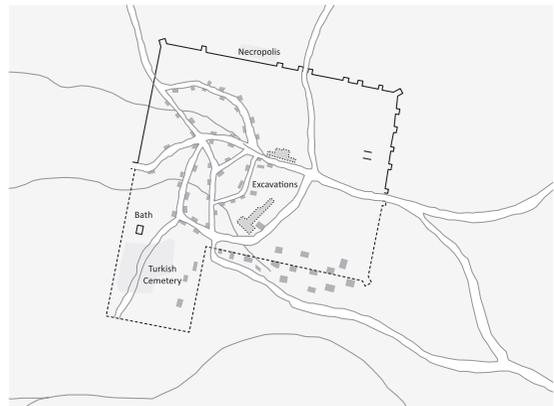


Fig. 3. Alfred Biliotti's plan of Satala, September 1874 (redrawn by the author).

Table 1. Provenance chain of the head of Anahita.

Date		Location
1872	Youssouf Kizzilbash of Sadaka Governor General of Erzerum	Sadak (Satala) Sadak Erzerum
	Savas Kougioumtsoglou Photiades Bey	Constantinople Constantinople
1872	Alessandro Castellani	Rome
1873	British Museum	London

discouraged the museum from pursuing excavations at Satala.

The bronze hand that Newton had referred to in his earlier report re-emerged in an Officers' Report to the trustees in June 1875, by which time it had been purchased by Castellani and gifted to the museum:

Mr Newton has the honour to submit to the Trustees the following present which is offered to the Museum by Signor A Castellani: A bronze hand.

This hand is said to have been found with the beautiful bronze head from Satala which Signor Castellani purchased from Mr Photiades Bey and afterwards sold to the Trustees. Mr Newton has no doubt of the accuracy of this statement, because the hand corresponds perfectly in style with the head and has undergone the same rough treatment, evidently with a view to breaking up and melting the bronze.<sup>58</sup>

Almost two years after Newton had contacted him, Thomas Fiott Hughes, general secretary of the embassy in Constantinople finally responded in a private letter:

I got hold of Alishan whom I found thoroughly acquainted with all the particulars concerning the history of the head. The hand of the statue is still I believe in the possession of a Greek 'Baccal' named Savas who is also a speculator in Antiquities.<sup>59</sup> It was he who obtained the head from the Turk or Kizzilbash of Sadaka in Armenia who entrusted it to Photiades, who was then starting for Rome, for sale. Photiades, as you know, sold it to Castellani & Savas received about 5000 francs.

He is a difficult man I am told, to deal with & will probably want a great deal of money for the hand.

Some months ago you sent Biliotti to Satala in search of the statue. He made excavations but failed to find it – although he was aided by the local Turkish authorities. Now the very man, an Armenian, who severed the head from the trunk of the statue was in my room here two days ago. He was brought to me by Alishan who has been entrusted with the secret which is known to only 2 or 3 other persons. They are afraid of Biliotti and the Turks. The story is a most curious one, as told to me by Alishan and the Armenian but I am pledged not to divulge it. You must communicate on the subject with Alishan. I will give any assistance in my power,

but I don't wish to have anything to do with the money part of the business. Not only is the statue (of which you have the head) in existence, but a companion statue quite uninjured can be had. The Ambassador must ask leave to purchase and bring away the statue as a special favour from the Sultan. In the present temper of the Turks as regards antiquities it can be done in no other way.

Sir H Elliot tells me that he will not object to ask this favour as far as regards the fragment or trunk of which the British Museum actually possesses the head. But he won't ask for the other statue . . . I foresee many difficulties.<sup>60</sup>

Hughes's letter reopened the tantalizing possibility that the remainder of the statue might be found. In correspondence in French addressed to Newton while he was at Athens, Alishan invited him to visit Satala so that together they could inspect the chamber where the bronze statue was located. This visit would need to be made in absolute secrecy. Once Newton had satisfied himself that the statue existed, a firman would be needed for its removal.

It would not be possible to clear the entrance of the subterranean chamber without employing workmen for removal digs . . . such proceedings would certainly be reported to the Pasha of Erzerum and . . . the interference of the local authority would cause the affair to fail altogether.<sup>61</sup>

When Newton declined this invitation because of the difficulty of travelling in a season when the roads were barely passable, Alishan reiterated his conviction that the statue existed. Newton was not optimistic that the local authorities would grant a firman to allow the excavation to uncover the statue, and suggested that Alishan would attract less attention visiting Satala alone. Proof of the existence of the statue might be achieved by making a paper impression of the inscription believed to be present on its base.

The story may be true and yet the difficulties in verifying these facts may prove insurmountable, or again the story like many such stories . . . might be entire fiction. Should the Trustees themselves not feel justified in risking £30 by guaranteeing the travelling expenses of Mr Alishan, this might be proposed him conditionally, on his producing satisfactory proof that he has visited Satala and actually seen the bronze statue. One of these proofs would be of course a copy of the alleged inscription.<sup>62</sup>

Alishan's story was never substantiated and it is unclear whether the rest of the bronze was ever found. Instead, by this stage, documentation in the archives reports numerous difficulties in dealing with the Ottoman authorities and ever increasing complications in being able to export findings from excavations back to the museum.

## Conclusion

The story of the Satala head well illustrates the dealings and complications of the nineteenth-century art market. In order to be able to unlock the sale of his collection, Castellani had to find a piece that would entice the British government sufficiently to release the promised funds and proceed with the acquisition of his collection. In doing so, he acquired, in Italy, an antiquity found in the Ottoman province of Armenia that should, according to the laws in place at the time, have gone straight to the museum at Constantinople.

Having failed to reach the Ottoman museum there, but having arrived instead in Italy, the Satala head should have remained in Italy, much like the rest of Castellani's collection, since Italian laws at the time stipulated that items found in the ground belonged to the state and that an export licence had to be obtained to export *any* antique item. But Castellani had decided that the ultimate destination for his collection should be a foreign museum, and when in 1870 the Italian authorities sealed his cabinets with the intention of examining the collection and exploring the possibility of acquiring it, he set a price that proved unaffordable for the newly formed Italian state.<sup>63</sup> Letters between him and Newton reveal that this was deliberate and that Newton, in making an offer on behalf of the British government, used this sum as a benchmark and made sure not to offer more, therefore acquiring the collection for a sum similar to the offer Castellani had refused to accept from the Italian government. Had this been disclosed, the Italian government could potentially have put a stop to the export. There is also written evidence that Castellani had to bribe the customs officials to be able to ship the collection and the head out of Italy.<sup>64</sup>

The case of the Satala head shows that, though it was bought on the open market, it was sold in contravention of Ottoman law and exported from Italy in contravention of Italian law, before finally arriving at the British Museum. The journey of the head between Constantinople and London via Rome (Table 1) would probably have been impossible had there not been a network of collectors and dealers to enable it. Photiades Bey, who would have been well aware of Ottoman law, intercepted the head, putting it up for sale in Italy where he was initially Ottoman minister in Florence. He is documented as a passionate dealer who bought antiquities and 'pays enormous prices for

anything at all good'.<sup>65</sup> In the same period (1865–81), Dominic Ellis Colnaghi,<sup>66</sup> Newton's former personal assistant in Greece and trusted friend, was serving as consul general for Great Britain in Florence. Colnaghi and Photiades Bey undoubtedly moved in the same diplomatic and social circles, and most likely discussed their mutual interest in antiquities. As the importance of the Satala head for Newton was such that he had published an open letter in *The Times* to justify its acquisition to the public and appealed directly to the prime minister, it seems likely that the appearance of the head on the Italian market and in the hands of Castellani was not a coincidence.

The journey of the head illustrates a methodology for the acquisition of pieces for the British Museum, the efficiency of the deployment of diplomatic channels to enrich its collection, and the workings of the nineteenth-century trafficking chain. It opens a series of complicated ethical questions about the head and to whom it belonged in the first place, whether to the inhabitants of Armenia or the governing Ottomans, and whether it should have been allowed to reach Italy and, from there, England. But it seems that, at this point in history, the lure of antiquities transcended national loyalty. Historical evidence shows that all of the figures involved in the export and sale of the head and the hand were perfectly aware of the difficulties and risks of selling and acquiring antiquities from the Ottoman Empire in this period, but that none of this deterred their trade. Their actions have to be interpreted in the context of the European race for the construction of national museums, whereby significant pieces became of interest to a number of possible buyers at the same time who used similar methods of acquisition. This drove a race for the acquisition of such pieces, which, for the protagonists, justified the morality, methodology and means.

## Supplementary information

An online Appendix at <https://academic.oup.com/jhc> provides extended transcriptions of the documentary sources relating to the transactions discussed here.

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## Acknowledgements

This article would not have been possible without the support of a grant from UCL HEIF, Research England's Higher Education and Innovation Fund which is administered by UCL Innovation & Enterprise (Project reference code KEI2018-06-25), and the kind permission and collaboration of the British Museum Archives and the Department of Greece and Rome. Special thanks go to Francesca Hillier and Dr Peter Higgs for facilitating access to documentation and generously sharing their time and knowledge. Thanks also go to Professor Stephen Conway for his continuous encouragement and support and to Dr Jeremy D. Hill for his constructive help, and to Charo Rovira and Angela Grimshaw at the Central Archives. Passages quoted from British Museum archive documents are © The Trustees of the British Museum.

## Notes and references

- 1 The statue was called Anahita by Europeans, but Anahit in Armenia. For consistency, this article and the accompanying online Appendix use the form 'Anahita', except where the spelling 'Anahit' is used in quotations and Armenian documentation.
- 2 Ghevont Alishan was a prominent member of the Armenian diaspora and an active Armenian patriot and promoter of the Armenian language, both classical and modern. Ordained as a Catholic priest, he was a prolific historian, philologist, poet and writer. He was born in Constantinople in 1820, and educated from the age of 12 in Venice. In 1852 he visited a number of European cities, including London, Oxford and Cambridge.
- 3 G. Alishan, Այրարատ / *Ayrarat* (Venice, 1890) <https://digitale-sammlungen.ulb.uni-bonn.de/content/zoom/250857> (accessed 25 March 2021).
- 4 J. R. Russell, *Zoroastrianism in Armenia* (Cambridge, MA, 1987), p. 72: 'Two of the legions were stationed in Melitene and Satala, in the west of Armenia; on evidence from Satala, which is considered to have been the site of a temple of Anahita, but is more likely to have been a Roman military shrine'. L. Burn, *Hellenistic Art: From Alexander the Great to Augustus* (Los Angeles, 2004), pp. 87–8, also offers two possible interpretations: the statue was either the Cnidian Aphrodite, pulling the drapery from her body (as is suggested by the hand), or, owing to the find spot, it was the Iranian goddess Anahita, later assimilated with the Greek goddesses Aphrodite and Athena. Burn states, however, that since no traces of the temple were found when the site was excavated, the original setting of the statue remains a mystery. The most likely hypothesis is that the statue was brought by the Roman army for its camp; the archival sources describe other finds to confirm the presence of a Roman camp on this site.
- 5 V. Nersessian, *Treasures from the Ark: 1700 years of Armenian Christian art* (Los Angeles, 2001), pp. 114–15.
- 6 M. Sakayan, 'The curse of Anahit', *Armenia Weekly*, 18 July 2013, at <https://armenianweekly.com/2013/07/18/the-curse-of-anahit/> (accessed 24 April 2020). For the petition, see note 10.
- 7 Formerly part of the territory of the Ottoman Empire, in 1914 Armenia counted 2,133,190 citizens; by 1922 just 387,800 remained. J. Kifner, 'Armenian genocide of 1915: an overview', *New York Times*, [2007], at [https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/ref/timestopics/topics\\_armeniangenocide.html?mcubz=0](https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/ref/timestopics/topics_armeniangenocide.html?mcubz=0) (accessed 24 April 2020).
- 8 R. Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory* (London, 2016), pp. 76–8. See also the site of the Armenian Ministry of Culture. <https://www.mfa.am/en/cultural-genocide/>, and <https://www.armenian-genocide.org> (accessed 29 April 2021).
- 9 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, <https://www.mfa.am/en/cultural-genocide/> (accessed 24 April 2020).
- 10 'Return the fragments of Armenian pagan goddess Anahit's statue to Armenia', online petition to the UK Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, launched by Gevorg Martirosyan, April 2012, <https://www.change.org/p/uk-secretary-of-culture-return-the-fragments-of-armenian-pagan-goddess-anahit-s-statue-to-armenia> (accessed 3 June 2020).
- 11 L. Patrizio Gunning, *The British Consular Service in the Aegean and the Collection of Antiquities for the British Museum* (Abingdon, 2009), ch. 4.
- 12 British Museum, Central Archives, Officers' Reports (hereafter BM, CA, OR) 1873–4, fol. 57, Rome, 17 February 1873.
- 13 British Museum, Greek and Roman Antiquities Department (hereafter BM, GRA), CAS 1–60, August 1865. At this stage, Castellani had already sent some specimens to the museum. Most probably he would have met Newton while his brother Augusto was cataloguing the Campana collection, which the museum intended to buy. Most likely in 1865, when his father died and a rift opened between Alessandro and his brother Augusto, Castellani sent some pieces to the museum with the intention of enticing the trustees to acquire his own collection; at this stage, however, the bulk of the collection remained in Italy. See Victoria Keller, 'Castellani and Italian archaeological jewellery', *The Art Book* 12 no. 3 (2005), pp. 23–5.
- 14 British Museum, Central Archives, Original Letters (hereafter BM, CA, OL), 1869–72, fol. 141, 23 December 1869.
- 15 BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 142, 9 February 1870, in appendix: 'Having taken into consideration your letter, and the project proposed to me to display my collection of ancient gold at the Kensington Museum, I was minded to accept when this morning I received a despatch from the Ministry of Public Instruction (Mr Correnti) who informed me to have given all necessary orders so that my collections of ancient gold, bronzes, terracottas, must not be taken out of Italy, and cites the law that authorises him to do so. He adds, in truth, that this is not to create me damage, but only to buy time so to be able to acquire these collections for the Government of Italy.'
- 16 BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 143, 13 May 1870, in appendix.
- 17 BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 146, 29 October 1870.
- 18 Victoria and Albert Museum Archives, London, Castellani, Part 1, 1869–84, MA/1/c713/1, paper RP/1870/43649, Naples, 2 November 1870. Letters to and from the Treasury follow this one in the same file, authorizing the transport of Castellani's collections and advising that the sum of £200 to cover it should be paid out of the Science and Art Fund (21 March 1871, n.12549; 3 May 1872, n.5205).
- 19 BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 147, 21 February 1871.
- 20 Sir William Richard Drake (1817–1890) was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries on 17 February 1848, and contributed to the society's periodical *Archaeologia*. A Knight Commander of the Italian Orders of SS. Maurizio and Lazzaro and the Corona d'Italia, a Knight of the Austrian Order of the Iron Crown, and a member of the 2nd class of the Turkish Order of the Medjidie, he was knighted on 6 September 1869 at the instance of William Gladstone.

- 21 BM, GRA, CAS 1-11, Rome, 1 October 1872, in appendix.
- 22 BM, GRA, CAS 1-7, Rome, 17 January 1873, in appendix.
- 23 Wolfgang Helbig was the newly appointed second secretary at the Istituto Italiano di Corrispondenza in Rome, today the German Archaeological Institute. He was renowned for his commerce in antiquities and was in competition with Castellani for the acquisition of objects that appeared on the market. See D. Williams, 'The Brygos tomb reassembled and 19th-century commerce in Capuan antiquities', *American Journal of Archaeology* 96 (1992), pp. 617-36.
- 24 BM, GRA, CAS 1-8, Rome, 26 January 1873, in appendix.
- 25 BM, GRA, CAS 1-7, and CAS 1-8, Rome, 26 January 1873, in appendix.
- 26 BM, CA, OR, 1873-4, folio 3, 7 January 1873, in appendix
- 27 The emphasis on 'Homeric art' was clearly intended to appeal to Gladstone, who, in 1858 had published his *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* in three volumes. By using this terminology, Newton knew that Gladstone would respond, as in fact he did, authorizing the acquisition.
- 28 British Library, Gladstone Papers (hereafter BL, GP), vol. CCCLII, Add. MS 44437, fol. 169, Newton to Gladstone, private, 15 February 1873.
- 29 BL, GP, vol. CCCLII, Add. MS 44437, fol. 163, 17 February 1873.
- 30 BM, CA, OR, 1873-4, fol. 57, Rome, 17 February 1873, in appendix
- 31 This is equivalent to £2.6 million in today's prices. The head was valued £8,000 by Castellani, which equates to roughly £900,000. When making this calculation, it is easy to see why the prime minister needed to be involved. The final price paid for the entire collection including the head was £27,000, which today equates to just over £3 million.
- 32 BM, CA, OR, 1873-4, fol. 64, and *passim*, Rome, 17 February 1873, in appendix.
- 33 BL, GP, vol. CCCLIII, Add. MS 44438, fol. 170, Charles Thomas Newton to William Gladstone, 9 April 1873.
- 34 Published in *The Times*, 10 April 1873, and reprinted as 'The bronze head of Castellani', in C. T. Newton, *Essays on Art and Archaeology* (London, 1880), pp. 400-4.
- 35 BL, GP, vol. CCCLIII, Add. MS 44438, fol. 209, 17 April 1873. Newton advised both Gladstone and the trustees at this stage; BM, CA, OR, 1873, fol. 89, in appendix.
- 36 BM, CA, OL, 1873-5, A-L: fol. 65, Vienna, 11 May 1873, in appendix.
- 37 BL, GP, vol. CCCLIII, Add. MS 44438, fol. 276, Newton to Gladstone, 16 May 1873.
- 38 BM, CA, OR, 1873-4, 21 May 1873, in appendix.
- 39 BM, CA, OL, 1873-5, A-L: fol. 66, Bologna, 4 August 1873, in appendix.
- 40 BM, GRA, CAS 1-51, Castellani to Newton, Rome, 28 October 1873.
- 41 E. Eden, 'From blissful indifference to anguished concern: Ottoman perceptions of antiquities, 1799-1869', in *Scramble for the Past: A story of archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914*, ed. Z. Bahrani, Z. Çelik and E. Eldem (Istanbul, 2011), pp. 281-330; see also W.M.K. Shaw, 'From mausoleum to museum: resurrecting antiquity for Ottoman modernity', in *ibid.*, pp. 423-41.
- 42 I. Donkow, 'The Ephesus excavations, 1863-1874, in the light of the Ottoman legislation on antiquities', *Anatolian Studies* 54 (2004), pp. 109-17; see also Shaw, *op. cit.* (note 40); N. Baflgelen, 'Istanbul archaeology museums, from Imperial Museum to the present', *Arkeoloji / Archaeology* no. 14 (2006), pp. 114-21.
- 43 BM, CA, OR, 1873-4, fol. 57, Rome, 17 February 1873, in appendix: 'This bronze was recently sold to Mr Castellani by Photiades Bey, late Turkish minister at Florence, and formerly in the same capacity at Athens where he was well known as a connoisseur and collector of Greek antiquities.'
- 44 BM, CA, OR, 1873-74, in BM, GRA, 1 of 2 volumes in box, fol. 181.
- 45 See: BM, GRA, CAS 1-11, Rome, 1 October 1872. See also note 21.
- 46 Y. Galanakis 'Early prehistoric research on Amorgos and the beginnings of Cycladic archaeology', *American Journal of Archaeology* 117 (2013), pp. 181-205, at p. 192.
- 47 Y. Galanakis, "'University professor - antiquities looter": a 19th-century Athens art dealer and the trafficking of antiquities in Greece under the first archaeological law. Part I', *Anglo-Hellenic Review* no. 45 (2012), pp. 7-10; Y. Galanakis, "'University professor - antiquities looter": a 19th-century Athens art dealer and the trafficking of antiquities in Greece under the first archaeological law, Part II', *Anglo-Hellenic Review* no. 46 (2012), pp. 3-5.
- 48 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9, fols. 47-50. Biliotti noted that the XV Legion had been stationed at Satala and that the ruins at Saddak were consistent with those of a Roman sedentary camp. Furthermore, there was evidence as to the identity of Satala, 'in the presence at Saddak of the brick inscribed with the number of the XV Legion . . . The presence at Saddak of fragments of more than one bronze statue, conveys the idea of a wealthy town adorned with artistic luxury while the merit of the head now in the British Museum suggests that Satala, or whatever its former name may have been, was thriving at the time when Greek art was still in the highest development . . . If we consider now that marble is to be found nowhere in the immediate vicinity of Saddak, that the transport of large blocks from a distance would have been attended with great if not unsurmountable difficulties, that copper is a produce of the country, that the working of this metal constitutes the principal occupation of the natives, that its casting into statues involved little trouble and expense, we must come to the conclusion that all the objects of art represented elsewhere in marble were here in bronze.'
- 49 BM, CA, OR, 1873-74, in BM, GRA, 1 of 2 volumes in box, fol. 177, 5 October 1873. The photograph could not be located in the archive.
- 50 BM, GRA, Trustees Meetings, (hereafter BM, GRA, TM) 1874, fol. 287, 28 March 1874, in appendix.
- 51 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9.
- 52 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9.
- 53 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9, fols. 26, 51.
- 54 BM, CA, OR, 1873-74, 1 of 2 volumes in box, fol. 397, 9 July 1874.
- 55 BM, GRA, TM, 1874, fol. 325, 11 July 1874.
- 56 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9, 'Journey to Satala and the bronze statue'. The report is also

- extensively published in T. B. Mitford, 'Biliotti's excavations at Satala', *Anatolian Studies* 24 (1974), pp. 221–44.
- 57 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9, fol. 51.
- 58 BM, CA, OR, 1875–6, relating to BM, GRA, fol. 91, 22 June 1875.
- 59 This was Savas Kougioumtsoglou, a Greek antiquities dealer. For this reference see the British Museum website at [https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G\\_1873-0820-1](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1873-0820-1) (accessed 17 March 2021).
- 60 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers, Rhodes, Mausoleum, etc., pt. 9, Hughes to Newton, private, Therapia, 26 August 1875.
- 61 BM, GRA, Alfred Biliotti papers volume, 1864–75, Alishan to Newton, 25 August 1875, 1 September 1875, 2 October 1875.
- 62 BM, CA, OR, 1875–6, relating to BM, GRA, fol. 301, 10 May, 1876, in appendix; for a further entry on this point, see fol. 329, 25 January 1876.
- 63 BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 142, 9 February 1870.
- 64 BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 147, 21 February 1871, in appendix: 'Finally my collection has been loaded, a few days ago, on the Royal Navy vessel Defence and all has already left bound for Malta. With the Customs authorities here a real coup d'état was made, having managed to embark 41 cases, without them being checked! But with money you can do great things . . . Now let's see when these will be in England, what will be the result of this great and difficult undertaking on which, as you know, the future of my family depends. Sir William Hutt writes to me that he has spoken with Mr Lowe concerning the purchase to be done directly by the Government and he thinks that it is very well disposed.' See also: BM, CA, OL, 1869–72, fol. 66, Bologna, 4 August 1873, in appendix.
- 65 Y. Galanakis, 'On Her Majesty's Service: C. L. W. Merlin and the sourcing of Greek antiquities for the British Museum', *Center for Hellenic Studies Research Bulletin* 1 no. 1 (2012) at [http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hln.essay:GalanakisY.On\\_Her\\_Majestys\\_Service.2012](http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hln.essay:GalanakisY.On_Her_Majestys_Service.2012) (accessed 20 March 2021).
- 66 Dominic Ellis Colnaghi was the elder son of Dominic Paul Colnaghi, a well-known and well-connected collector and dealer in fine art in Pall Mall, London. At a young age, Dominic Ellis accompanied Charles Thomas Newton to Mytilene, when he was appointed British vice-consul there in 1852, both to assess the possibility of procuring pieces of art for the family firm and as a sort of educational grand tour. Colnaghi received a stipend directly from Newton, whom he assisted during excavations, recording them photographically on behalf of his firm. Almost Newton's private secretary, Colnaghi also ensured that regular contacts were maintained with the British Museum. When Newton was posted to Rome, Colnaghi became Lord Stratford's private secretary, before being appointed consul at Messolonghi, and from there was rapidly promoted to the post of consul general in Florence. See Patrizio Gunning, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp. 167–82.